

MSF reports massacres in Rwanda border town

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BRUSSELS, April 20 (Reuter) - The medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) said on Wednesday there had been massacres around the Rwandan border town of Butare where thousands of people were trying to cross into Burundi.

“At the road barricades erected by the militias, people trying to escape were killed on the spot. Dozens of bodies were seen by our teams at these barricades,” MSF said in a statement from Brussels.

“Dozens of people, stabbed, but also with bullet and grenade wounds, have arrived in the last few hours at the hospital in the centre of the town (Butare) where an MSF team is operating,” the statement said.

MSF said eye-witnesses had told medical staff that people trying to flee ethnic bloodshed in Rwanda had been systematically killed.

Despite these killings, MSF said hundreds of wounded had managed to reach the border between Rwanda and Burundi.

The aid group said it had set up an emergency medical centre at Cayanza in northern Burundi to treat the wounded.

“Since last night, 24 seriously wounded people have been treated (in Burundi). The search for wounded people in the hills is continuing today,” MSF said.

Rwanda has been plunged into a vicious tribal war between the majority Hutu and minority Tutsi tribes since Hutu President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed when a rocket hit his plane on April 6.

Tens of thousands of Rwandans are believed to have died in the bloodshed and up to two million have been driven from their homes or camps.

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