

# Desolate Village Bears Witness to Rwanda Carnage

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Blue flowers of morning glory hanging from the eaves of mud huts trumpet the fertility of soil that produces giant vegetables, jasmine and frangipani. In Mayangi, however, the air is perfumed only by the smell of death.

A few weeks ago this small village was the centre of a thriving farming community. Now untended goats and cattle feed on ripening crops of beans and sweet potatoes. Apart from soldiers fighting on the front line near by, there is barely a living human for miles.

Every member of the Tutsi tribe has been killed, as well as Hutu moderates. Everybody else has fled the scene of barely imaginable carnage, which has been repeated in thousands of villages throughout Rwanda.

The advancing rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) has cleared away most of the bodies in Mayangi. But, as Lieutenant Innocent Kalandana said : "We buried perhaps

a thousand people, maybe more. But this is an operational area so we did not get time to inter them all."

This week the United Nations Security Council voted to increase the number of blue berets in Rwanda to 5,500. "What use will they be? When these people were being killed the UN was running away," he said.

In Bonn yesterday, Klaus Kinkel, the Foreign Minister, said they would comply with a UN request to fly humanitarian supplies into Rwanda. In Paris, President Mitterrand and Edouard Balladur, the Prime Minister, also approved an increase in French humanitarian aid to the country. Additional aid would be sent to Rwandan refugees in neighbouring Burundi whose health and food supplies were threatened. The French government will send an emergency medical team to Burundi's border with Rwanda to treat refugees.

In Rwanda, Western intelligence

agencies and the RPF had feared mass attacks on political moderates and Tutsis even before President Habyarimana was killed on April 6. His plane was shot down as it landed at the airport close to the capital, Kigali. The missile that killed him is believed to have been fired by his own presidential guard which believed he was on the verge of signing a peace deal with the rebels.

Immediately after the murder of the President, the Hutu militia, already armed with rifles, grenades, machetes and clubs, was unleashed on the population in villages and hamlets across the country.

It is possible when walking around the deserted hamlet to piece together the nightmare that struck after April 6 and which continued while the UN Security Council debated for six weeks what to do about Rwanda. A bloody patch by a hole in the ground marks the spot where men, woman and children were dragged by their Hutu neighbours, slashed or clubbed,

and then flung in.

The interahamwe meaning “those who kill together” clearly picked on individual houses. Metal doors bear the marks of battering rams. Some of the barriers remain intact because the murderers came in through the mud walls. Outside one hut the energy of the killing spree is symbolised by a huge nail-studded wooden club, and a 30-inch-long arrow caked in blood.

A scuffling sound came from a house on the edge of the village. Its door was closed ; there were no signs of attack. In the courtyard behind the house a goat was tethered. The cause of the scuffling became clear when we tore back a curtain from the outside. Next to a dead sow, bloated to bursting point, lay a woman. Her legs were splayed, her skirt pulled above her waist. Her throat had been slit, and the piglets jostled around her left shoulder.

By Sam Kiley in Mayangi, Southern Rwanda.