

# 'Alarming number' of MNR bandits held — Mahachi

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## Herald Reporter

ZIMBABWE is holding a large number of MNR bandits following arrests after contacts with the security forces, the Minister of Home Affairs, Cde Moven Mahachi, said in Harare yesterday.

Some of the South African-sponsored bandits had been flushed out from refugee camps or caught at road blocks. "The number is alarming and we cannot give the figure at the moment since we are still soliciting more information from them," Cde Mahachi told *The Herald*.

The bandits would be handed over to the Mozambican authorities after they had been interrogated. Besides the MNR bandits, car thieves and drug smugglers had been netted at road blocks.

"As a result of these many exercises the graph scoring successes is high, confirming that MNR bandits continue to suffer devastating blows," the minister said.

The security forces continued to enjoy the upper hand because more and more MNR bandits were being accounted for daily. The success of the security forces was due to the co-operation they received from the public.

Cde Mahachi said from the information obtained from the captured MNR bandits, it was evident that they had some Zimbabwean sympathisers. "I confirm this because they have inside information which, to us, shows they have contacts within the country."

On the general security situation in the country, Cde Mahachi said there had been no better time that the people had enjoyed peace after independence than at the moment. The problem of MNR bandits would be overcome soon.

He urged all Zimbabweans to continue to be vigilant because of the threat posed by racist South Africa. The Pretoria regime would remain a real threat until Namibia and

South Africa were free.

The minister said there had been a general rise in crime following the Presidential amnesty and a number of habitual criminals had already been sent back to jail. In future habitual criminals would not benefit from the amnesty.

Cde Mahachi said that two former dissidents had been beaten up by the people for allegedly trying to rape women. On the whole, however, the amnesty had been a success.

There had been a decline in crime in and around Harare following police raids on prostitutes. The exercise had been a great success because, besides prostitutes, it netted car thieves and pickpockets.

Cde Mahachi said out of 222 people arrested by police in the raids, only four had not admitted to being prostitutes. Both women and men had been rounded up in the police blitz.