



The carcass of a white rhinoceros bull was found on a farm in the Gobabis district on Sunday. Photos provided (<https://cdn.nmh.com.na:2083/S3Server/republikein/uploads/images/2024/05/07/305087.jpeg>)

POLICE AND CRIME (/POLISIE-EN-MISDAAD)

RHINO POACHERS STRIKE THIRD TIME ON FARM

Five suspects arrested

The investigation is currently at a very sensitive stage, but high-ranking people are believed to be involved in the syndicate.

Francoise Steinberg

1 DAY AGO - 2024-05-08 00:00:00

A carcass of a large white rhinoceros bull was discovered on Sunday morning on a farm in the Gobabis district that has previously lost white rhinos to poachers.

The owner of Walmaine Boerdery, Walter Kinnear, is furious and emotional about the loss of yet another rhino, especially this large breeding bull that was about 12 years old.

The spokesperson of the Namibian police (Nampol), Chief Inspector Elifas Kuwinga, confirmed to NMH yesterday that the rhino was hunted with a firearm and both horns were removed.

According to Kinnear's son and police reservist, also Walter, the investigation is at a very sensitive stage with a high-profile syndicate suspected to be involved.

The rhino is believed to have been poached between Saturday night and Sunday morning, according to Kinnear Jr., after the bull went missing Sunday morning. The carcass was located on the farm with the help of a drone and the other rhinos were luckily all found unharmed.

"The rhino's horns were not cut out, but removed in a professional manner with a razor-sharp, thin, flat knife between the skull and horns. They know what they're doing," Kinnear Jr. said.

They are still waiting for Nampol's forensic unit to come out to the farm.

He praises his four fellow police reservists led by Jan Pienaar, the captain of the reservists in the Omaheke region's crime prevention unit, who have already arrested five suspects.

31° Oranjemund: 10° | 18° Luanda: 25° | 27° Gaborone: 14° | 29° Lubumbashi: 15° | 28° Mbabane: 14° | 30° Maseru: 11° | 26° Antananarivo: 11° | 22° Lilongwe: 16°

"Just on Sunday we walked more than 70 km and cut tracks. The poachers wrapped sponges around their shoes to hide their footprints," Kinnear Jr. said.

"The suspect's vehicle, which was used during the crime, was already located on Sunday evening."

FARMERS DISCOURAGED

This is not the first time the Kinnears have run into rhino poachers.

Just before Christmas in December 2016, a stud bull and a pregnant cow that were in the process of calving were stripped and dehorned. A young bull and an eight-year-old heifer were injured, but the heifer died a month later due to her severe gunshot wounds.

Five suspects, including the former team doctor of the Brave Warriors, dr. Gerson Kandjii, was arrested. Kandjii stood trial on several charges of rhino poaching, as well as in connection with the robbery and murder case of a farm owner from Kalkrand, Reinhard Schmidt, in February 2015.

Kandjii meanwhile died of Covid-related causes in the Gobabis police cells in July 2021.

In October 2020, a rhino calf, only one year old, still drinking from its mother, was poached on the Kinnears' farm. The white rhino calf's horn stump, which was "as long as a little finger", was removed by the poachers.

Kinnear Sr. confirmed that the farm has an anti-poaching unit which is a huge expense amid the scorching drought that is crippling farmers.

"Protecting rhinos has become too expensive. We are still only two farmers in the Gobabis district who have rhinos, the others have sold theirs," he said.

He also lashed out at convicted rhino poacher Jackson Babi who was released from prison three months ago after paying a fine of almost N\$230,000 following the review of his sentence at the end of last year.

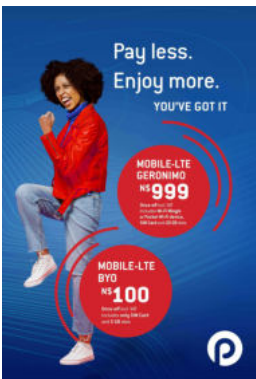
He was arrested for rhino poaching in May 2020 and was sentenced to effectively 10 years in prison, which was reduced late last year.

The preacher pleaded guilty to 11 charges which include illegal hunting, theft, bribery, money laundering and possession of rhino horns.

Meanwhile, no family members of the two suspected rhino poachers who were shot dead by the anti-poaching unit in the west of the Etosha National Park at the weekend have come forward to report missing or identify the bodies, Kuwinga confirmed.

– francoise@nmh.com.na

- Rhino poaching (/search?query=renosterstropery)
- white rhinoceros bull (/search?query=witrenosterbul)
- Walter Kinnear (/search?query=Walter Kinnear)



(https://nmh.my.na/advert/track/

COMMENTARY



Republican 2024-05-09

No comments have been left on this article

PLEASE LOGIN TO COMMENT

➡Click here to register

RELATED ARTICLES