



TWO businessmen and a farmer of Lusaka have been taken to court for illegal possession of a live pangolin, one of the most trafficked mammal in the world, valued at over K23, 000.

Pangolin meat is considered a delicacy, while their scales are used in traditional Chinese medicine as they are believed to treat a range of ailments from asthma to rheumatism and arthritis.

The suspects in the case are Isaac Nkhata, 44, of Kamwala South, his fellow businessman Patrick Mwambi, 42, of Kamanga, and Jairos Zulu, 64, a farmer of Mungule area.

They are charged with illegal possession of protected trophy, contrary to section 130(1) of the Zambia Wildlife Act.

Allegations are that on January 13 this year, the trio, had in their possession, a live pangolin, a vehicle registration number ALL3389 and a brown sack.

All the properties in their possession are believed to have been stolen or unlawfully obtained.

The trio pleaded not guilty before Lusaka magistrate Mutinta Mwenya.

During trial, a Department of National Parks and Wildlife narrated how the suspects were arrested in connection with the allegations.

Patrick Mukupa, of Kafue, narrated that the arrest was after the department received information that some people had a pangolin.

“Isaac Nkhata asked for forgiveness, Patrick Mwambi did not say anything while Jairos Zulu also asked for forgiveness,” the officer said.

He said he later charged and arrested the trio in connection with the charge.

In cross examination, Nkhata contended that he has never seen the pangolin in contention from inception.

“Which magistrate saw it?” the accused asked as Mr Mukupa told him that he could not recall the magistrate’s name.

“Do you know that disposal order [for the pangolin] is fake?” Nkhata asked the officer who responded in the negative.

“Where is the pangolin in question?” the accused asked as the officer responded “There is an order of disposal, that’s my evidence”.

“We cannot be talking about a fictitious and imaginable thing,” Nkhata rebutted.

(Mwebantu, Tuesday, 30th January, 2024)

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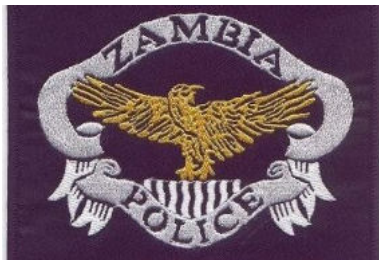


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