

Burundian refugees speak of persecution by troops

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NAIROBI, April 11 (AFP) - Burundian refugees arriving in Tanzania said members of the Hutu ethnic group were being persecuted by Burundian soldiers, radio Tanzania reported Monday.

A group of 188 Hutu refugees arriving at Kibondo, across the border into Tanzania, said they saw large numbers of refugees travelling through the border region.

Members of the group told the radio they were fleeing "persecution" by the Burundian army and Tutsi civilians.

Troops in the border region were beating up and killing Hutus heading for Tanzania, the radio quoted the refugees as saying.

Hundreds of Burundians, mainly from the majority ethnic Hutu, are fleeing possible trouble in their coun-

try after the death last Wednesday of Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira.

The refugees are reportedly massing on the Burundi-Tanzania border.

Ntaryamira and Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana died when their plane was allegedly shot down near Kigali airport in neighbouring Rwanda on Wednesday as they were returning from a one-day regional peace summit convened in Dar es Salaam by Tanzanian President Ali Hassan Mwinyi.

The refugees are apparently fleeing possible reprisal attacks by Burundi's Tutsi-dominated army for the ongoing massacres of Tutsi civilians by the mainly Hutu army in neighbouring Rwanda.

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