

MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

249 3 April 2014

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Also in this issue:

Water, penal code

Major escalation

Renamo attacks two trains in Sofala

Renamo guerrillas shot at two trains on Tuesday night on the Sena/Maotize line, near Semacueza, 30 km north of Dondo, on the railway between Muanza and Dondo, Sofala. The driver of a Vale train was shot in the leg and is out of hospital, but the driver of the CFM train was seriously injured, according to CanalMoz this morning (<https://www.facebook.com/CanalMoz>)

Noticias today also reports that Renamo has been blocking the railway with logs in that area, and that the Vale train had stopped behind the barricade. After the driver was shot, local people removed the logs and a driver was able to take the train to Dondo.

This is a major escalation by Renamo, and is the first attack on the railway which carries coal from Tete to Beria port. There were two attacks in this area last year, on a police post at Samacueza railway station on 12 October and on the Savane arms store in June. This is a heavily wooded and sparsely populated area, making it excellent guerrilla territory. During the 1981-92 war Renamo repeatedly attacked the railway in this area, eventually closing it by forcing local people to tear up many kilometres of railway track by hand.

Vice minister of the Interior, José Mandra, and Vale both issued press statements yesterday reporting the attack on the Vale train. So far only CanalMoz has reported the second attack, but it is normally well informed on the small war in Sofala. Renamo denies that it is responsible for the attacks.

Comment

Demobilisation, elections, and observation

Renamo appears to want to delay disarmament/demobilisation until after the election. What will happen if Renamo comes third, after Frelimo and MDM, which is now quite possible? Will it refuse to demobilise? Will the threat of armed men, combined with the significant increase in Renamo presence in the National Elections Commission and in STAE at all levels, mean pressure for political deals to increase the vote for Renamo? It would be in the joint interests of Frelimo and Renamo to marginalise the up-start MDM.

The local elections showed that most fraud occurs at the polling stations, which makes observation, particularly during the count, the single biggest check. But Gurué also showed the level of

manipulation that can be done by district and provincial election commissions and STAE. That was caught because of the parallel count (PVT) done by the Electoral Observatory and EISA. Thus observation and a parallel count will be central in preventing electoral authorities from bending to political pressure.

The Electoral Observatory has not observed voter registration so far, because of disagreements between its leadership and some of its donors. If these disagreements are not resolved soon, they will jeopardise the OE's ability to observe the remaining phases of the electoral process. The OE is a coalition of NGOs, mainly religious groups, which have strong organisation at local level. Thus the OE the only organisation in Mozambique with the experience, knowledge and ability to recruit observers necessary to carry out a solid observation in a national election. Any attempt to undermine the OE to promote an alternative organisation to carry out nation-wide observation would be a severe blow to the efforts to detect and deter electoral fraud and malpractices.

Does the international community want observation of the election and a good parallel count? Or do they want to avoid a parallel count this year so that the electoral administration is be able to bend to Renamo pressure? *jh*

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Water

Water will be central to Mozambique's agricultural development, and conflicts over access to water are likely to be much more serious than conflicts over land. The new UN climate change report cites the World Resources Institute for some of its data, and WRI shows two things: Mozambique will have less water stress than many African countries, but more decline in crop yields due to rising global temperatures. (www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-26810559)

Climate change may already be making rainfall more irregular, which points to a need for increased irrigation. Any "green revolution" to increase in yields will demand more water. And research for our next book "Galinhas e cerveja: uma receita para o crescimento" points to water as both a constraint on big agricultural projects and already as a source of conflict in parts of Nampula province. *jh*

Big plans for Rio Lúrio

Major and contradictory plans for the Rio Lúrio, which forms the border between Nampula and Cabo Delgado provinces, were announced at a recent Nacala corridor international development conference. (Notícias 1 April) The main proposal is for a 120 Megawatt (MW) hydroelectric dam. But two other projects called for diverting some Rio Lúrio water to the Rio Mecuburi, 30 km to the south, and for using water from the river to supply Pemba, 60 km to the north. Meanwhile, warnings were issued that there is not enough water in the Lúrio for all the proposed projects.

Third try at Nguri irrigation

President Armando Guebuza announced in Pemba in 25 March that he is attempting to revive the long-paralysed Nguri irrigation scheme in Cabo Delgado. He made a similar announcement on 19 May 2008, during an earlier tour of the area.

Located in Muidumbe district on the Messalo river, Nguri was established in the late 1970s as part of Mozambique's agricultural cooperation with North Korea, and should to be able to irrigate 1,000 hectares for rice production. But no water flows. The pumps no longer work, the canals were not maintained, and the area is subject to flooding from the Messalo River.

