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MARC NKWAME

Arusha

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The Guardian

Anti-poaching squad ropes in 27 suspects

PATROL groups of the paramilitary National Anti-Poaching Squad have arrested 27 people on suspicions of being involved in a series of poaching incidents in the past 10 months in the Moyowosi and Uvinza game reserves of Kigoma region.



That averages three arrests per month, with the patrol units working with the Friedkin Conservation Fund (FCF) and warders at the two reserves.

The head of security at FCF, William Mallya said poaching incidents are declining countrywide, but there are racketeers damaging ongoing conservation efforts, urging cooperation between the private sector and public institutions to eradicate poaching and illegal logging.

"We must also appreciate that villagers living close to the game reserves have been quite helpful in reporting cases of illegal hunters, strangers trespassing into reserves and other characters whose presence appeared to have raised eyebrows," he said.

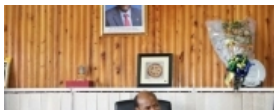
Awareness programs conducted in villages near or around game reserves and other conservation precincts have yielded positive results, such that few loopholes are left for illegal harvesters of natural resources to slip through for outlawed activities, he declared.

While illegal killing of game for food prevailed in the past, the Tanzania Wildlife Management Authority (TAWA) has moved to introduce legalized wild meat shops countrywide, he stated.

TAWA Assistant Commissioner for Conservation, Imani Nkuwi said that already the process of establishing the bush meat outlets is in place, with qualified applicants for permits to distribute bush meat being accepted.


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