

Rally called off after accord on coalition government

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KIGALI, March 14 (AFP) - Rwanda's main opposition parties called off a demonstration due Saturday after the east African country's ruling party agreed to the formation of a coalition government, opposition sources said.

The four parties - the Republican Democratic Movement (RDM), the Liberal Party, the Social Democratic Party and the Rwandan Socialist Party - cancelled the rally after authorities said the country's next prime minister would be chosen from a list of candidates presented by the opposition, a statement by RDM leader Faustin Twagiramungu said.

Under the accord, signed by the ruling National Republican Movement for Democracy and Development and the opposition parties, President Juvenal Habyarimana will choose the prime minister after the opposition had presented their list.

A transition government would

be formed prior to holding a national conference and organising general elections, the statement said.

The opposition rally, which the authorities had banned, was called to protest tribal massacres in southeast Rwanda which officials said have claimed 60 lives since fighting broke out on March 4 between the majority Hutus and the Tutsi people.

Diplomatic sources in Rwanda said the true toll could be "several hundred". A state of emergency and a curfew were still in place Saturday in the region.

More than 10,000 people have been displaced by the fighting.

Opposition sources said Saturday's rally had also been called off because the organisers feared a violent crackdown by the authorities.

A regional economic summit of heads of state from Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire, due to take place at Gisenyi, in northern Rwanda, on Sa-

turday has been postponed, official the postponement.
sources said. No reason was given for jpc/bb/fc AFP AFP SEQN-0159