

President Ndadaye "executed" by captors: Rwandan radio

AFP, October 21, 1993

NAIROBI, Oct 21 (AFP) - Burundi's President Melchior Ndadaye has been executed by his captors, according to unconfirmed reports on Rwandan radio Thursday, in a coup against the first head of state from the majority Hutu people.

The president and several senior ministers were arrested early Thursday and taken to an army base in the capital Bujumbura by rebel troops in an overnight coup.

According to Burundi's ambassador to Kenya, Joseph Bangurambona, the radio said Interior Minister Juvenal Ndayikeza and top security official Richard Mdikumami had also been killed.

However, the reports could not be independently confirmed as all contact with the Burundi capital Bujumbura was impossible, Bangurambona said.

The putschists, apparently led by former president Jean-Baptiste

Bagaza and soldiers from the minority Tutsi people, took the president and several government ministers captive in an early morning coup.

It began with an attack on the president's residence by four tanks of the 11th Armoured Division and about 100 paratroopers at around 2:00 a.m. (0000 GMT), said Communication Minister Jean-Marie Ndendahayo, who was not among the captives.

Speaking on the telephone to the Rwandan capital Kigali he said that troops had also fired on pro-Ndadaye demonstrators in Bujumbura, but he gave no casualty figures.

The family of Ndadaye, who won Burundi's first multi-party elections against widespread expectations in June, were allowed to take refuge in a foreign embassy, Ndendahayo declared, but he did not say which one.

The first trouble came before Ndadaye was invested, with a coup

attempt by Tutsi officers on July 3. This was put down quickly as the army, led then by chief of staff Colonel Michel Mibarurwa, proved loyal to the new president.

Like neighbouring Rwanda, another densely populated highland nation, Burundi has been wracked by outbreaks of strife between the Hutu

majority and their Tutsi overlords.

Some 200,000 Hutus were massacred in 1972, ten years after independence from Belgium, and another wave of violence claimed at least 5,000 lives in 1988, according to official figures.

bur/job/ns
AFP AFP