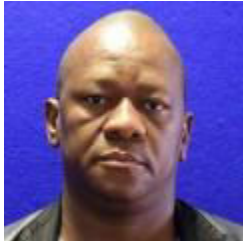




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Pangolin poaching for enhanced sexual pleasure on the increase

The Commander of Botswana Defence Force, Lieutenant General Placid Segokgo, has warned that poaching will continue to be part of our lives for as long as some countries in Asia cling to their beliefs that some organs of wild animals give them sexual powers.

Addressing journalists at a recent press briefing, Segokgo said, “There are some people in the East who believe that consuming or applying samples of organs such as horns, teeth, or even skins enhance their sexual performance and therefore they will do anything to acquire such, and they are prepared to pay whatever amount of money to satisfy their beliefs,” he said.

This, the commander said, has potential to entice their suppliers to get the products since they know that it is a lucrative business that they are engaged in. There are reports that rhino horns, elephant tusks, nails and other related organs, are in high demand in Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, and China, hence providing a lucrative market for poaching syndicates.

However, the Commander said there is a decrease in incidences of poaching of rhinos, lions and elephants in the country, but noted that there is an increase in incidents of pangolin poaching because of its unique skin.

He said some of the perpetrators are locals who live in areas where there are wildlife species that are in high demand and fall into temptation when they realise the offer they get from the syndicates.

“Sometimes the offer exceeds 60 percent of the person’s total earnings in a year and therefore they are tempted to take the risk that will bring instant improvement in their lives. Others engage in poaching because of a craving for game meat while others do it for business,” he said.

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However, the BDF commander did not have immediate statistics for poaching incidences in the country since the beginning of the year.

He said that the borderline between Botswana and its neighbouring states makes up to thousands of kilometers and sometimes presents a challenge to secure the whole of it.

Meanwhile, speaking at a recent press conference, the minister of Defence and Security, Kagiso Mmusi, has refuted allegations of corruption in his ministry and dismissed all recent reports about corrupt procurement practices in the ministry as false and malicious.

Mmusi said the reports were motivated by political opponents who were trying to tarnish his name as the country prepares for 2024 general elections.