

Problems hinder resettlement of Burundi refugees in Tanzania

AFP, December 4, 1993

DAR ES SALAAM, Dec 4 (AFP) - Tanzania's government said logistic problems and inadequate resources were hampering efforts to resettle almost half a million Burundi refugees who fled ethnic reprisals in their country, the state-owned Daily News reported here Saturday.

The newspaper quoted the home affairs ministry official in charge of refugees, Johnson Brahim, as saying that problems of regrouping some 457,000 Burundian refugees and moving them to new settlements "were very complex".

"The fact that the number of Burundian refugees in the country increases each day is making it even more difficult to implement plans due to meagre resources we have," Brahim said on Friday, citing lack of vehicles as the main problem.

The paper said the government had now decided to use the few available vehicles to ferry much-needed food to refugees instead of moving

them to new settlements.

The government appealed for international assistance to help meet the influx of the refugees, who have been fleeing their country following an October 21 failed coup, and the resulting ethnic reprisals between the Hutu majority and minority Tutsi traditional rulers.

On Thursday, two French aid agencies warned that more than 700,000 Burundian refugees who have fled to neighbouring Rwanda, Tanzania and Zaire would die from hunger and disease unless they received urgent international aid.

"They are still not adequately sheltered and are being fed rations below the minimum required," the international medical charity Medicins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) and another French aid group, International Action Against Hunger (AICF) warned.

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