

Rebels say new front opened up

LISBON. — Mozambican rebels, extending their six-year insurgency campaign, claimed yesterday to have opened a new front in the northern Nampula province.

A Lisbon-based Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) spokesman, Mr Evo Fernandes, who made the claim after unconfirmed sabotage attacks in the port city of Nacala, said: "We now have units operating in nine of the 10 provinces".

Mr Fernandes claimed:
▶ Saboteurs had exploded bombs at Nacala's central power station on December 19, leaving the country's third largest Indian Ocean port without electricity.
▶ A second bombing at the city's air base on the same day killed at least one para-

trooper and wounded two.

Nacala is the main supply point for all northern Mozambique and is linked to neighbouring landlocked Malawi by rail. The MNR usually attacks transport targets linking central Beira and southern Maputo ports to neighbouring countries, such as Zimbabwe.

Western intelligence sources have backed Mozambican claims that the MNR gets South African training and supplies.

If the Nacala attacks are confirmed, they would indicate the MNR, which claims to have 12 000 armed men, is operational in every province except the extreme north-eastern Cabo Delgado.

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[abridged]*