

Burundi soldiers accused of killing in Rwanda

AFP, December 1, 1993

KIGALI, Dec 1 (AFP) - Soldiers from Burundi massacred at least a dozen civilians in Rwanda and slaughtered an unknown number of others after forcing them back across the border, Rwandan radio reported Wednesday.

The troops carried out their attack on Tuesday in the Ngenda district of Rwanda, south of Kigali, the radio reported, without saying whether the victims were Rwandans or Burundi refugees.

Hundreds of thousands of people, mostly from Burundi's Hutu majority, fled the small central African country after soldiers of the Tutsi-dominated army on October 23 assassinated its first Hutu president before abandoning a coup bid.

More than 300 of the refugees have been sheltered in the Roman Catholic parish of Ruhuha, neighbouring on Ngenda.

Five members of the Tutsi minority, traditionally the overlords in both the densely populated highland

nations, were killed in Ngenda on Tuesday by their Hutu neighbours, well-informed sources said.

Relief workers estimate that tens of thousands of people were murdered in Burundi after the coup attempt, which followed an unexpected victory for the late president Melchior Ndadaye in the first multi-party poll in June.

Both countries, which became independent from Belgium in 1962, have been swept by periodic waves of ethnic bloodshed in which hundreds of thousands of people have died.

Burundi government ministers, who took refuge in foreign embassies after the coup attempt, have re-emerged under close guard in a bid to restore order and assure themselves of the loyalty of the army.

But further slaughter has been reported in the outskirts of the Burundi capital Bujumbura and in the provinces.

Ndadaye and close aides killed in the coup bid are currently due to be

buried on December 6 in a funeral already postponed from last month.

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