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Zambian poachers flee as officials confiscate 24 elephant tusks

NATIONAL NEWS

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**Hertta-Maria Amutenja**

In an operation led by Members of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism (MEFT), in collaboration with the Namibian Police (Nampol) and Namibian Defense Force (NDF), 24 elephant tusks were



confiscated during an early morning interception on Friday in the Zambezi region.

Spokesperson of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism, Romeo Muyunda, said the operation targeted a syndicate of Zambian nationals engaging in transnational poaching, utilising the Zambezi region as a transit route for smuggling wildlife products, from Botswana.

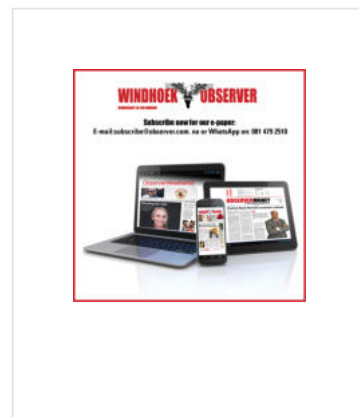
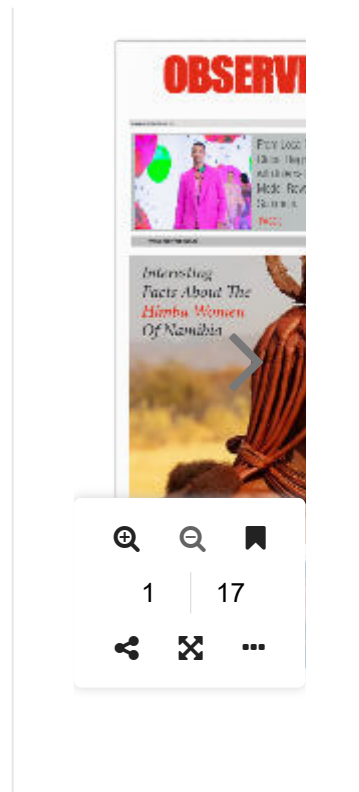
Muyunda said upon intercepting the suspect's vehicle, authorities discovered and seized the illicit items, including 24 elephant tusks, 12 elephant tail bundles, two pots, two butcher knives, one inflatable mattress, and a silver Nissan Latino vehicle.



All seized items were booked as exhibits at Katima Mulilo Police Station.

The intelligence-led mission aimed to disrupt the illegal activities of the poaching syndicate. However, authorities only arrested one suspect, a 37-year-old man, while seven others managed to evade arrest by fleeing the scene.

The arrested suspect is held in connection with the smuggling attempt and is currently detained in the holding cells of Katima Mulilo police station, he is expected to make his first appearance in court today, according to Muyunda.

Muyunda further commended the response of security operatives in arresting the suspects, stating, "The response by our officials and law enforcement is highly commendable. This is most likely the fate of those involved in wildlife crime. We are invested in pursuing perpetrators of wildlife crimes and will leave no stone unturned in our efforts to protect our wildlife."



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