

Zaire to expel Hutu extremist leader: report

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BUJUMBURA, March 5 (AFP) - Zaire has pledged to expel a Hutu extremist leader suspected of masterminding cross-border raids against Burundi's Tutsi-dominated army, former Burundian foreign minister Cyprien Mbonimpa said Sunday.

Leonard Nyangoma would be expelled because Zairean authorities considered "inadmissible" the prospect of a revolt against Burundi being organised from inside Zaire, Mbonimpa told state radio here.

A former interior minister and ex-member of the Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU), Nyangoma fled into exile after the party last September agreed to share power with the Tutsi opposition in a government of national unity.

Nyangoma later formed the Front

for the Defence of Democracy (FDD), whose members the Burundian army accuses of regularly launching raids against its positions from bases inside Zaire.

The former minister's forces are also suspected of cooperating with the Interahamwe, the Hutu extremist militias blamed for the bulk of ethnic massacres last year in Rwanda that claimed at least 500,000 lives.

There was no immediate reaction to the radio report from Zairean authorities.

Rwanda and Burundi, which border each other, have the same tribal make-up, and there are fears that Hutu-Tutsi tensions in Burundi could spill over into widespread carnage.

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