

E Cape cops uncover land theft gang

Five suspects – aged between 38 and 62 – alleged to be part of a land theft syndicate have been arrested following a week-long covert police investigation.

Eastern Cape police spokesperson Brigadier Thembinkosi Kinana said they had allegedly been selling plots on farms belonging to the department of public works for R15 000 in 2020.

The suspects allegedly increased the price to R20 000 in January.

Kinana said involved in the intelligence-led operation was the crime intelligence coastal police, commercial crimes detectives, public works and infrastructure's investigation section and asset forfeiture unit of the Hawks, national intelligence unit and visible policing officers.

The suspects have been charged with fraud.

Kinana said: "During the operation, an undisclosed amount of money was recovered, as were two vehicles believed to have been used by the suspects during the commission of the crimes.

"According to the information, this group of suspects was identified selling plots illegally to people. Reports suggest that the group were selling theses plots for R15 000 each up to 31 December 2020 and increased the price to R20 000 per plot from January, 2021.

"From 20 January to 27 January, covert police observations and investigations ensued, which resulted to the arrest of the suspects on Wednesday."

– News24 Wire

R20 000

is the price plots were allegedly increased to from 1 January.