

Police put on alert as Burundian refugees flood Tanzania

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DAR ES SALAAM, Oct 27 (AFP) - Tanzanian police have been put on a state of alert as the number of Burundian refugees fleeing their country after last Thursday's coup reached 85,000 on Wednesday, it was announced here.

Burundian President Melchior Ndadaye, the first elected majority Hutu president in Burundi since independence from Belgium in 1962, died along with several of his ministers in the coup led by the minority Tutsi-dominated army, triggering another wave of massacres and exodus of hundreds of thousands of refugees to neighbouring Rwanda, Tanzania and Zaire.

Announcing the new figures for the every-increasing influx, Tanzanian deputy premier and home affairs minister Augustine Mrema told AFP that police and other security forces would be on alert to counter any persons taking advantage of the refugee

situation to cause chaos in Tanzania.

"Police in Kigoma and Kagera regions have been instructed to be on full alert to ensure that bad elements do not take advantage of the refugee situation to cause chaos and disrupt public peace", Mrema said.

Mrema said Tanzanian authorities expected to receive more than 100,000 Burundian refugees fleeing atrocities perpetrated against the Hutu civilian population by Tutsi soldiers who led the coup that has re-kindled bloody ethnic clashes throughout the country.

He said the security precautions were necessary in the two regions bordering Burundi and would be used to disarm some of the refugees that might come in armed, in order to maintain peace in the area.

The Tanzania government has, meanwhile, made a fresh appeal to the international community for assistance to enable it manage the

refugee-inflow.

The appeal comes amid reports from Kagera region's district of Ngara which say that over 60 percent of the 30,000 Burundian refugees at reception centres there were children in very poor health.

He said doctors from the regional

capital of Bukoba had been dispatched to Ngara with medicines to help control diarrhoea, measles and other diseases, while vaccines were also dispatched there to prevent outbreaks of cholera and meningitis.

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