

Three arrested with 13 elephant tusks

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by Theresia Tjihenuna



THREE suspects were arrested on Tuesday evening at Tjova village in Kavango East after being found in possession of 13 elephant tusks by a joint police and ministry of environment patrol.

Police spokesperson Kauna Shikwambi yesterday said police arrested a Namibian and two Angolans, aged 27, 42 and 50, respectively, during an intelligence-led investigation.

Shikwambi said there were five suspects, but two of them managed to escape. She also said the two Angolan suspects were not in possession of valid documentation allowing them to be in the country and one of them was in possession of fake N\$100 notes.

The three, who could not be named before appearing in court today, were charged with possession of controlled wildlife products, entering Namibia without valid documentation and being in possession of counterfeit money.

"The value and weight of the tusks are not yet determined, but police investigations continue," said Shikwambi. The three were expected to appear in the Rundu Magistrate's Court today.

Spokesperson of the ministry of environment Romeo Muyunda said the arrests were made after the police received a tip-off from the public.

"We really want to thank the efforts of the public in reporting such incidents. It shows that we are starting to work together as a nation in protecting our wildlife and combating poaching," he said.

He said the ministry took cases of illegal possession of prohibited wildlife products seriously and would increase its efforts in combating poaching and related activities.

"This should serve as a warning to poachers that our officials and other relevant authorities are on the ground to eliminate the threat of poaching and other wildlife related activities," he said.

The latest arrests come just six days after two Chinese nationals were arrested with two rhino horns at the Berhoff Flats in Windhoek's Eros suburb.

The Chinese nationals appeared in the Windhoek Magistrate's Court on Monday.