

Renamo controls biggest area yet

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LONDON. — Renamo guerillas in Mozambique now control the entire lower Zambezi valley and only Zimbabwean troops are keeping open the vital road link between Malawi and Zimbabwe, according to reports published here yesterday.

The rebels have captured key towns along the Malawi border and are now stronger in three central and northern provinces than at any time in the 10-year war against government troops, the independent newspaper said

in a report from Tete.

"Frelimo, while consolidating its hold on the southern provinces of Gaza and Inhambane, has lost effective control of much of the provinces of Zambezia, Tete and Northern Sosala," it reported.

Most of the region's roads have been cut and the district capital of Milange fell to a 20 000-man MNR army on October 8. On September 23 a force of several hundred guerillas routed 1 500 government troops from the

district of Mutarara in Tete province, sending 50 000 civilians and at least 1 000 soldiers fleeing into Malawi.

The report quoted a witness as saying: "They ran. The Frelimo soldiers just disappeared."

The report said 600 Zimbabwean troops were keeping open the road link between Blantyre and Harare, which cuts through the Tete province of Mozambique.

It said poor logistics continued to plague the 40 000-man Frelimo army. — Sapa