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# Maputo gets tough with trade crime <sup>014/i</sup>

From Joseph Hanlon  
in Maputo

The execution of six men in public on Saturday and the floggings in Quelimane of two stevedores for theft reflect the serious decline of law and order in Mozambique.

The Frelimo Government rejected international appeals for clemency, and the weekend executions bring to at least 18 of the number of people put to death so far this year.

Two of those executed by firing squad had killed a 72-year-old baker during an armed robbery. Two others had been members of the anti-Government Mozambique National Resistance and had burned people alive in buses.

The other two had committed economic crimes. Jose Manderero was a train driver who in January this year stopped his train during the night and sold off part of the cargo of sugar. He had been gaoled for an identical crime two years before.

The sixth man was Goolam Naby, a 31-year-old Maputo businessman who had suborned a customs post and smuggled truckloads of prawns, Mozambique's most important earner of foreign exchange.

The death sentence on Naby shocked and frightened the Asian business community here. In the past two years, blackmarketeering has become epidemic. As food has become short, due to the war and

drought, the Government has been under heavy pressure to take stronger measures.

Naby's sentence brought a number of appeals for clemency, particularly from Islamic countries and from the Islamic community in Mozambique. Naby's crime was not a capital offence when he was arrested, and he was executed under a law passed while he was in gaol awaiting trial. He was tried in secret.

Speaking at the public execution on Saturday, the mayor of Maputo, Mr Gaspar Zimba, said that those who asked for clemency were "asking us to accept passively terror, robbery, and blackmarketeering. We reject categorically this macabre attitude." Mr Zimba's speech and the execution were broadcast on the radio.

The Asian community controls more than three-quarters of the wholesale and retail trade in Mozambique. But Frelimo has tried not to make Naby's execution a racial issue. It is unclear how the Asian business community will respond to the execution, but there were strikes by private traders in 1977 and 1978, and such a strike is possible now.

The reintroduction of flogging has produced a cautious reaction. It was one of the most hated forms of colonial punishment. Officials repeatedly say that Frelimo flogging is different from colonial flogging because "it serves the people and not the oppressors."