

Mozambican mutineers halt SA trains to Maputo

The Argus Foreign Service

JOHANNESBURG. — All trains between South Africa and Maputo have been suspended after mutinous soldiers seized and looted a Spoornet goods train at Matola station near the Mozambican capital.

The passenger trains that normally run three times a week to Maputo will turn round at Komatipoort until further notice, Spoornet said today.

No goods trains would run to Maputo until the Mozambican railway authorities gave the all-clear.

Normally three or four goods trains travel daily to Maputo, carrying a total of 7 000 tons of freight.

The hold-up is expected to be a severe setback to South African efforts to divert more traf-

fic through Maputo under the programme of economic assistance to Mozambique.

The goods train seized at Matola, about 25km west of Maputo, was held for several hours on Wednesday by the mutineers, who looted much of its cargo of South African citrus fruit before allowing it to proceed.

The hijacking is the latest in a series of mutinous actions by Mozambican soldiers angered by delays in demobilising them under the peace process. Some of the troops are also complaining that they have not been paid and are being poorly fed.

All traffic on Mozambique's main north-south highway was halted when troops blocked the road at Machafutene, about 15km from Maputo. The road-block was removed today.

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