



**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA  
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND TOURISM**

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**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**PRESS RELEASE**

**(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)**

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**UPDATE ON RECENT RHINO POACHING CASES**

In response to the recent discovery of carcasses of poached Rhinos in ENP, Law Enforcement efforts were intensified and through intelligence – driven operations and investigations, a total of 11 arrests were effected in four different incidents in regions adjacent to the ENP to date.

All the arrests and confiscated items are suspected to be linked to the recent rhino poaching incidents in Etosha National Park. The joint operation confiscated items such as two (2) vehicles, five (5) rifles, ammunition, axes, knives as well as cash close to N\$ 50 000 – 00 found in the possession of the accused persons during their arrests. These items are subject to in-depth investigations to establish positive links with the carcasses discovered in the Etosha National Park.

All the 11 accused persons are remanded in custody and their cases were postponed to, 24/08/2022, 08/08/2022, 03/10/2022 in Ondangwa, Tsumeb and Okahao Magistrates courts, respectively, for further investigations. The suspects are charged with four different rhino poaching related crimes. The suspects are 26 years old Naeman Kangula; Agas Johannes Jafet 19 years old; 33 years old Risto ; 32 years old Matiti Matteus Kauzapo; Elago Natangwe Elago 34 years old; Kiinge Ignatius Kamati 18 years old; Johannes Nelongo Shikongo; Mbayenovantu Katiti, 45 years old; Tjozondunge Murumbua 23 years old; Kazoondou Mutambo 37 years old and 30 years old Jonas Njamba Albina.

There have been new developments in other cases currently on the court roll and been investigated. In August 2018, four suspects were arrested at a traffic checkpoint when three fresh rhino horns and a hunting rifle were found in the vehicle, they were traveling in. This case has now been linked to the two Rhino carcasses that were discovered in ENP also during August that same year. Ballistic and DNA evidence has positively

linked those two cases. The trial for these cases is scheduled for 12- 14 July 2022 at the Otjiwarongo Regional Court.

In another high profile case in May 2020, two Rhino horns were confiscated during a covert operation in Otjiwarongo and another two Rhino horns and a hunting Rifle were seized at a residence of the self-proclaimed Prophet Jackson Babi in the Kleine Kuppe Residential area, as well as the discovery of two fresh Rhino carcasses on a farm in the Omaheke Region. All these three cases were also linked through ballistic, DNA and other technical evidence. These cases were also combined for the purposes of trial and scheduled to be heard on 19 August 2022 in the Gobabis Regional Court.

This is a clear indication that the joint law enforcement operations between the MEFT, NAMPOL, NDF and Intelligence and investigations through the Blue Rhino Task Force is producing results. It is also important to note that for almost all rhino carcasses discovered, there are suspects arrested. This should serve as a caution to would be poachers that they may be successful in killing our rhinos or other wildlife species, but our relentless law enforcement officials will definitely catch them. Furthermore, we want to caution that the law was amended to increase penalties for poaching of rhinos. Namibia has increased fines for poaching to N\$ 25,000,000 from N\$ 200,000 and prison sentences have risen to 25 years from 20 years.

The joint operation also continues to effect pre-emptive arrests of suspects before they get to poach. Recently, two suspects were apprehended with .303 rifle, 11 rounds of live ammunition, silencer, axe and knife among other things. The suspects intended to enter the ENP to poach a rhino; however, they were caught before they could enter the park and better yet before they could kill a rhino.

We once again, assure members of the public that our law enforcement operatives are on the ground, in all our national parks and conservation areas to ensure that our wildlife are protected and that what happened in Etosha does not happen again.

Issued by

**Romeo Muyunda**  
**MEFT Spokesperson**

