

Bugesera massacre trial suspended

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KIGALI, April 14 (AFP) – The trial of 41 people accused of tribal massacres in southeast Rwanda’s Bugesera district last month was indefinitely suspended soon after it began Monday, informed sources said here Tuesday.

When Hutus attacked the minority Tutsi people early in March, 182 people were killed, some 1,200 animals slaughtered and 1,500 houses razed to the ground, according to the latest official toll.

Rwandan human rights activists and diplomats posted to Kigali have said the violence at Ngenda, Gashora and Kanzenze left at least 300 dead. Late last week, some 7,000 people had still not returned to their homes.

The state prosecutor’s charges against the 41 suspects include murder, which carries a death sentence on

conviction, the sources said.

A court in Nyamata, south of Kigali, suspended the trial at the request of defence lawyer Celestin Nzabandora, who is acting on behalf of the Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (CDR), a political party which professes to represent Hutu interests.

The court ruled that the trial should resume at an unspecified date in the capital of the small, highland nation in east central Africa.

Lawyers close to some opposition parties reportedly said they would join the state prosecutor to counter the move by Nzabandora, who raised legal objections to the hearing in Nyamata. Details of his objections were not made clear.

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