

MNR resort to smuggling food, drugs

MUTARE — Amid the current drought which is affecting the whole of Southern Africa, Mozambican bandits have now resorted to large-scale smuggling of food, illicit drugs and weapons in connivance with Zimbabwean locals along the eastern border.

In its latest issue of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces magazine the Zimbabwe National Army reports that several border jumpers had been arrested by security forces along the bor-

der areas with various goods such as sugar, salt, clothing and soap.

"Top brass bandit leaders are now engaged in sending their juniors into Zimbabwe in search of food," said the magazine.

According to sources, the bandit leaders order their juniors to cross the border into Zimbabwe pretending to be civilians in search of food.

"They sneak through

secret crossing points into Zimbabwe to exchange bags of mbanje for foodstuff, soap, clothes and money. Some bring firearms in exchange for food and money," says the magazine.

The largest cache of 120 bags of mbanje and a number of axes were recovered after clashes with the bandits at a place which security forces suspected to be a temporary trade base inside Mozambique.

The magazine quotes Lt-Col Sango, commander of the ZNA 61 Infantry Battalion, whose deployment

stretches from Nyamapanda to Kanyemba, as having said that now that MNR bandits had been defeated in combat action by the Zimbabwe defence forces, they resort to smuggling along the border.

"He (Lt-Col Sango) warned the locals who collaborated with bandits in trade deals that the Government would deal ruthlessly with such elements," the magazine says. — Ziana.