

MNR massacres 211 in Mozambique

4.31.10.87

TANINGA (Mozambique).

SOUTH AFRICAN backed MNR bandits massacred at least 211 people when they attacked a convoy of vehicles on the main north-south road on Thursday afternoon.

The attack took place at around 2 pm, 12 km north of the small town of Palmeira, and 80 km north of Maputo. Known as Tanninga, this is the same area where bandits ambushed a convoy on October 16 and massacred 53 people.

Thursday's convoy was travelling from Maputo to the provinces of Gaza and Inhambane.

Military sources at the site of the ambush yesterday said that the death toll could rise. The number of 211 dead "is the

number of bodies we managed to collect today", said one soldier. "There are many bodies scattered in the bush."

The wounded were evacuated to hospitals at Manhica, Xinavane and Maputo.

A survivor of the massacre, Rosa Jose (80), said: "I don't know how it happened, I was travelling in my uncle's car. Suddenly I heard shooting from all directions. I managed to escape with my three children, but I don't know where my uncle is."

The bandits destroyed a total of 80 vehicles, including trucks and buses full of passengers.

When journalists arrived at Tanninga yesterday afternoon, they found vehicles spread out over

about 4 km of road. Smoke and flames continued to rise from some of the vehicles. Inside, burnt-out bodies and the remains of passengers who had been burnt alive could be seen.

Beside a ruined bus of the private transport company "Oliveiras" lay two bodies. Although these had been burnt, it was possible to see that this was not the cause of death, and that these victims' stomachs had been ripped open with a sharp object.

After the journalists' visit to Tanninga, the helicopter that carried them flew low over the massacre site. Bodies could be seen scattered around over a radius of about 500 metres from the vehicles. — ZIANA-AIM.