



16 arrested for wildlife crimes

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POACHED: The poached carcass of a rhino calf was recently discovered on a farm near Gobabis. Photo: CONTRIBUTED

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A total of seven new wildlife crimes were reported recently, while 16 suspects were arrested.

Eleven of the suspects were arrested in connection with rhino poaching and/or trafficking cases, while two others were arrested for elephant poaching and/or trafficking.

This is according to the latest information from the intelligence and investigation unit in the environment ministry and the protected resources division within the safety and security ministry.

Ten wildlife products were seized, which included six rhino horns, two elephant tusks and two giraffe carcasses. Two firearms were also seized with 17 rounds of ammunition, while two vehicles were confiscated.

Elephant tusks, giraffe carcasses

At Rundu, two Namibians, Kundangu Makuse Kandjimi and Mparo Josia Katembo, were arrested on 23 May for being in possession of two elephant tusks. They have been charged with contravening the Controlled Wildlife and Products and Trade Act.

In another case, two Namibians were arrested at Kamanjab on 23 May and two giraffe carcasses were seized.

Hubertus Alfred Kreiner and Daniel Stefanus Malan were charged with contravening the Nature Conservation Ordinance and the failure to endorse a permit with the required information after hunting specially protected game.

Hunting rifle

On 25 May, another Namibian was arrested in Wanaheda for contravening the Arms and Ammunition Act.

Onesmus Nangombe was arrested with a hunting rifle and three rounds of ammunition.

Rhino poaching

The suspects also include the eight people arrested in connection with the poaching of two rhinos on a farm near Gobabis recently.

However, the death of another rhino on the same farm and the discovery of another rhino carcass are being investigated and are believed to be linked to the same poaching syndicate.

The suspects include self-professed prophet of House of Joy Ministries, Pastor Jackson Babi (30), and his co-accused Frizans Dumeni (25). They were arrested on 27 May in Windhoek and two rhino horns, a hunting rifle and 14 rounds of ammunition were seized.

They face charges of possession and/or dealing in rhino horns and possessing a hunting rifle and ammunition without a license.

The matter has been postponed to 24 July for further investigations.

Hunting protected game

Babi also faces a charge of hunting specially protected game and will appear in the Gobabis Magistrate's Court on 8 June.

Four of the eight suspects have already appeared in the Otjiwarongo regional court.

The suspects were arrested at Otjiwarongo after allegedly trying to sell two rhino horns to an undercover police officer. They are Enos Utoni, Onesmus Haufiku, Vaaruka Musutua and Nashivela Elias. They were found in possession of two rhino horns and a vehicle was also seized.

They have been charged with contravening the Controlled Wildlife and Products Trade Act and possession and dealing in controlled wildlife products.

Two other suspects, believed to be poachers, were arrested and charged on 27 May. Joseph Matheus and Alberto Mbwale appeared in the Gobabis Magistrate's Court last Monday on charges of hunting specially protected game and money laundering. The case has been postponed to 15 September for further investigations. They are remanded in custody.

More rhino horns

In another incident, three Namibians were arrested on 29 May at Tsumeb and two rhino horns and a vehicle were seized. Sakaria Mekondjo Manasse, Augustinus Jonas and Limbu Lemens Maseka were charged with contravening the Controlled Wildlife Products and Trade Act, the Riotous Assemblies Act, as well as the Prevention of Organised Crime Act.

