

At least 50,000 Burundian refugees enter Tanzania

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DAR ES SALAAM, Oct 25 (AFP) - At least 50,000 Burundian refugees fleeing atrocities by soldiers who toppled President Melchior Ndayizeye flooded into Tanzania on Monday, Tanzanian Prime Minister John Malecela said.

The prime minister described Thursday's bloody coup in Burundi as "an insult to the democratic world" and appealed for help in coping with the sudden influx of refugees which "had exerted an unbearable strain on existing services and facilities."

Refugees were crossing into Tanzania through the western regions of Kigoma and Kagera, both bordering tiny Burundi, and were being temporarily sheltered in schools and football stadiums, Malecela said.

At least 7,000 of them are camped in a stadium in Kigoma on the shores of Lake Tanganyika.

Malecela directed that emergency medicine and food supplies be sent

immediately to Kigoma and Kagera regions and dispatched a minister, Mustafa Nyang'anyi, to assess the situation.

The Tanzanian Red Cross Society (TRCS) said it had donated clothing and utensils worth 300,000 U.S. dollars and had requested further aid from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Meanwhile, Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana has proposed a summit of leaders of Rwanda, Tanzania and Zaire, which border Burundi, to discuss the crisis.

The proposal was contained in a special message Habyarimana sent to Tanzanian President Ali Hassan Mwinyi on the situation in Burundi.

The message, which was received by Malecela on behalf of Mwinyi who is attending the Commonwealth summit in Cyprus, called for the summit to be held on Sunday.

Receiving the message, Malecela

said the coup in Burundi "was not Burundi, but also to Africa."
only an insult to the people of Burundi. hb/lto/rt AFP AFP