

# Ethnic violence claims thousands of lives in Zaire

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KINSHASA, July 18 (AFP) - Zaire President Mobutu Sese Seko has just spent three days in Goma in North-Kivu province where some 2,000 people are believed to have died in three months of ethnic violence.

This weekend Mobutu will visit Lubumbashi in Shaba region (ex Katanga) where "similar problems have arisen," radio Zaire reported Saturday without giving details.

Thirty years after independence, Zaire is confronted with a revival of ethnic strife in its eastern and south-eastern regions which has left between 1,000 and 3,000 people dead in North Kivu and forced nearly 100,000 people to flee their homes in Shaba, according to informed sources here.

In addition to the ethnic troubles in North-Kivu, the authorities in the north of this same province are having to cope with raids by "rebels" infiltrating from Uganda or based in the remote and inaccessible regions along the border.

These armed bands are believed to be the remnants of the rebellion which shook Zaire in 1964-65.

In Kivu, violence over land and national rights has pitted local Nyuanga and Hunde tribes living near Massissi and Walikale against Hutu and Tutsi immigrants from Rwanda, locally known as the Banyarwanda.

A team from Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF), the French and Belgian medical aid organisation said thousands of people had been injured in the violence and about 150,000 people have fled their homes.

"Hundreds of villages have been partly or totally burned. Our workers say they have seen dozens of bodies by the roadside and in a church," MSF said. It added that food was scarce and malnutrition and diseases like dysentery and malaria were taking a heavy toll.

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