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## #PASIN: EIGHT ARRESTED OVER EASTER FOR RHINO POACHING

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Eight suspects were arrested over the Easter weekend for rhino poaching-related crimes in two separate incidents.

According to Environment Ministry spokesperson Romeo Muyunda, two suspects were arrested on April 6 on the Tsumeb/Otavi road at a mobile roadblock for illegally entering the Etosha National Park to hunt rhinos.

Two fresh rhino horns were found in their possession and seized by the law enforcement agencies led by the Blue Rhino Task Force.

The suspects – a Namibian man Sakaria Johannes and an Angolan man Tomas Domingos – appeared in court on 11 April and were both refused bail. The case was adjourned until July 7.

According to Muyunda, follow-up investigations in this case led to the discovery of a fresh carcass in Etosha.

He said investigators also found a .375-caliber rifle, a silencer and ammunition.

Two more old carcasses were discovered in Etosha, believed to have been stripped.

"There is currently no indication that connects the two old carcasses with the two suspects," said Muyunda.

In a separate incident on April 7, two suspects were arrested after they were found in possession of some rhino horns in another operation by security forces on the Outjo/Otavi road.

Further investigation led to the arrest of anti-poaching security personnel on a private farm in Outjo district who were believed to have supplied the horns.

The suspects are David Nakare, Makanga Johanness, Matema Thiyemo, Shampampi Ndjunga Kamanya Joseph Kandjimi and a woman, Magdalena Mavandje Mukuve. They are all Namibians.

Investigations in both cases are ongoing.

The ministry is currently conducting an evaluation of rhino poaching incidents for this year and will pass on the latest information next week.