

Nairobi [Violence is being meted out not only to the traditional Tutsi targets but also to fellow Hutu who belong to opposition movements]

AFP, January 27, 1993

What has raised the latest crisis to an unprecedented political level is that violence is being meted out not only to the traditional Tutsi targets but also to fellow Hutu who belong to opposition movements.

The inter-communal warfare is nothing new in the tiny eastern African state. Ethnic antagonism is especially deep-rooted there and has regularly bloodied the country since the 1960s, when the Hutu revolted against their Tutsi overlords.

The last big massacre dates back to March last year, when young Hutu extremists killed about 300 Tutsi in the Bugesera region south of Kigali. Witnesses reported how they waded in blindly with clubs, spears and arrows, indiscriminately slaughtering youths and old people.

Members of religious organisa-

tions and opposition sources said at the time that local supporters of the Rwandan leadership had set up the massacre and paid the perpetrators for services rendered.

Hardliners of the regime were trying then to stall a first political breakthrough, which nevertheless duly took place a month later when opposition parties, both Hutu and Tutsi-based, got posts in the government, including current Prime Minister Dismas Nsengiyareye.

This time round, the hardliners feel the latest Arusha agreements have made fools of them, and they want to get the negotiations firmly into their own hands.

Accordingly, Foreign Minister Boniface Ngurinzira, who has been leading the government side, is being replaced on the president's orders by

Defence Minister James Gasana.

The prime minister has rejected the change, which at a time when ethnic and political conflict is mounting, could plunge Rwanda into a very se-

rious crisis. The dispute has postponed the departure for Arusha of the government team.

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