

SIGNIFICANT ARRESTS OF WILDLIFE CRIME PERPETRATORS CONTINUES

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The latest wildlife crime statistics indicate that four rhinos and one elephant have been poached to date, as law enforcement operations continue to bag perpetrators, an official said this week.

From the beginning of June, law enforcement agencies have made significant arrests of wildlife criminals involving products of high valued species across the country, the Ministry of Environment spokesperson, Romeo Muyunda said in an update.

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Muyunda said a suspect was arrested on 2 June after being found in possession of two elephant tusks without a permit, while in another incident, a police operation on 4 June, conducted at Amarika Village in the Omusati region, found three suspects in possession of a 303 hunting rifle with 20 rounds of ammunition. All three were arrested.

“On 6 June, two suspects were arrested for being in possession of two elephant tusks and one live pangolin without a permit at Kangumbe Communal Farm in the Kavango East region, while a suspect was arrested in Windhoek on the same day for being in possession of a giraffe skin which he presented and offered for sale without a permit,” he added.

According to Muyunda, the four rhinos were white rhinos, poached on private farms while the elephant was poached in a conservancy in the Otjozondjupa region.

“These figures show a significant decline in poaching of rhinos and elephants. This is mainly due to the collaborative effort of stakeholders against wildlife crime,” he said, adding that four suspects including one police officer and a soldier were arrested on 6 June.

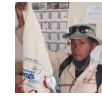
Meanwhile, the ministry has condemned the involvement of law enforcement officers in wildlife crimes.

“However, we wish to acknowledge the continued support and involvement of the Namibian Police and the Defense Force in fighting wildlife crime in general and in particular for apprehending the suspects and prevention of illegal killing of our wild animals especially rhinos, elephants and pangolins,” said Muyunda.



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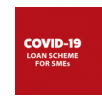
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