

Hutu extremist journalist murdered in Zaire: report

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NAIROBI, Feb 13 (AFP) - One of the leading journalists of a Rwandan Hutu extremist radio and television station, Kantano Habimana, has been murdered at Goma in Zaire, another senior Hutu journalist said Monday.

Hassan Ngeze, director of the extremist publication Kangura, alleged that Habimana was "poisoned" in Goma, the east Zairean town where he was living in exile and which has become a hub of refugee camps for hundreds of thousands of mainly Hutu Rwandans.

Habimana was one of the star editorialists on Mille Collines Free Radio and Television (RTLTM), a station charged with calling for the genocide of Rwanda's minority Tutsis and Hutu moderates after President Juvenal Habyarimana was killed in a suspected rocket attack on his plane last April 6.

His death unleashed three months of civil war and ethnic carnage, in which between 500,000 and a million Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered before the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) seized power and installed a new coalition government.

Ngeze said that his own paper was edited in Belgium and sold in the refugee camps in Zaire, which are home to more than a million people. Many of the refugees are afraid to go home for fear of reprisals by the RPF, some of whose troops have been charged with summary executions.

RTLTM, founded by close aides of the late president and members of his family, was known by its opponents as "Radio-Television Death" because of the incitement to genocide. Habimana was trained as a journalist in Leningrad, now Saint Petersburg.

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