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NEWS

Kenya: Two men found with elephant tusk arrested in Bungoma

🕒 6TH OCT 2021





By Brian Ojamaa, The Nation

Police in Bungoma town over the weekend arrested two men who were found with an elephant tusk.

The two suspects, James Wandili and Moses Crusho, are suspected to be part of a syndicate engaging in poaching and selling wildlife trophies on the black market.

Police said the two were found in possession of elephant tusk weighing 1kg with an estimated street value of Sh100,000. Bungoma South Sub-County Police Commander Benjamin Kimwele told journalists that a team of officers who were on patrol confiscated the illegal cargo in Bungoma town after a tip off from the public.

Mr Kimwele said they are tracking more players in the illegal business said to be operating from Mt Elgon Forest and neighbouring countries of Uganda and DR Congo.

He said that the two men might have killed an elephant in Mt Elgon Forest, adding that they will be arraigned once investigations are done.

Despite a ban on international trade in ivory, African elephants are still being poached in large numbers.



High-Tech Surveillance

As part of efforts to stop the crime, Kenya has started using high-tech surveillance equipment including drones to track poaching gangs and to keep tabs on elephants and rhinos.

Kenya Wildlife Service, working with stakeholders, has put in place mechanisms to eradicate all forms of wildlife crime, particularly poaching.

These mechanisms include enhanced community education, inter-agency collaboration and intensive intelligence-led operations among others.

These efforts have led to zero rhino poaching in Kenya in 2020, the first time in about two decades.

At least 20,000 elephants are killed annually in Africa for their ivory. This translates to 55 elephants being killed daily or one elephant being killed every 26 minutes.

On April 30, 2016, Kenya set ablaze 105 tonnes of elephant ivory and 1.35 tonnes of rhino horn.

President Uhuru Kenyatta led world leaders and conservationists in burning the remains of 6,500 elephants and 450 rhinos killed for their tusks and horns.

Anti-Poaching Laws

Parliament has also passed strict anti-poaching laws and the government has beefed up security in parks to stop poaching, which threatens the vital tourism industry.

Regionally, Kenya has also emerged as a major transit route for ivory destined for Asian markets from eastern and central Africa.

The illegal ivory trade is mostly fuelled by demand in Asia and the Middle East, where elephant tusks and rhino horns are used to make ornaments



and traditional medicine.

<https://nation.africa/kenya/counties/bungoma/police-in-bungoma-arrest-suspected-poachers-3571804>

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