

Rwanda expels two Burundian diplomats

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NAIROBI, Dec 1 (AFP) - The Rwandan government has expelled two Burundian diplomats in what observers believe to be a retaliation for the expulsion of a Rwandan charge d'affaires from the Burundian capital, Bujumbura, last Friday.

But state-run radio Rwanda said in broadcast monitored here on Sunday that the Burundian diplomats had been expelled for "engaging in activities incompatible with their diplomatic status", a term signifying that the diplomats' activities had threatened the security of Rwanda.

The radio did not say how many Burundian diplomats were still in Kigali or give further details of their activities.

The radio named the diplomats as embassy counsellor Jean Karonkano and third secretary Balthazar Bankurunaze, both of whom were given un-

til noon on Sunday to leave the country.

Observers said the move appeared to signal a widening rift between Kigali and Bujumbura, following fighting in Bujumbura between government troops and rebels a week ago that left at least 114 people dead.

The government of Burundian President Pierre Buyoya has blamed the bloodshed on rebels of the exiled Hutu Liberation movement, Palipe-Hutu, who are seeking to end domination of Burundi's majority Hutus by the small but traditionally-ruling Tutsi minority.

The Hutus dominate the power structure in neighbourng Rwanda whose tribal make-up is similar to that of Burundi.

str/lto/jb AFP AFP

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