

Zimbabwe: troops kill MNR general in fierce battle (Text) Harare, 14th October: A general of the South Africa-backed MNR bandits, identified as Samuel, and about 50 other bandits were killed recently in a mop-up operation launched by troops of the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) deployed along the border with Mozambique. According to the latest issue of the Zimbabwe defence forces magazine, Brig Paradzai Willings Zimonte, who commanded the operation said four MNR bases in Chicamba, Mapunga and Rwenya River, along the eastern and north-eastern border with Mozambique, were attacked and completely destroyed by ZNA forces. Brig Zimonte told the magazine that the bandit general was killed at Rwenya River base where the longest and probably the fiercest battle of the four was fought. He said it took troops about five hours to break through.

"I think this base was one of the MNR's strongholds and the resistance faced by troops during the fight clearly indicated to me that someone of a superior rank was inside. There was an exchange of heavy fire for about an hour and we discovered that the base was heavily mounted and closely guarded, due to the presence of a general in it", Zimonte said. He said that the recent mop-up operation against the MNR bandits had "drastically" reduced the bandit activities along the border with Mozambique and warned that, should the MNR continue to terrorise Zimbabwean civilians, the forces would be "more than ruthless" on them. He also revealed that the troops, who had penetrated about 40 km inside Mozambique during the attacks, recovered a large quantity of arms and ammunition in the MNR bases. Meanwhile, Brig Zimonte has urged Zimbabweans living along the eastern and north-eastern borders with Mozambique to be vigilant and to report any suspicious people to the security forces. (ZIANA/PANA in English 1325 gmt 14 Oct 89)