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## Doctor accused of wildlife crime gets N\$100 000 bail

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by Tileni Mongudhi



Daniel Jordaan

**WINDHOEK doctor Daniel Jordaan, who is accused of illegally possessing leopards, cheetahs and baboons at his farm, was granted bail of N\$100 000 yesterday.**

The state said in court yesterday Jordaan allegedly threatened to kill an official from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism who investigated him.

Jordaan was arrested last week for alleged wildlife crimes.

He appeared in the Okahandja Magistrate's Court yesterday and is expected to reappear on 7 April.

Jordaan was initially denied bail on Friday after the state opposed it to allow "critical investigations".

Court documents show that Jordaan was arraigned because the authorities allegedly discovered he was keeping wild animals illegally on his farm Okaipuro in the Okahandja district.

The authorities allegedly found six leopards, two cheetahs, and two baboons on his farm. The animals have a combined value of N\$1 million, the charge sheet says.

Jordaan now faces seven counts related to the contravention of the Nature Conservation Ordinance pertaining to the illegal hunting of protected game, capturing and keeping game without a licence, transporting game without a licence, illegal hunting, the possession of controlled wildlife products, the illegal capturing of large carnivores, and confining an animal to a place which affords inadequate space.

Magistrate Leonard Mateus granted Jordaan bail on condition that he reports to the nearest Windhoek police station between 06h00 and 08h00 every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

He is also prohibited from going to or near his farm until the case is finalised.

Jordaan is not allowed to leave the Windhoek district without informing the investigating

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officer, and has been ordered to remain at his Ludwigsdorf home in Windhoek for the duration of his bail period.

He is required to surrender all his travelling documents and firearms before 4 February, and is not allowed to interfere with investigations or to contact state witnesses in the case.

Proceedings started with state prosecutor Hilma Mwata requesting that bail be set at N\$300 000.

She argued some of the charges Jordaan was facing could lead to a fine of up to N\$15 million if found guilty.

The particular offence Mwata was referring to appeared as count five on Jordaan's charge sheet, which is the contravention of laws governing the possession of controlled wildlife products.

This charge carries a fine of N\$15 million, or a maximum prison term of 15 years.

Mwata said the bail amount was a sufficient impediment to prevent Jordaan from fleeing.

She believes Jordaan could flee, despite him having to surrender his travel documents, due to a lack of strict controls at the Namibian and Angolan borders.

Mwata said setting such a high bail amount and strict conditions was partly due to allegations that Jordaan threatened to kill environment ministry chief warden Jeremia Amutenya, who was one of the officials responsible for investigating and arresting him.

Jordaan's lawyer, Thomas Andima, told the magistrate the bail amount set was just out of reach for Jordaan, who was struggling financially.

He said his client had mobilised N\$50 000 for bail. Jordaan has two medical practices, in Windhoek and at Swakopmund, Andima said.

According to him, the Swakopmund practice is struggling and depends on Jordaan.

He said Jordaan's monthly expenses amount to over N\$80 000.

"We appreciate the fact that bail should create a sense of security, to deter the accused from avoiding justice, but my client is a doctor and has spent his lifetime in Namibia, and is now 60 years old," said Andima.

He said bail should always be within reach of the accused.

"The amount is exorbitant and amounts to indirect refusal of bail," Andima said.