



The two accused (left and centre) are pictured at the court complex.

China duo fined for harvesting wild plants at national park



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KUCHING: Two Chinese nationals were each fined a total of RM14,300 in default nine months' imprisonment by the Sessions Court here yesterday for the illegal collection and possession of wild plants at Santubong National Park.

Judge Iris Awen Jon convicted Shih Kuan-Yu and Sun Dayong on their own guilty pleas to all three charges.

For the first charge, the two were charged under Section 26(c) of the National Parks and Nature Reserves Ordinance 1998 read together with Section 32(a) of the same Ordinance, for taking plants from Santubong National Park without the permission of the Controller of National Parks

and Nature Reserves.

They were each fined RM3,500 in default three months' imprisonment.

For the second charge, they were charged under Section 26(f) of the National Parks and Nature Reserves Ordinance 1998 read together with Section 32(a) of the same Ordinance and Section 38 of the Interpretation Ordinance 2005, for attempting to remove plants from the national park without permission.

They were each fined RM3,800 in default three months' jail.

For the third charge, they were jointly charged under Section 30(2) of the Wild Life Protection Ordinance 1998 for possessing a protected plant belonging to the Orchidaceae species without a licence.

They were each fined RM7,000 in default three months' imprisonment.

The offences took place at about 1.50pm on Sept 3 when a

team of park rangers inspected the two visitors at Santubong National Park on suspicion of collecting wild plants there without permission.

The inspection found two transparent plastic bags containing wild plants inside a black backpack belonging to Sun, and another two bags containing wild plants inside a grey backpack belonging to Shih.

Further examination revealed that one of the bags contained a protected plant from the Orchidaceae species.

Both men failed to produce any documents, licences or permits issued by the Controller of National Parks and Nature Reserves or the Controller of Wild Life in relation to the seized plants.

The prosecution was conducted by prosecuting officers Mohammad Mazidul Mis and Beatrice James, while the two accused were unrepresented.