

Twenty-three men plead not guilty to organised crime charges in Kuching

KUCHING: Twenty-three men charged with alleged involvement in the organised crime group 'Geng 24 Hung-Hung' pleaded not guilty before separate High Court proceedings here on Monday.

Judges Datuk Faridz Gohim Abdullah and Amelati Parnell fixed July 23 for further mention of the cases.

The court also ordered all the accused to be remanded in prison pending the next mention date.

This followed the prosecution's submission that bail was not available to any of the accused under Section 13(1) of the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (SOSMA).

The prosecution also applied for a fresh mention date for the delivery of documents under Section 51A of the Criminal Procedure Code.

The court also allowed the prosecution's application for all the cases to be tried jointly, with the High Court set to preside over the trial to be determined at a later date.

The charge was framed under Section 130V(1) of the Penal Code, which carries a prison sentence of between five and 20 years upon conviction.

According to the charge sheets, the 23 accused are alleged to have participated in organised criminal activities as members of 'Geng 24 Hung-Hung' between



Several of the accused individuals being escorted under heavy police guard to the Kuching Court Complex for the proceedings.

December 2021 and April 20 at an oil palm plantation in Kampung Temaga Cina-Dayak, Sematan.

The men, aged between 19 and 44, were arrested during the police's Ops Pusak Merah conducted between April 19 and 23.

Deputy public prosecutors Shafiq Hasim and Mohammad Mustaffa P. Kunyalam appeared for the prosecution.

The accused were represented

by several counsel, including Datuk Shankar Ram and Ranbir Singh, Ralph Lee, Patrick Voon, Daniel Ling, and Tiong Ing Neng.

Earlier, on May 15, the accused were produced before the Sessions Court, but no plea was recorded as the offence falls within the jurisdiction of the High Court.

Previously, Bukit Aman Criminal Investigation

Department director Datuk M Kumar had said the group was believed to have been active since 2020 and comprised 26 members, all of whom were repeat offenders.

He said police also seized a pump-action shotgun, a quantity of 12-bore ammunition, two Japanese-style swords and two long machetes during Ops Pusak Merah.