

Rwanda declares April 7 national day of mourning

AFP, March 18, 1995

NAIROBI, March 18 (AFP) - Authorities in Rwanda have declared April 7 a national day of mourning for the victims of last year's massacre of ethnic Tutsis and opposition Hutus, state-run radio reported Saturday.

At a cabinet meeting chaired by President Pasteur Bizimungu, it was announced that "all victims of genocide and heroes of democracy will be buried on April 7.

"The day has been declared a public holiday in order to honour and bury all the people who died in last year's genocide," the radio, monitored here by the BBC, said.

Between 500,000 and a million people - mostly minority ethnic Tutsis - are thought to have been killed in the three months that followed the death of Rwandan president Juvenal Habyarimana on April 6 last year.

Habyarimana was killed when his plane was shot down as it was coming in to land at the airport in Rwanda's capital Kigali.

The massacres have been blamed on government soldiers and militias loyal to Habyarimana.

jnm/pcj

AFP AFP