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An attempt by the defence of self-proclaimed prophet and founder of the House of Joy Ministries Jackson Babi to have his case provisionally withdrawn, fell flat when the court denied the request. Babi's lawyer Mbanga Siyomunji requested that his client's case be provisionally withdrawn and consequently have Babi released from custody while the State waits for the prosecutor general to pronounce herself in the matter.

"The State has failed to inform the court that they failed twice to provide the decision. Now, two months later, the decision is still not available," said Siyomunji. He added the State should put into account that the accused is entitled to a speedy trial.

Prosecutor Sylvia Kauluma informed the court the police have not finalised their investigations into two more criminal cases Babi is facing in Windhoek and Gobabis. Kauluma explained the prosecutor general has instructed the three cases to be joined so she may give a joint answer.

Furthermore, she said it is best Babi be tried once for all the cases, as they are closely related. Thus, it would be prudent for the court to grant another postponement to allow the prosecutor general to make a decision.

Having heard the arguments, magistrate Samunzala Samunzala granted the State's request for a further postponement, making it a final remand. "The delay occasioned in having the decision is not unreasonable and not a delay tactic by the State, but it is in the interest of justice to allow the prosecutor general to make a joint decision," said Samunzala.

He then postponed the case to 4 October, remanding Babi in police custody. For his first case, Babi is charged alongside Frizans Naululu Dumeni for possession of two rhino horns, a firearm and ammunition without a licence.

Both men have since denied any wrongdoing when they tendered a no guilty plea during their preliminary plea on 3 March.

They were arrested in May 2020 and form part of the group which was found in possession of rhino horns. According to police reports at the time, the group of eight men includes a police officer from the VIP protection directorate.

They stand accused of possessing or dealing in two rhino horns, hunting a rhinoceros that is protected by law and possessing a hunting rifle and ammunition without a licence.

The prosecution claims Babi and Dumeni were in possession or dealt in two rhino horns at Babi's residence in Kleine Kuppe in Windhoek on 26 and 27 May 2020.

The alleged discovery of the horns, firearm and bullets also led to his arrest and that of his co-accused Dumeni and two other suspects (Alberto Mbware and Joseph Matheus).

It is alleged the horns are linked to the poaching of two rhinos found dead and with their horns removed in the area of Gobabis in May. According to court records, Babi has a second case in the Gobabis Magistrate's Court, where he faces charges of illegal hunting of specially protected game in the Gobabis district alongside Mbware and Matheus.

For his third case, Babi is facing bribery charges. It is alleged while in police custody, he attempted to bribe the investigating officer – offering him N\$13 000 for his release.

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