

MNR deprives 2m of health care

MAPUTO.

AROUND two million people have lost access to health care due to the banditry of the South African backed MNR, according to Dr Inusse Noormahomed, National Director of Manpower in the Mozambican Ministry of Health.

Dr Noormahomed said between 1982 and 1986 the bandits destroyed 211 health posts and health centres, and a further 374 were looted or forced to close.

By the end of 1986 only 17 doctors were working in rural hospitals, largely due to security fears for the large number of foreign personnel employed by the Ministry of Health.

This meant that in rural Mozambique there was only one doctor for 443 000 people, whereas in 1981 the ratio had been one for 160 000 people.

The central province of Zambezia had been worst hit, said Dr Noormahomed. In 1981 13 of Zambezia's 17 districts had doctors, but by late 1986, outside of the provincial capital, Quelimans, there were only doctors in Mocuba and Curue.

Dr Noormahomed said that the number of war-wounded patients entering the country's hospitals had increased from a monthly average of 53 in 1981, to a monthly average of 382 now.

Banditry had also resulted in a sharp rise in infant and child mortality.

Estimates are that in 1985 200 out of every 1 000 children born died before their first birthday. Between 325 and 375 children out of every 1 000 died before they were five years old. — Ziana-Aim.

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