

Rwandan army appeals for help to end ethnic violence

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NAIROBI, April 8 (AFP) - The Rwandan armed forces have appealed for public support to combat what they described as "wrongdoers" amid reports of fighting between the Presidential Guard and the opposition Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), Rwandan radio reported on Friday.

The radio broadcast, monitored here by the BBC, quoted an armed forces statement as saying violence had been perpetrated by angry soldiers escaped from barracks.

In an appeal to "Rwandan men and women", the communique said that after Wednesday's death of the head of state, security had been disrupted, particularly in Kigali.

Problems were "caused mainly by some soldiers who, because they were angry, escaped from their barracks and attacked and harmed the population", it said.

"The armed forces cannot tolerate such shameful criminal acts. That is

why they hastened to do everything possible to maintain security, while at the same time, searching for and arresting criminals, and by Thursday evening, this reckless behaviour had subsided", the communique said.

It added that the armed forces "urged the people to be vigilant and help them stop the wrongdoers".

"The country's armed forces are doing everything possible to protect those in trouble".

"You too, are requested to support the armed forces so they can continue to maintain security. Stay alert", the communique urged.

Meanwhile, the communique also said an attack by forces of the Rwandan Patriotic Front on the Presidential Guard barracks had been repulsed.

"RPF soldiers at the Kimihurura Parliament Building left it and launched an attack on the presidential guard barracks but the attack

was repulsed", the communique said, adding that "they also launched another attack at Remera near the national stadium, and at the King Feisal Hospital".

The violence was triggered by the death of Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundian President Cyprien Ntaryamira, when their plane crashed near Kigali airport on Wednesday as they were returning from a regional summit in the Tanza-

nian capital, Dar es Salaam, to discuss problems in Rwanda and Burundi.

The summit, chaired by Tanzanian President Ali Hassan Mwinyi, was also attended by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, Kenyan Vice-President George Saitoti and Organisation of African Unity Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim.

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