The Korean International Cooperation Agency (Koica) announced on 31 March that it will build a small dam to supply water to 300 hectares of Nguri. A longer-term solution involves building a

larger dam, and could irrigate 7000 ha. (AIM 25, 26 March 2014 and 19 May 2008; Macauhub 1 April 2014)

Cabo Delgado floods

Floods caused by heavy rains in Cabo Delgado on 28 March washed out the bridge over the River Messalo on the main road that links the provincial capital Pemba with the five northern districts. This has caused an immediate fuel shortage in those districts. The road is used intensively by contractors developing the gas fields who transport material and equipment from Pemba. (*Notícias* 31 March)

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Did someone try to sabotage the penal code march?

Civil society accuses the government of trying to sabotage the 20 March demonstration on the penal code. The march was to call for changes in the draft code to protect human rights, maintain positive changes in the family law, and raise gender issues. Meanwhile there is total confusion about what changes have been made. (See also *News reports & clippings* 246, 20 March)

In a statement issued 25 March, a wide range of civil society organisations says there was an organised attempt to prevent the march. Messages on e-mail and Facebook said the demonstration had been cancelled, including an MP going on Radio Moçambique on the morning of the march to say it had been cancelled because all their demands had been met.

After the demonstration, head of the parliamentary Constitutional Matters, Human Rights and Legality Commission told the press that "I guarantee that 100% of the articles that were in the petition presented by NGOs had already been revised or removed from the draft law before February." He accused the NGOs of wasting his time and said all had been invited to participate in the commission debates. (*Notícias*, 31 March) But the NGO statement said they had been following the commission debates, but were taken completely by surprise because no one had told them of the changes.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International on 24 March issued an "Urgent Action" appeal for members to write to parliament because it said the objectionable articles were still in the law, despite Waty's statement.

In fact, it is impossible to verify what changes have been made, because Waty has not given a copy of the revised draft to civil society.

Other news

Three Mozambican MIG-21s are being held in Germany, according to *Der Spiegel*. They are part of a group of reconditioned MIGs bought from Romania, which were being shipped by rail in containers from Budapest to the German port of Bremerhaven, to be sent to Mozambique. But no attempt had been made to register them. So, just like the armoured cars being illegally moved across Maputo two weeks ago, the German authorities stopped the planes as an illegal arms shipment.

President Guebuza's leaving present to his daughter has caused some controversy. On 1 April the government signed a \$133 million agreement with the Chinese company StarTimes for implementing the second phase of a digital broadcasting system. This will involve the construction of 24 transmission stations and digital installations for the public broadcasters, and is part of the \$300 million migration from analogue to digital broadcasting. The money for the StarTimes deal

comes as a loan from the Eximbank of China. But the deal has caused an outcry and an angry denunciation from *O Pais*, owned by the main private TV network STV. It says Focus 21, controlled by the President's daughter Valentina Guebuza, is part owner of StarTimes, and that the deal was made entirely in secret, without any discussion with the local private radio and TV, and without a public tender. (AIM 2 April, O Pais 3 Apr)

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The next book

Galinhas e cerveja: uma receita para o crescimento

by Teresa Smart & Joseph Hanlon will be launched 2 July in Maputo.

Zimbabwe takes back its land

by Joseph Hanlon, Jeanette Manjengwa & Teresa Smart is now available from the publishers

https://www.rienner.com/title/Zimbabwe_Takes_Back_Its_Land also as an e-book and

<http://www.jacana.co.za/book-categories/current-affairs-a-history/zimbabwe-takes-back-its-land-detail>

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by Joseph Hanlon & Teresa Smart

is now available in **paperback**, for £17.99 (+ p&p)

from the publisher <http://www.boydellandbrewer.com/store/viewItem.asp?idProduct=13503>

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The Development Revolution from the Global South**

by Joseph Hanlon, Armando Barrientos, and David Hulme

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NOTE OF EXPLANATION:

This mailing list is used to distribute two publications, both edited by Joseph Hanlon. This is my own sporadic "News reports & clippings", which is entirely my own responsibility. This list is also used to distribute the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, published by CIP and AWEPA, but those organisations are not linked to "News reports & clippings"

Joseph Hanlon

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Mozambique media websites:

Noticias: www.jornalnoticias.co.mz

O Pais: www.opais.co.mz

On Facebook:

@Verdade: <https://www.facebook.com/JornalVerdade>

CanalMoz: <https://www.facebook.com/CanalMoz>

Macauhub English: www.macauhub.com.mo/en/

AIM Reports: www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news

Carlos Serra Diario de um sociologo: <http://oficinadesociologia.blogspot.com>

Good daily newsletters:

English: Mozambique Investor. Send e-mail to theinvestor@clubofmozambique.com

Portuguese: Mozambique Hoje. <http://mail.clubofmozambique.com/mailman/listinfo/mhoje>

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