

President Ndadaye killed in coup, says Burundi health minister

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NAIROBI, Oct 22 (AFP) - Burundi's President Melchior Ndadaye has been killed by army rebels who staged a coup in Bujumbura, Burundi Health Minister Jean Minani confirmed Friday.

"The dictators killed Ndadaye," Minani, who was in the neighboring Rwandan capital of Kigali when the coup was launched Thursday, told Rwandan radio monitored here.

He said his information came from Burundi, though he gave no other immediate details. Minani also said several senior officials in Ndadaye's regime had fled to Rwanda.

"The whole world knows that they killed him in cold blood, as well as the speaker of parliament and many other democratically elected leaders" of Burundi," he said.

Rwanda radio reported Thursday that Ndadaye had been executed, along with the interior minister and security chief, but there has been no

confirmation from the Burundi capital of Bujumbura.

Earlier Radio Burundi said the coup-makers had installed a committee of national salvation led by Francois Ngeze, the interior minister in the government of ex-president Pierre Buyoya.

Ndadaye defeated Buyoya in Burundi's first multi-party elections on June 1, becoming the first president from the country's majority Hutu tribe.

The soldiers who overthrew him Thursday reportedly hail from the minority Tutsi tribe, which has traditionally dominated Burundi's executive branch of government and the armed forces.

Minani urged the international community to "isolate" the committee set up by the coup-makers.

"Democracy has been thrown to the dogs," Minani added, "Burundi people must now fight to the last man

to re-establish it. Those who have inals thirsting for blood.”
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