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Bailers are denied bail

Prophet Babi and co-accused part of a larger poaching syndicate

Shortly before the sensational "Prophet Babi" and the co-accused Dumeni are brought before the judge, new cases of poaching are known, in which Babi is also said to be involved. The deposit is refused and on Monday he has to go to the Kadi again.



Pastor Jackson Babi, revered by his followers as a prophet, in court yesterday. Photo: Marc Springer



This young bull is also said to have been the victim of poachers. Photo: private

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By Francoise Steynberg & Frank Steffen, Windhoek

A total of eleven suspects were arrested, according to the weekly report on wildlife crime related to rhino poaching and nose horn smuggling. Yesterday morning, a farmer reported that two other white rhinoceros carcasses had been found on a farm in the Gobabis district. This happened shortly before the alleged rhino poachers Pastor Jackson Babi (30) and 25-year-old Frizans Dumeni were brought before the judge Linus Samunzela in Windhoek.

According to the farmer, a rhinoceros cow had been injured by poachers two months ago, but did not survive until it died on Monday. Veterinarian Dr. Kallie Nel had previously tried to save the cow by putting a drip on it. "The carcass of her six-year-old bull calf was discovered last Saturday and his horns removed," reports the farmer. The young bull was the first rhinoceros calf to be born on the farm. "The cow had a two and a half year old heel that was looking for her mother like a madwoman. Fortunately, she was already weaned and is now running with another rhinoceros. "

The commander of the police special unit Blue Rhino Task Team, Commissioner Barry de Klerk, carried out investigations on site yesterday. A cartridge is said to have been removed from the cow's carcass. "It is believed that it is the syndicate of eight suspects who were arrested last week. The caliber of the hunting weapon is identical to what the two previous rhinos were shot on a farm in the Gobabis district," said the farmer. Actually the gun is too small to shoot a rhinoceros on the spot.

Babi and Dumeni's bail request took a turn yesterday when prosecutor Rowan van Wyk announced that Babi would also be brought before the magistrate judge in Gobabis next Monday for rhino poaching. Meanwhile, the investigation would continue and the state was waiting for statements and the results of the DNA and ballistics analysis. Samunzela rejected the bail request and postponed the case to July 24.

Babi and Dumeni are accused of poaching rhino, smuggling horns and illegally possessing nasal horns and illegally possessing a firearm with ammunition. They are part of the six suspects who were arrested in Windhoek and Otjiwarongo last week (AZ reported). Two nose horns and a hunting rifle with ammunition were apparently found in Babi's house.