

REBELS KILL 22 IN TRAIN AMBUSH

Sowetan 4.1.88

MAPUTO — At least 22 people were killed and 71 injured when right-wing guerillas ambushed a train with a land mine near the country's western border, the national news agency *Aim* reported at the weekend.

About 1500 people were aboard the train on Thursday afternoon when it hit the land mine placed by the Mozambican National Resistance (Renamo), *Aim* reported.

The train was headed east toward the capital of Maputo when the attack occurred, about 40 km east of Mozambique's border with South Africa, the news agency said.

Many of the passengers were Mozambicans who had been working in South Africa, *Aim* added.

Five railway trucks were derailed and a

71 are injured after bomb blast

section of the track was destroyed, *Aim* said. Guerillas looted the train and abducted several passengers, but most managed to escape into the bush, the report said.

Rescuers did not arrive for several hours and some of the injured were not removed from the wreckage until Friday, the report added.

The injured were taken to a hospital in Maputo, where 11 remain in critical condition, *Aim* said.

In Lisbon, Portugal, a rebel spokesman said it was highly likely that the

ambush was carried out by Renamo, but added that he had not yet received any confirmation from rebel sources in Mozambique.

"It is a key aim of our military strategy to cut off Maputo as much as possible from the rest of the country," the spokesman, who asked not to be named, told the *Associated Press*.

Renamo has been fighting a 10-year-old hit-and-run insurgency in a bid to overthrow Mozambique's marxist government.

The government has accused the rebels of several large-scale attacks on civilian targets in recent months in which more than 900 people have been reported killed. The government said the rebels on Wednesday opened fire on a bus carrying civilians, killing three and wounding 14.