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Kenya: Age Question Delays Sentencing of Dikdik Poachers

The Nation (Nairobi) (<http://www.nation.co.ke/>)

30 JUNE 2021

By Lucy Mkanyika

Three people accused of poaching 187 dikdiks will spend another week in remand in Voi, Taita Taveta County, after the court pushed their sentencing to July 5.

Voi Principal Magistrate Cecilia Kithinji ordered that the suspects be detained for one more week.

The accused - Kaviha Charo, Katana Unda and Bugo Suluhu - pleaded guilty to three charges related to poaching wildlife on June 21.

They were arrested with the animals in Akales, Galana Ranch, in Tsavo East, Kilifi County.

On Wednesday, prosecutor Lilian Moke asked the court to give them more time to obtain Suluhu's birth certificate and his school report.

She said the age assessment conducted at Moi County Referral Hospital in Voi established that the accused is 23 years old though his parents insisted he is 16 years.

"The parents have promised to bring the birth certificate. We are also waiting for a letter from his school to confirm that he is indeed a student," she said.

Last week the magistrate ordered prosecutors to establish Suluhu's actual age after he claimed to be a minor.

On Wednesday, the magistrate said the court was also waiting for a report from the probation department before sentencing the trio.

"We will wait to establish the factual age of the third accused person before giving the sentence," she said.

Suluhu will remain at the Voi Police Station cells while his two accomplices will be held at Manyani Maximum Security Prison.

The three were charged with dealing with the carcass of wild animals, being in possession of wildlife trophies and conveying hunting apparatus in a protected area.

They were found with game meat weighing 596kg. The wildlife trophies - 25 roasted heads of dikdiks, 187 dikdik carcasses, two gerenuk and three kori bustard bird carcasses - were found being ferried on five motorcycles.

The suspects were also found with hunting materials, including 10 hunting sirens, five machetes, 14 torches, assorted batteries and clothing.

Read the **original article** (<https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/taita-taveta/age-question-delays-sentencing-of-dikdik-poachers-3456590>) on **Nation** (<http://www.nation.co.ke/>).

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