

## Rwanda and Burundi "covered up genocide" in population statistics

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LONDON, Dec 8 (AFP) - Former governments in Rwanda and Burundi covered up massacres in the last 30 years by massaging their population statistics, an article in the British science magazine Nature said Thursday.

American demographics specialist Peter Uvin said that widely-used UN figures for the African countries were based on government-provided data and "hide some of the worst genocide the world has witnessed" in fifty years.

Uvin referred to massacres between 1962 and 1964 in Rwanda and in 1972 in Burundi which were followed by large refugee displacements.

Statistics on Rwanda gave no indication of the thousands of deaths and the hundreds of thousands of refugees, around ten percent of the population, who fled the country at the beginning of the 1960s, he said.

"With the annual population in-

crements at that time in the range of 60,000 people, incidents such as the killing of up to 10,000 in 1963 and the fleeing of approximately 100,000 in 1960-61 should be clearly visible," the article said.

"Instead (UN data) indicate that the population increase continued exactly as before," Uvin said.

The article continued : "The governments of Rwanda and Burundi have always refused to acknowledge the massive killings within their boundaries, executed largely by their military apparatus. Hence it comes as no surprise that they would also seek to cover up these events in their population data."

Population counting is carried out with too long a delay, is incomplete and carried out by government officials, the article said.

The author said that population figures in Africa are "at best informed estimates."

He adds : "Even so it is surprising that the UN data, which are authoritative and widely used, are so unrealistic as to hide some of the worst genocide the world has witnessed since the Second World War.  
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