

Kenya: Three Suspected Poachers Plead Guilty Over Dik Dik Game Meat Seizure

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By Lucy Mkanyika

Three suspected poachers arrested with 187 dik-diks in Tsavo East were on Monday charged at the Voi Law Court.

The suspects were arrested with the trophies on Saturday at Akales area in Galana Ranch within Kilifi County.

Kaviha Charo, Katana Unda, Bugo Suluhu, were arraigned before Principal Magistrate Cecilia Kithinji and pleaded guilty to three charges of dealing with carcass of wildlife species, being in possession of wildlife trophies and conveying hunting apparatus in a protected area.

The suspects were found in possession of game meat weighing 596 kilograms.

According to the first charge, the three were accused of dealing with carcasses of wildlife species contrary to section 96 (1) as read with section 105 of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act 2013.

"You are charged that on June 19, between 7am and 9am at Akales in Galana Ranch within Kilifi County with others not before court were found in possession of wildlife trophies namely 25 roasted heads of dikdiks, 187 dikdik carcasses, two gerenuk and three kori bustard birds carcasses weighing 596 kilograms without a permit or any other lawful exception," stated the charges.

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

Magistrate Kithinji ordered for age assessment of Suluhu after he stated that he was a minor.

The two other accused will be remanded in custody at the Manyani Maximum Security Prison awaiting sentencing on 28 June.



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"The third accused person will be escorted to Moi hospital for age assessment. He will be remanded at the Voi police station until the day of sentencing," she said.

She said the court will also consider a probation report of Mr Suluhu if he is found to be below 18 years.

Two other suspects escaped but detectives have launched a manhunt to arrest them.

According to sources at KWS, the suspects are believed to be notorious and deadly poachers who have been involved in the business for years.

Prosecutor Ngina Mutua asked the court to give the accused heavy penalties to serve as a lesson to others.

She said the park has been witnessing increased poaching activities that have endangered the wildlife.

"Wildlife is our heritage and if such activities will continue our wildlife will become extinct. I pray that the court gives them a higher sentence for it to serve a lesson to others," she said.

Read the **original article** (<https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/taita-taveta/three-suspected-poachers-plead-guilty-over-dik-dik-game-meat-seizure-3445816>) on **Nation** (<http://www.nation.co.ke/>).

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