



Rhino horn suspects want bail relaxed

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WINDHOEK FAITH SANKWASA

Two men on trial for allegedly selling a rhino horn to an undercover police officer have applied to have their bail conditions relaxed.

Arvo Johannes Mufeti, 40, and Andreas Panduleni Naholo are out on bail of N\$7 000 each. One of their bail conditions is that they must report to the Windhoek or Oshakati police stations every Monday and Friday. They want this condition removed .

The two are on trial before Magistrate Dinnah Usiku in the Windhoek Regional Court.

Magistrate Usiku postponed the bail application hearing to June 11 for a decision.

Mufeti and Naholo were arrested for possession of a rhino horn valued at N\$125 000 during a police sting operation in Windhoek on May 27, 2009.

At the start of their trial in July 2012, a witness from the police's Protected Resource Unit told the court that they had received information that the two accused were in possession of unpolished diamonds and rhino horns.

The officer then posed as a potential buyer and met with Mufeti, who got into the officer's car, while Naholo waited nearby in another vehicle.

The court was further told that Mufeti had a bag containing the rhino horn, which was found when he was searched.

Mufeti and Naholo pleaded not guilty at the start of the trial.

Three months ago, the case was delayed when the two accused had to get new lawyers, who needed transcriptions of the court records to familiarise themselves with the case.

On Tuesday, the records were still not transcribed.

Mufeti is represented by Mbushandje Ntinda of Sisa Namandje law firm, while Carol-Ann Esterhuizen is the State prosecutor.