



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

MEDIA RELEASE ON HUMAN ATTACKS BY CROCODILE AND HIPPOS ON THE RIVERS IN THE NORTH EAST REGIONS

On 26 March 2018, a twenty eight (28) year old woman, Mungomba Maria Magdalena, was killed by a crocodile on the Kavango River in the area of Shighuru, Ndonga Linena Constituency in the Kavango East Region while washing clothes in the river. At the time of the attack she had her four month old baby, Kanyemba Paneyambeko, on her back who also died in the process.

In the Zambezi Region, a forty five year old man, Mahoto Mwilima, was attacked and killed by a hippo on the Linyanti River in the Maunga area, Linyanti Constituency while fishing on 25 March 2018.

These unfortunate incidents are worrisome and raise many concerns to us especially the crocodile attacks on people swimming and washing clothes in the river or the floodplains. With the current good rains in certain parts of the country, the river levels are rising and floods are already experienced in some areas. The crocodiles, hippos, snakes and other wetland wild animals are also moving with the water.

I therefore would like to caution all communities living along the rivers and floodplain areas in the north, north west and north eastern regions, and the general public, not to take risks that may result in further losses of human lives.

Furthermore, I would like to urge parents and, traditional and community leaders living along the rivers and floodplains in these regions to warn children swimming or bathing in the rivers that it is dangerous to do so as they put their lives at risk of being caught and killed by the crocodiles and hippos.

We advise that people should collect water from the river and immediately move to the banks where they can conduct their usual activities such as bathing, washing clothes, etc. or do so at their villages and not directly in the river.

Those fishing should be very careful, vigilant and conduct their fishing in the safest manner. Similarly, water should be collected in the safest manner possible.

The Ministry staff members in the regions are under instructions to give information and render services to communities along the rivers and floodplains in order to protect themselves from these animals.

Innovative mechanisms have also been created to reduce the level of human wildlife conflict, and to ensure that benefits of conservation management far outweighs the costs, and to build on the significant successes in managing human wildlife conflict.

Crocodiles and hippos are being offered to communities for conservation hunting through the conservancy programme, so that rural communities can generate income from these animals. In addition, the Ministry is currently investigating possibilities of crocodile farms as concessions to communities that leave with such animals so that they can generate income from the sale of skins and meat.

It is a fact that both humans and wildlife are sharing the same space, but these incidents of human attacks by crocodiles and hippos can be avoided.

On behalf of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, I express my heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the family and friends of those who lost their lives from crocodile and hippo attacks last week and regret the loss of lives for our citizens.



Colgar Sikopo

Director: Wildlife and National Parks

