



## More charges may follow in rhino horn case

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The case against three Chinese nationals - accused of trying to smuggle 14 rhino horns valued at N\$2 million out of Namibia - has been postponed for further investigations and the possible adding further charges. Li Xiaoliang, Li Zhibing and Pu Xuexin have been charged with the possession and export of controlled wildlife products, after they were allegedly caught with the 14 rhino horns and a leopard skin in their suitcases at the Hosea Kutako International Airport on March 23. They have maintained that they did not know what was in the suitcases. The three accused appeared yesterday in the Windhoek Magistrate's Court in Katutura. State prosecutor Eric Naikaku said although Li Xiaoliang wants to enter a plea, the State is not ready to accept it. Naikaku said the State wants to add further charges in the case. He said investigations will still take about three to four weeks. During a previous appearance, the State indicated that further evidence had been discovered, which may lead to more arrests. Defence lawyer Orben Sibeya said the three accused have been in custody since March, and this should therefore be the final remand for investigations to be completed. He said the case should be postponed until October 9, at which time a date for trial should be set. Although a translator was needed during previous court proceedings, Li Zhibing has now apparently mastered some English, and no interpreter was needed yesterday. Magistrate Alpha Haihambo postponed the case to October 9. WINDHOEK ELLANIE SMIT



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