

State urged to build bunkers for protection against MNR

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RUSHINGA.

THE Government should incorporate underground bunkers into houses built for villagers living along Zimbabwe's eastern border with Mozambique to protect them from MNR bandits, Minister of Home Affairs Cde Moven Mahachi said during the weekend.

Addressing about 400 people at Chomutukutu, about 40 km from Rushinga, Cde Mahachi urged the men of the area to keep knives and spears or any other weapon in their homes to protect their families from the bandits who have killed scores of

Zimbabweans in cross-border raids.

"Let's be men who can protect ourselves. Our professionals, like the soldiers, must come as a last resort," he said.

He said the men should not just run away to protected villages when the bandits invade their villages, but should make a stand to protect themselves and their families.

"Development ministries must take the opportunity of expanding our housing programme along the border areas to take security into account. The villages and houses must be built with security in mind by building bunkers in our residential areas.

"The border is always

going to be there, so will be the security threat. The army and police will come as reinforcement, but basic security measures must be taken," he said.

As a short-term measure, he said, policemen and soldiers had been deployed to the area to protect the villagers from MNR attacks which have left many huts and fields deserted.

Some villagers, however, said that the soldiers deployed to the villages were "in transit" to Mozambique so did not stay long enough to protect them from the bandits.

They said they wanted the Government to deploy more policemen who would be permanently

based around the villages.

On this, Cde Mahachi said the army was based there to protect the villages, but in the long term, "we need security and villagisation which can be sustained".

Cde Mahachi said the Zanu (PF) Government could "not afford" multi-parties in the border areas as this would create confusion among people and further threaten security.

"We get confusion with certain political parties aligning themselves with the bandits. For our security, it is important for us to be united," he said.

He could not be drawn into naming any political party. — Ziana.