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MNR bandits making gunpowder from fertiliser

Post Reporter

SOUTH African-backed MNR bandits have resorted to looting fertiliser from locals along the eastern border with Mozambique which they use of make gunpowder. The bandits also use the fertiliser to treat wounds.

According to The Elephant News, a house magazine for 1 Brigade of the Zimbabwe National Army, the bandits mix the fertiliser with other substances to make gunpowder for home-made weapons (mgigwa) which they use to kill elephants, buffaloes and rhinos in their poaching activities.

A company commander with the brigade said fertiliser was also being used in the treatment of wounds as evidenced by the fertiliser found in the medical kit of one of the two killed in April this year.

The magazine says the bandits have formed looting gangs which raid villages along the border.

The bandits, according to the magazine, gave each other tasks designed to get food, clothing and blankets. It quoted villagers as saying the area was "infested" with Mozambican refugees and it was hard to differentiate them from locals. The situation in the area was now back to normal because of intensified patrols along the border by Zimbabwean security forces.

The April/June issue of the magazine says two bandits were killed and several others wounded in Valahala compound in Burma Valley recently. About 17 MNR bandits had infiltrated the area to loot food, fertiliser and other items.

Those killed included the second-in command of the gang "Jongwe" and another unidentified bandit, said Major Josephat Mukaro, a company commander with 12 Infantry Battalion.

Two AK rifles, four magazines, two stick hand-grenades and self-made webbing were recovered at the scene. According to the Major, the remaining bandits were wounded but managed to escape.