Rwandan rebels claim control of strategic points in Kigali

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NAIROBI, April 13 (AFP) - The rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) announced on Wednesday that its forces from the north linked up with a rebel battalion in Kigali and took control of four strategic points in the capital.

In a broadcast monitored here on Wednesday by the BBC, the rebel radio Muhabura also said the northern region of Mutara had been "entirely liberated" on Tuesday, while RPF forces had encircled government positions in the northern town of Byumba.

It said the rebel attack in Byumba was halted because the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) wanted a ceasefire to evacuate its forces there.

"There is not a single indication that the government army is able to resist RPF forces in Kigali", the radio added.

The announcement came as the rebels said they had rejected a ceasefire call from the government.

In an interview in Kigali with Radio France Internationale (RFI), monitored here, the rebels said their headquarters had rejected the idea of a truce.

"Let me make this very clear: the contacts we have had with the UN have nothing to do with a general ceasefire, or with negotiations leading to the formation of a transitional government", RPF spokesman Liogene Rudasingwa said.

He said the contacts were about security guarantees for the evacuation of French, Belgian and American nationals. "Our position is very clear. We have no desire to have a dialogue with these criminals", Rudasingwa said.

Earlier, the rebel radio said it would not consider a ceasefire request by government forces, unless the army first pledged to fight ele-

ments of the presidential guard. The force is blamed for massacres that have erupted in the capital since a plane crash last week that killed Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira.

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