

Civil parties in Genocide case trash suspect's 'excuse' in lying about his identity

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The Genocide trial of Hategekimana Philippe Manier, famously known as Biguma against prosecution at the Paris Court of Assize is nearing its end in France, with this week consecrated to submissions of parties.

Hategekimana, former Adjutant Gendarme in the then Force Armées Rwandaise(FAR) is accused of Genocide crimes committed in different areas of Nyanza district, southern Province of Rwanda during the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi which claimed over one million Tutsi in three months.

On Friday, June 23, civil parties gave their submission after nearly two months of the trial where they showed the context of the Genocide at large and the presumed role of the suspect.

Me Sylver dwelled on the defence of Hategekimana who said that his dropping the name to Philippe Manier while in the current Democratic Republic of Congo(DRC) and

this registering wrong identity in France, "*was a strategy to avoid being recognised by the Rwanda Patriotic Front-RPF Inkotanyi which could kill him*" was a mere excuse.

The lawyer presented to court a list of prominent soldiers in FAR who maintained their names and received not threat whatsoever, instead received good treatment back in Rwanda.

Case at point was Gen. Paul Rwarakabije who was even given good job straight from DRC where he was commander of the so called Force Démocratique pour la Liberation du Rwanda (FDLR).

"Not only that. Augustin Ndingiyimana, who was the Chief of Defence Staff of FAR never changed his name. We heard him here giving his testimony," observed Me. Tapi Sylvain during the hearing, Friday June 23.

"You may just realise that Biguma

chose the path of lie; could you imagine that he even refused to be knowing his classmate Silas Munyampundu who testified here?"

To more bring his point home about "*the lie*" of Biguma, the lawyer said, that at first he wanted to deny his alias name of Biguma, yet an investigation of his wife's phone conversation was heard when a visitor called them asking about his news and it said: "*How are the children? ...and how about Biguma...*" and the answer was: "*he is well, too.*"

Another lawyer from civil parties M^e Julia Cancelier told the court to ignore allegations of defence according to which the "*Rwanda Patriotic Front-RPF Inkotanyi also committed crimes*".

"*We are not debating on the RPF*

behaviour during the Genocide. If anyone committed a crime, would not give an excuse to a suspect in front of us to be exempted from punishment if found guilty," said the lawyer.

On the fact that some witnesses shared testimonies from what they heard, which "*undermines credibility*", the lawyer said: "*Saying what you heard does not mean you are not accurate.*"

The lawyer even dwelled on the "*unnecessary precisions*" that the defence kept asking, like in cases of the number of people that were massacred in a specific spot.

"*The question: who are they, is not relevant if the court can establish that indeed the person participated in the killings anyway,*" she said.