

Suspected MNR bandit ^H captured after killing 3 ^{16/11} ¹⁹⁰

**Herald Correspondent
 MUTARE.**

A MAN believed to be a member of a gang of MNR bandits which killed three people in Chipinge has been captured by Zimbabwean security forces.

The man, a Zimbabwean who was only identified as Solomon, was captured a day after a group of 20 bandits attacked two villages in Chief Musikavanhu's area near Chisumbanje last week.

The bandits first struck at Rupangare Mutondo village and after killing two people, stole clothes and food worth \$1 500.

Some of the villagers were forced to carry the loot into Mozambique. They were later set free.

The two people killed at the village, 60-year-old Cde Rhoda Mungwachini and Cde Josiah Madha Kuhamba (44) were buried last Saturday. A police spokesman in Mutare said follow-up operations were in progress.

The following day, the

same gang was at Rima village, about 15 km from Rupangare, where they abducted six members of a family and forced them to carry food and clothes to the Mozambican border, about 20 km away.

An 18-year-old youth, Gondai Mhlahla, who was among those forced to carry the loot, was bayoneted to death.

The other five who escaped were admitted to Chipinge district hospital where they were treated.

Cde Mhlahla's body was badly mutilated and had several stab wounds. At his State-assisted funeral in Chisumbanje on Wednesday, the Chipinge district administrator, Cde Chris Chingosho, called on villagers to stop collaborating with bandits.

In an emotionally charged graveside speech, Cde Chingosho said petty jealousies among the locals were some of the reasons why they ended up selling out each other to bandits.

He said the villagers

can only blame themselves for the escalation of bandit activities. The majority of the bandits, he said, knew Chipinge very well.

"As I speak here, I know some of you sympathise with the bandits. Come tomorrow and the bandits will be fully furnished with the details of everything that's transpired here," he said.

"The only way to wipe out the bandits is through co-operation between the people and the security forces, but this cannot be achieved at the moment because the collaboration is just too much," said Cde Chingosho.

Pleading with the people to work closely with the Government in development projects, Cde Chingosho said Chipinge was the only district which had its image tarnished by people sympathising with the MNR bandits.

He said the spirit of destruction slowly developing in the district must come to an end.