

## **Duo fined RM1,500 each for encroaching on Maludam National Park**

**KUCHING:** The Sessions Court in Sri Aman yesterday fined two men RM1,500 each, in default three months' jail, for encroaching on Maludam National Park four years ago.

Judge Intan Nurul Farena Zainal Abidin convicted Sazali Melian and Bujang Ibrahim Amin on their own guilty pleas to a charge under Section 26(a) of the National Parks and Nature Reserves Ordinance, 1998, which is punishable under Section 32 of the same Ordinance.

The Section provides for a fine of up to RM5,000, or imprisonment of up to one year, or both, upon conviction.

They committed the offence at Sungai Daun within the Maludam National Park in Pusa, Sri Aman at 1.45pm on July 25, 2020.

Based on the facts of the case, a team of Sarawak Forestry Corporation (SFC) and General Operations Force (GOF) personnel inspected an area near Sungai Daun when they detected bicycle tracks leading into Maludam National Park.

Further inspection following the bicycle tracks led the team to find Sazali and Bujang with different equipment including chainsaws.

Upon being discovered, the men ran away leaving their belongings behind. The team then raided an address in Kampung Hulu, Pusa, which was stated on a seized driving licence left behind at the national park.

At the village, the team found Sazali and Bujang and arrested them, as well as seized their modified bicycles and chainsaws.

The men also failed to show that they had any valid permission from the controller of National Parks and Nature Reserves to enter Maludam National Park.

Deputy public prosecutor Ronald Felix Hardin and prosecuting officer Willy Chin handled the prosecution.

Neither Sazali nor Bujang had legal representation.

Both men settled their fines.