

Rwandan vice-president pays his debt to Uganda bank

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NAIROBI, Dec 9 (AFP) - Rwanda's vice-president and defence minister Paul Kagame has paid a 27,520-dollar loan lent to him by a Uganda bank in 1989, the official New Vision newspaper reported Friday.

Kagame, a former head of military intelligence in the Ugandan army, borrowed the money from the Uganda Commercial Bank to develop his 259-hectare farm in central Uganda.

The bank received Kagame's cheque on Monday, the newspaper said.

Kagame, along with several other senior military officers of Rwandan origin deserted the Ugandan army in 1990, to form the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), which invaded Rwanda to fight for the right to return of ethnic Tutsi refugees who fled tribal

massacres in the 1950s and 1960s.

Fred Rwigyema, the first RPF commander and former Ugandan defence minister who was killed in fighting shortly after the invasion began, was lent 22,800 dollars by the bank. He died before settling the debt.

The RPF formed the government in Kigali in July after defeating the Hutu-dominated army loyal to president Juvenal Habyarimana who was killed in a suspicious plane crash in April.

His death sparked an unprecedented wave of tribal massacres in Rwanda. The killings, perpetrated mainly by extremists Hutus against Tutsis, were estimated to have left between 500,000 and a million people dead.

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