

Route to Malawi via Zambia expensive: Haulers

H

24/1/91

ZIMBABWEAN long-haul transporters plying the Malawi route now have to send their trucks through Zambia, because of the deteriorating security in Mozambique, which has stopped regular traffic from Zimbabwe using the Tete route.

Several Harare-based transporters said on Tuesday that it was no longer safe for their trucks to use the Nyamapanda-Tete to Zobe route, following the withdrawal from the area of Zimbabwean troops who used to protect convoys travelling on the route. The Zimbabwean soldiers were withdrawn as a result of a partial ceasefire reached between MNR bandits and the Mozambican government.

MNR bandits took advantage of the Zimbabwean troop withdrawal to mount attacks on traffic using the route to Malawi through Tete. Traffic from Zimbabwe came to a halt on this route after a recent bandit attack on a convoy travelling along it, in which several drivers were killed.

A spokesman for one of the major hauliers, Cargo Carriers, said the diversion through Zambia had resulted in a 60 to 70 per cent increase in rates to their clients.

He said where it took them two days to Malawi and back to Harare through Mozambique, their trucks were now taking five days.

A spokesman for Coley Hall Transport said the route through Lusaka now meant an extra 2 000 km that had to be covered by their trucks, instead of the 1 200 km that it took through Mozambique. — Ziana.