

Rebel threat to Machel growing — claim

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Citizen Correspondent

DURBAN — A Natal businessman, who still has fairly extensive interest in Mozambique, says there is no doubt that the Mozambique Resistance Movement (MRM) is now posing a threat to the government of President Samora Machel.

He said that on recent trips to Mozambique it was obvious that the movement was making inroads, particularly in the northern provinces. He said there had been claims and strong ru-

mours, both in Beira and Maputo, that the resistance movement was virtually in control of three provinces in the north.

"Some of the government officials I had contact with substantiated these claims and said that the 'rebels' were continually on the move and were attacking vital installa-

tions."

The businessman said that it was not surprising that the resistance movement was having considerable success. He said the local army was poorly fed, badly trained and appeared to be "an undisciplined lot"

He said the local population, particularly in ru-

ral areas, appeared to be apathetic about the Machel regime and were openly assisting the resistance fighters in the north.

He also commented on the fact that Pres. Machel was very rarely in public in Maputo. When he did make an appearance, he was always heavily guarded.

He said he could not verify claims by the MRM that they had captured Russian technicians last month but was informed in Beira that bridges and roads were being blown up almost weekly.

It appeared that Mozambique's Foreign Minister Mr. E. Chissano, was the strong man in the regime. He was seen repeatedly in public and also broadcast frequently on the local radio service.

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