

MNR bandits kill 5 Zambian children for making 'too much noise'

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Herald Reporter

FIVE weeping Zambian children aged between two and 14 were recently hacked to death with machettes by the Mozambique National Resistance bandits for "making too much noise".

According to the Southern African Research and Documentation Centre's desatlabilitation update, these children were among 13 victims abducted by nine MNR bandits on November 11 from Mphwalo village in Petauke, Zambia.

Only one of the victims managed to escape without injury. Five more, including a boy and girl aged three were killed later followed by two women who were wounded.

Five weeks previously, 19 Zambians were killed in MNR cross-border attacks. Nine others were wounded, a vehicle burned, cattled rustled, shops looted and the sparse possessions of poor villagers stolen.

Zimbabwe recorded 33 MNR attacks across the eastern border between September and October in which 43 people were killed, two of them policemen, a tourist and the rest villagers. A further 41 were wounded, 24 abducted of whom 11 escaped and the rest presumed dead.

Zimbabwe's communications and fuel lines to the port of Beira have also come under continued attack. Seven attempts to sabotage the oil pipeline were made in October and November bringing the country's petrol, diesel and jet fuel losses to almost 2 million litres in 1989.

It is costing Zimbabwe an estimated \$1 million daily to keep its 8 000 to 10 000 troops in Mozambique, the report said.

On November 4, a bomb exploded at the home of a Botswana citizen in Gaborone's Broadhurst suburb slightly damaging houses and extensively damaging one. No one was injured.

"The gravest costs have been, and continue to be, incurred by Angola and Mozambique. The war-related death toll in the Frontline States, largely in those two countries, is estimated at \$15 000 per month — some \$180 000 per year," the report said.

On November 28, 10 bandits looted Chikwavaire village in Ngorima, Manicaland, abducting two villagers. The two managed to escape before crossing the border into Mozambique.

Four days earlier, a large group of bandits looted Lambton compound in Penhalonga where they planted four anti-personnel mines, one of which injured a local woman who lost her left leg.

Between May 1 and August 31 the Mozambican army killed 352 bandits in Nampula province, 21 MNR collaborators, captured 19 camps and bases and released 500 people.

In Zambesia province between August 24 and 31, the Mozambican army killed 59 bandits released 720 people and recovered military equipment.

During August a total of 116 people were killed in Mozambique and 56 injured. Zambia reported two deaths and two injuries while Botswana reported 10 injuries.

In Angola 42 people were killed and 46 injured in attacks by Unita bandits in the month of August.

Between June and July Mozambique reported 93 deaths and 124 injuries, Zambia reported 31 deaths and nine injuries, Angola 43 Unita related deaths nine injuries, Zimbabwe 34 deaths and seven injuries while Botswana reported one injury.

On November 17, provincial governor Cde Cadmiel Muthemba said that the military situation in Tete had improved substantially over the previous 18 months with the recapture of six district capitals which had been in MNR hands.

Since January 1989 MNR had attacked 19 villages in the province destroying 2 500 homes and closing 13 primary school and seven health posts.

The International Committee of the Red Cross was in touch with MNR spokesmen to clarify a threatening statement made to a United States radio station that MNR had "ceased guaranteeing the security" of ICRC personnel.