

NEWS

NWDC Chairman In Poaching Charges

*Bears the scar from a buffalo charge



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Ntsogotho's wounded thigh

CHARGED: Ntsogotho

Nearly three years ago, North West District Council Chairman, Kebareeditse Ntsogotho was badly injured during an encounter with a buffalo just outside his home village, Khwai.

Last week he, along with six other men from his village- including Deputy Chairman of Khwai Development Trust, Paul Mothathobi were summoned before Maun magistrates court charged with poaching.

According to the charge which all the men pleaded not guilty to, they are said to have on 10th May 2020, hunted and killed a buffalo.

This according to the police was a criminal act as none of them had a permit to hunt the said protected wild animal.

The accused include Sisco Ntsogotho (67), Kebareeditse Ntsogotho (44), Keotshephile July (29), Kejisitswe Motsamai (37), Costa Chidua (52), Paul Mothathobi (34) and Balebeng Stone John (28).

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Ntsogotho has since maintained his innocence as he said on that day, during the Covid-19 lockdown, he was home when he received a call from some distressed villagers who wanted his help.

He said the caller asked him to bring more bullets as they had encountered a raging buffalo while fishing.

“They had called wildlife officers who were taking too long to get to the scene, so I took the bullets to where they were,” Ntsogotho had previously explained to this publication.

He further noted that upon arrival at the scene, he found the buffalo lying down but it swiftly sprang to its feet and as the men fled and spread out in the bush, the wounded beast went for Ntsogotho and attacked him, its sharp horn searing through his right thigh.

Allegedly the men had shot at the beast but it kept fighting back and by the time Ntsogotho arrived it was lying down and as the men were still deciding who among them should take it out, it sprang back to its feet and went directly for Ntsogotho who was a bit slower than the rest.

He is said to have fainted and only woke up at Letsholathebe memorial hospital a few hours later while the other men had managed to kill the buffalo.

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When they went for mention a year ago, one of the accused persons maintained that he did not understand Setswana language and that he needed Sesarwa interpretation.

When the matter returned to court this week, the interpreter was available but the prosecutor was absent, having failed to travel from Selebi-Phikwe.

The matter returns to court on 25th May, 2023 for status hearing.