

Kampala [2,000 people had been killed in Zaire cause of ethnic violence]

AFP, July 29, 1993

The official Zairean radio had said Mobutu visited the region after reports that some 2,000 people had been killed there in three months of ethnic violence and was due to visit Lubumbashi in Shaba region, formerly Katanga, where similar problems had arisen.

But Nasur claimed that the situation was aggravated when Mobutu went there last week and ordered his personal elite Presidential Guards to intervene to halt the fighting, but in the end 110 out of the 140 guards were killed.

On learning that his forces had been wiped out, Mobutu sent in more reinforcements from his home town of Gbadolite, which arrived and literally opened fire at anyone in sight, Nasur charged.

Last week's massacre is the second this year after that of April during which some 1,000 people, mostly of Rwandan origin, were reported massacred.

Ethnic tension between Rwandan refugees, most of them Tutsis who fled to Zaire during the 1959 political uprising in Rwanda by the majority Hutus, has left thousands dead, while thousands of others also fled back to Rwanda or to Uganda.

Indigenous Zaireans accuse the Rwandan refugees of having taken over their land, but international aid organisations working in the region claim that the indigenous Zaireans were mostly envious of the economic progress of the Rwandan refugees.

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