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March 13, 2024

University student, accomplice jailed for possessing pangolin scales



Two men from Chipinge who were found in possession of pangolin scales which they were selling for US\$6 000 have been sentenced to an active nine years in jail.

Munashe Maposa (23) and Oswald Chingwara (21) were convicted of possessing pangolin skin after a full trial by Harare magistrate Ms Ruth Moyo.

Their accomplice Vincent Sigauke is still on the run.

Maposa is a university student while his co-accused are unemployed.

Prosecutor Ms Berlinda Chimuka proved that on March 2, at around 6 am, detectives from CID MFFU Harare received information to the effect that there was a male adult who was in possession of a pangolin trophy (skin with scales) and was looking for a buyer.

Detectives went there posing as pangolin trophy buyers and one of them contacted Maposa.

He then invited the purported buyer to meet him at Corner George Silundika Avenue and First Street, Harare.

Detective Assistant Inspector Banhu drove and parked at the agreed place and remained in the car.

The court heard Maposa and his two accomplices came to Danhu's car and entered inside for negotiations.

The two negotiated to sell the pangolin trophy for US\$ 6000, got out of the vehicle and went to the nearby shops to get the pangolin trophy.

They came back, now three in number, with Chingwara holding a suitcase whilst Maposa and Sigauke were following.

Maposa then entered and sat at the front and Chingwara handed over the suitcase to Sigauke who took it into the car.

Chingwara and Sigauke sat at the back.

Banhu asked to see the pangolin trophy and Sigauke opened the blue suitcase and took out a black and yellow overall which had the pangolin trophy in it.

Upon seeing the pangolin trophy, Banhu signalled other detectives to close in.

The court heard the other detectives swirly came and identified themselves as police officers by producing their service identity cards.

The accused persons were asked to produce a permit or licence that authorised them to possess the pangolin trophy but they had none leading to their arrest.

Parks and Wildlife officials were called and confirmed that it was indeed a pangolin trophy valued at US\$5 000 and an assay report was issued.

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