

Five suspected poachers arrested in Zambezi

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by Lugeretzia Kooper



THE police in the Zambezi region have arrested four Namibians and one Zambian suspect after they were allegedly found in possession of four elephant tusks on Friday.

The tusks were hidden at a house in the Choto compound at Katima Mulilo, and are believed to have been poached from elephants in the Chobe National Park in neighbouring Botswana.

Zambezi regional crime investigations coordinator, deputy commissioner John Nyanya, said during a media briefing over the weekend that the police were tipped off by a law-abiding citizen on Thursday.

He said the four Namibians, aged 34, 39, 49 and 32, along with one Zambian, aged 28, are facing charges of being in illegal possession of controlled game products and dealing in controlled game products.

The alleged poachers are expected to appear in the Katima Mulilo Magistrate's Court today.

"We got information that on Thursday, the suspects were making their way to Namibia with the elephant tusks from the Chobe National Park in Botswana, so we started our operations. On Friday morning, we received confirmation that the tusks were brought to a house in Choto. So, we went to raid the house, and found the four elephant tusks hidden there," Nyanya explained.

He further noted that when they raided the house, four of the suspects were not at the house, and only a woman, believed to be the owner of the house, was present. She has also been arrested as a suspect. The other suspects had at the time allegedly crossed into Zambia to meet with buyers.

"We then went in pursuit of the [other] suspects, and luckily found them at the Wenela border post as they were returning from Zambia. We promptly arrested them, along with the woman who is the owner of the house where the tusks were hidden," he stated.

Nyanya thanked the public for their assistance in combating crime, and warned those who take part in criminal activities that they will feel the wrath of the law if they get caught.