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rhino

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CO-ACCUSED IN KANDJII POACHING CASE GET YEARS BEHIND BARS

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- 21 HOURS AGO - 2023-10-11 00:15:00

The environment ministry has welcomed sentences of at least 13 years in prison each for four rhino poachers.

The sentences were handed down in the Windhoek Regional Court last week.

Former Brave Warriors chiropractor Gerson Kandjii (51) was also involved in the case, but died in custody in 2021.

The arrests stem from an incident in December 2016, when four white rhinos were poached on a private farm in the Gobabis district.

On 22 December 2016, the suspects, allegedly without a hunting permit, killed four white rhinos – two bulls and two pregnant cows – each valued at N\$1.25 million, with a total value of N\$5 million.

The other accused in the matter are Zee Shekumba, who was employed at the farm where the poaching occurred, Erwin Tjiteere, Domingo Justice Moma and David Stephanus.

Strong message

According to the ministry, Magistrate Johannes Shuuvani's ruling shows that the court understands the seriousness of the matter, especially because he did not allow the option of a fine. It will also serve as a strong message that poaching in Namibia has serious consequences, it said.

Spokesperson Romeo Muyunda said the trial concluded on 18 September, while sentencing took place on 4 October.

“The accused faced charges of hunting specially protected game, theft of rhino horns, malicious damage to property and trespassing.”

All four accused were convicted on three out of the four counts, Muyunda said.

They were acquitted on the charge of malicious damage to property.

Sentences

The sentences included 15 years of imprisonment - five of which are suspended - for hunting

specially protected game.

Shekumba, Tjiteere, Moma and Stephanus also received six years, with three suspended, for theft of the rhino horns.

Three of the four accused were sentenced to one year, with six months suspended, for trespassing.

The ministry reiterated its call to members of the public to condemn poaching by reporting suspected incidents to the police or the ministry.

COMMENTS



Namibian Sun 2023-10-1