

Genocide convict Tito Barahira passes away in France

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Tito Barahira, a convict who was in 2016 found guilty of genocide and crimes against humanity committed during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, has died at the age of 72 in France.

The development was confirmed by lawyer Richard Gisagara who was part of the civil party during Barahira and his co-defendant's trial. Gisagara announced the death on his X account on July 29, stating, "Tito Barahira alias Barahirwa, sentenced to life imprisonment by the Paris Assize Court for the massacre of thousands of Tutsi in Kabarondo church, has died in France. Heartfelt thoughts for his victims and their loved ones, some of whom had entrusted their defense to me."

Barahira and his co-accused, Octavien Ngenzi, former mayors of Kabarondo in eastern Rwanda, were both sentenced to life in prison by the Paris' Cour d'Assises, in July 2016.

In 2016, the Paris Cour d'Assises sentenced Barahira, then 64, and Octavien Ngenzi, then 58, to life in prison. Both were found guilty of genocide and crimes against humanity committed during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

The duo later appealed and, in 2019, a french court upheld the life sentence.

Barahira and Ngenzi were accused of participating in the killing of Tutsi at Kabarondo Catholic Church in April 1994. Ngenzi was particularly charged with supervising the killing of over 1,200 people who had taken refuge in the church.

Before his arrest in April 2013, Barahira had disguised himself by changing his name to Barahirwa. Ngenzi was arrested in Mayotte islands in 2010, while Barahira was apprehended in Toulouse, a city in southwestern France, in 2013.

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