

21 students recruited by MNR bandits escape

MAPUTO.

TWENTY-ONE students, recruited last year by the MNR bandits in the central Mozambican city of Beira with the promise of scholarships in the West, have escaped from a Renamo camp.

They handed themselves over to the authorities last week, reports yesterday's edition of the Maputo paper Noticias.

In an interview with Noticias, six of the students complained they had been tortured, and had suffered hunger in the bandit camp in Maringue district, south of the Zambezi River. They said that the MNR appeared to be simply a military organisation, and was "disorganised politically".

Jose Matangue (22) said he was recruited by an MNR agent he named as Muchanga, who owns a carpentry workshop in Beira. Matangue had finished ninth grade, but was unable to secure a placement for further education. Muchanga told Matangue and 18 other students that there were possibilities of study in the United States and France.

The 19 were driven out of Beira, in the belief that they were to take an aircraft to these countries. To their surprise, the car did not go to Beira Airport. Instead, their driver told them they would catch a plane in Zimbabwe. — Ziana-Pana.

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