

'Fierce' Battle Forces MNR To Flee Malanga
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[Text] In a 27-hour battle beginning early in the morning of 18 September, the Mozambican Armed Forces forced a group of more than 300 bandits to flee in disarray. The fighting was fierce, resulting in heavy losses among the criminals. By the time our correspondent had left Malanga, the main town in Niassa Province's Majune District, he had seen 15 dead bandits, including 2 ringleaders. Of these, one was a sectorial commander, according to his bodyguard, who was wounded and captured by the Mozambican Armed Forces. Our forces also captured an assortment of war materiel from the enemy, notably two heavy submachine guns, nine light AKM-47 rifles [as heard], one bazooka, two pistols belonging to the dead ringleaders, two 81-mm mortar shells, and a rocket for a B-10 weapon. According to a source in the Niassa Provincial Command, the number of human and material losses among the bandits may rise, seeing that our forces were still conducting search and destroy operations in the jungle.

Meanwhile, the captured bandit told our correspondent that he had operated in various districts of Niassa Province over the last 4 years, namely Majune, (Mpepe), Metarica, Mahua, Marrupa, Mavago, Mecula, Mandimba, (Ngauma) and Lichinga. Before this attack on the main town in Majune District, the armed bandits had raided Lugenda and Luambala hamlets, on the banks of the rivers by the same names, where they abducted local residents after looting their possessions and products.

This was the second major bandit attack against the main town in Majune District. The first attack, which occurred on 30 April last year, resulted in the razing of nearly all social and economic infrastructures. These scars, which were far from healed, have now been reopened. The people of Malanga and elsewhere are bitter. Their abodes were burned after being looted by the armed bandits. The people's food warehouses, containing some (?corn) and dry manioc, suffered the same fate. The bandits also raided two makeshift warehouses and one health center, looting their goods and medicines.