

Secondary school targeted

M10 News Review (142) 1/12/88

A group of about 300 bandits of the South African backed MNR killed at least 22 people in an attack, on 19 November, against the Alvor Secondary School 75 kilometres north of Maputo, 1.5 kilometres outside the town of Manhhiça. In the attack four other people were wounded seriously enough to be hospitalised in Maputo, and an unknown number of people were abducted.

According to one of the survivors, 35-year-old Celeste Chirindza, there were a large number of people concentrated at the school from other parts of Manhhiça district. They came there because they believed that the presence of a police post made the place relatively safe. "People sleep the night at the school, and then go back to their homes in the morning," explained Ms Chirindza.

She said that the MNR group was mainly composed of young boys whose age she reckoned at 14 or 15. Kidnapping and press-ganging children into the bandit ranks is a well-established method of recruitment for the MNR. Ms Chirindza said the bandits used rifles and bazookas in the attack. It did not last long, nor did the MNR manage to burn the school buildings down, since a Mozambican military unit arrived speedily on the scene.

from AIM - 25/11/88