

Dlakama narrowly escapes capture

THE PRESIDENT of the Mozambique National Resistance guerrilla movement, Alfonso Dlakama, narrowly escaped being captured by Zimbabwean forces who had stormed one of his bush bases in the district of Gorongosa in Sofala province. Dlakama, who is also the rebels' commander in chief, escaped in a helicopter when the Zimbabweans raided. According to a highly placed Zimbabwean army source, Dlakama had left only five minutes earlier.

The Zimbabwean forces were on an offensive to capture rebel leaders in the area when they bumped into Dlakama at his base. Several rebels were reported to have been killed during the raid. Large quantities of arms and ammunition were also reported to have been captured. The offensive was conducted by troops of One Command Battalion who were deployed in the province. It is understood that when the base was stormed by Zimbabwean troops, Dlakama was being briefed on the

current security situation by his generals.

The base is alleged to have been the home of the MNR special forces known as the "Dragon Battalion", which includes some mercenaries, including soldiers from South Africa's Buffalo Battalion.

Since the capture of their headquarters of Gorongosa by Zimbabwean forces, the insurgents have resorted to hit-and-run attacks. The rebels have also intensified their attacks in Zimbabwe. Once again, their main targets are civilians. Recently, the MNR kidnapped a British born academic visiting the Beira Corridor, attacked a convoy, killed 12 people and mortared a train.

The insurgents also have netted seven members of one family at Kwakwa village in the north eastern part of the country.

MNR supplies, according to Zimbabwe intelligence information, reach Mozambique via Saudi Arabia, Malawi and the Comoros.