

# Truckers back on hazardous Tete route

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**Herald Reporter  
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## **NYAMAPANDA.**

**SOME haulage trucks have begun using the Nyamapanda to Malawi route again only a month after seven drivers were killed in an ambush by MNR bandits there.**

Seven trucks, belonging to Wheels of Africa transport company, went through the border post here last Tuesday, safely reaching their destination the same day in what freight handlers here described as a daredevil operation.

Radio signals from Zobue town on the border between Mozambique and Malawi confirmed on Wednesday that another seven loaded trucks were coming through Mozambique to Zimbabwe.

At least four of the trucks had arrived safely by late Wednesday afternoon.

Since the ambush in early January, haulage trucks carrying mainly Malawi imports from South Africa had been going through Zambia, a route that is as long as it is expensive in terms of fuel costs.

It takes just over four hours to reach Malawi from Nyamapanda by road.

The break in the flow of traffic on this route was the first in nearly 10 years. Zimbabwean troops had been providing convoy protection against attacks by MNR bandits on what had become landlocked Malawi's "lifeline".

However, the convoys were withdrawn under the terms of a partial ceasefire agreement signed between the Mozambican government and the MNR

bandits as part of efforts to end the civil war.

Zimbabwean and Mozambican drivers interviewed here while waiting to go on the route expressed fear and apprehension.

"I don't know. This could be dangerous," said a driver from the Wheels of Africa transport company, who declined to be named. He said his employer had personally led his drivers on the hazardous journey.

However, one driver, who returned on the same route, said the route was safe enough for transporters to begin using it. He said he suspected it was not the MNR who attacked the trucks in January, but "some criminal elements".

Mozambican drivers, however, will not dare go it alone when bringing supplies to the Mozambican town of Tete on the Malawi route.

To reach the town from Maputo or Beira, they drive through the Beira Corridor, which is being protected by Zimbabwean troops, pass through Mutare, Harare and then back to Mozambique through Nyamapanda.

The Mozambican armed forces have begun providing armed escorts for the trucks to Tete, but observers say the escorts, lacking armoured personnel carriers, do not offer sufficient protection in the event of an ambush.

Sources in Nyamapanda say the Mozambican army may soon introduce armoured personnel carriers on the route up to the border with Malawi. Should that happen, observers say, more transport companies may return to it.