

Burundi [1,000 Rwanda-based Burundis demonstrated in the capital Kigali]

AFP, October 22, 1993

Fabien Hitimana, a deputy from Ndadaye's Party the Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU), told Rwanda radio Friday that soldiers had started rounding up Tutsis in the northern town of Kayanza as a probable preliminary to attacks on Hutus.

He said people in Kayanza had set up barricades and had destroyed bridges in an attempt "to defend democracy."

Also Friday several sources said the pro-coup armed forces had savagely clamped down on all anti-coup protests in Burundi.

The president of Burundi's Council of Churches, Bishop Alfred Ndoricimpa, said reliable sources reported Thursday that a number of protestors were killed in the capital Bujumbura during a demonstration when troops opened fire.

Some 1,000 Rwanda-based Burundis demonstrated in the capital

Kigali Friday and called on the international community to return democracy to their country. They urged their countrymen to stay "united and solid to fight against the military dictatorship." Further demonstrations were being planned for Saturday.

Coup leaders issued a statement introducing a ceasefire, closing frontiers, suspending communications, restricting travel and banning public assemblies. They also appealed for calm and asked neighbouring countries not to interfere in Burundi's affairs.

Radio Burundi reported that the coup eaders had installed a committee of national salvation led by Francois Ngeze, the interior minister in the government of ex-president Pierre Buyoya. It also said they had introduced a state of emergency.

But Bangurambona believed the relative silence from the coup leaders

was ominous, saying, "If they cannot tell the people why they carried out the coup it is to hide ignoble acts."

Bangurambona called Ngeze a "front" for the "real leader" of the coup, former president Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, whom Ndadaye allowed to

return to Burundi from Libya in July.

There was international condemnation of the coup Friday and the European Community froze all aid to Burundi.

more AFP AFP