

Guerrillas break ceasefire, Rwandan government says

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KIGALI, August 2 (AFP) - Guerrillas from the rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) shelled villages and government positions in the northeast Sunday, less than 48 hours after the start of a ceasefire, Defence Minister James Gasana said.

He said the rebels shelled the villages of Rurenge and Mabare as well as army positions in Gishoro in the Byumba military sector.

He also said the rebels kidnapped two teenage girls from Cyeru, in the northwestern province of Ruhengeri.

"Our forces remained in position, but they had received clear orders not to intervene," Gasana commented, "But it is obvious that if such aggression continues in the same manner, we will not remain with our arms crossed forever."

The ministry Saturday reported limited gunfire in Matara, to the northeast, but had claimed the ceasefire,

signed in Arusha, Tanzania, was holding.

A group of military observers from Nigeria, Senegal and Zimbabwe plus one other African state - possibly Egypt - is due to arrive in Kigali Tuesday to monitor the truce.

France, Belgium and the United States agreed to finance the peace operation.

The RPF, made up of members of Rwanda's minority Tutsi ethnic group, is fighting against the ruling Hutu majority which has held power since 1959.

Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana said on radio Saturday that he was very pleased with the ceasefire accord, calling it "a last chance to solve this war" which began in October 1990.

mbu/jg/dm

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