

Arson, looting leaves 3,000 Tutsi refugees, 10 dead

AFP, March 7, 1992

NAIROBI, March 7 (AFP) - More than 3,000 Tutsis were forced to leave their villages in the Kanzenze region in the south of Rwanda following arson and looting attacks on their homes which left 10 dead, informed sources contacted from here said Saturday.

Refugees assembled in the Nyamata parish in the Bugesera region after their houses were gutted and pillaged by members of the Hutu tribe, sources said.

The Committee for Human Rights and Democracy in Rwanda, based in Brussels, earlier said the attacks had been instigated by local officials and that the army had been attempting to encourage the refugees to return to their homes.

The committee said the violence against the Tutsis appeared to be a reaction to "significant defeats suf-

fered by the Rwandan military in clashes with the Patriotic Front in the northwest of the country near Butaro."

The wave of violence started Thursday in the town of Kanzenze and mainly affected Tutsis in the regions of Mayange, Muyenzi and Maranyundo, the committee said.

The attacks came after a leaflet allegedly issued by the opposition Liberal Party said that Tutsis were planning attacks against Hutus.

In a "preventive strike" Hutus then attacked the Tutsis, informed sources said, shedding doubt on the authenticity of the leaflet.

The Tutsi are a minority group in Rwanda - many of them live in exile, notably in Uganda - but are the dominant force in the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front.

jh/gk/hn AFP AFP SEQN-0249