

Violence growing in camps within Rwanda: UN mission

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KIGALI, Dec 11 (AFP) - Violence, including machete killings, grenade attacks and beatings, is growing in southwest Rwanda where Hutus are suspected of executing members of their own ethnic group who witnessed the genocide of Tutsis, a UN spokesman said on Sunday.

The violence is taking place in camps set up for Hutus fleeing advancing forces of the Tutsi minority, Captain Stephane Grenier, military public affairs officer of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) said in a communique.

Three months of carnage erupted in Rwanda following the death in a plane crash April 6 of Rwandan president, Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu. Rebels of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) led by minority Tutsis took power in Kigali in July.

In the camps, "most of these acts of violence are committed by well-organised groups of bandits," the UN-

AMIR communique said.

It said that in numerous cases these groups "are suspected to be members of either the former government forces or the Interahamwe," the latter a reference to extremist Hutus held responsible for mass killings of Tutsis and opposition Hutus.

"Furthermore we have reason to believe that many of the killings are executions of people who witnessed the recent acts of genocide and of family members of Rwandans that have left the camps for their home communes," the statement said.

"Over the last several weeks there has been an increase in the number of violent acts such as machete killings, grenade attacks, beatings and threats in and around displaced camps in south western Rwanda," it said.

"Furthermore, many weapons and munitions are still being found in these camps," it continued.

Captain Grenier said that UN-

AMIR troops actively patrol the areas but "criminal elements monitor UN movement and rarely commit violent acts in our presence."

Hundreds of thousands of Hutus are still living in the camps after fleeing their homes, and many fear that if they leave they will suffer reprisals

either from the RPF or from Hutu extremists.

Between 500,000 and a million Rwandans are believed to have died in the killings this year.

mgu/sa/cba/pcj

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