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[HOME](#) > [NATIONAL](#) > Two jailed for possessing live Pangolin in Balaka

## Two jailed for possessing live Pangolin in Balaka

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The Senior Resident Magistrate's Court sitting in Balaka district-Malawi has convicted and sentenced two men to 30 months and 36 months imprisonment with hard labor respectively, for the offense of being found in possession of protected species (Live Pangolin) contrary to Section 86 of the National Park and Wildlife Act.

The convict, Gabriel Chilunga aged 51 has been given a 30-month jail term while Frank Phiri aged 48 has been sentenced to 36 months imprisonment with hard labor.

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The court through state prosecutor Superintendent Bodwin Msukwa heard that the first accused person Gabriel Chilunga on May 4 2023 at Kalambo Village in Balaka district was found in possession of a specimen of listed species (Live Pangolin) valued at K7,000,000.00 without license from the director responsible for National Parks and Wildlife while the second accused person Frank Phiri on May 6 2023 at Matawale Area in Zomba district was arrested for being found in possession of listed species (Live Pangolin) valued at K7,000,000.00, without a license from the director responsible for National Parks and Wildlife.

Appearing before the court, the convicts pleaded not guilty to the charges. This prompted the state to parade four witnesses who proved the case beyond reasonable doubt, leading to their convictions.

In mitigation, the convicts asked the court for leniency, saying they were first offenders.

However, in his submission, state prosecutor Superintendent Msukwa pleaded with the court to meet out a stiff punishment as a warning to other would-be offenders.

Passing sentence, Senior Resident Magistrate Mercy Bonongwe concurred with the state's submission and jailed Gabriel Chilunga to 30 months IHL and Frank Phiri to 36 months IHL.

Meanwhile, Gabriel Chilunga hails from Chikanda Village in Traditional Authority Chikowi while Frank Phiri comes from Mwindano Village in Traditional Authority Mwambo, both from Zomba District.

BALAKA COURT CRIME PANGOLIN

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