

State-Owned Media Sources

ORINFOR (Rwanda Bureau of Information and Broadcasting)—31 May 2011: HRW Gacaca Court Report Abusive and Misleading

- The government of Rwanda has publicly criticized a report released by Human Rights Watch (HRW) calling for the review of Rwanda's community-based Gacaca court system.
- The Gacaca courts were established to handle the overload of cases following the 1994 Genocide. According to the 144-page report entitled, "Justice Compromised: The Legacy of Rwanda's Community-Based Gacaca Courts", the courts failed to provide credible decisions and justice in a number of instances, and exhibited corruption, procedural irregularities and inadequate safeguards to ensure fair trials.
- According to Rwandan Justice Minister Karugarama Tharcisse, the headline of the report (the phrase "Justice Compromised" in particular) is misleading. During a media brief he stressed that the Gacaca courts have thus far resolved over 1 million dossiers of Genocide suspects, which makes the 350 cases disputed by the HRW report only a 5% shortfall of successful trials. Minister Karugarama said that the report's authors should acknowledge the role the Courts have played in addressing the genocide and re-uniting Rwandans.
- The government of Rwanda is scheduled to release its own report on the performance of the Gacaca courts at the end of 2011.

*This story was also covered by RNA (Rwanda News Agency—neither state- nor privately-owned), in which it is reported that the HRW also highlighted the *successes* of the courts. It is worth noting that this detail was omitted from the above coverage of the story, which focused more so on the criticism of the report. The RNA article, entitled "Rwanda's Ministry of Justice calls HRW report 'distorting' and 'misleading'" of 31 May also goes into greater depth regarding the function of, and sentences handed down by, the Gacaca courts; it also includes more details of the HRW report.

Privately-Owned Media Sources

The New Times website—25 May 2011: France rejects ex-Rwandan first lady's asylum request

- Another request for asylum by the former Rwandan First Lady, Agathe Kanziga Habyarimana, was rejected by the French Interior Ministry.
- Wife of Genocide-era president, Agathe Habyarimana currently resides in Essonne, France, despite several asylum requests, the last of which was rejected by the Conseil d'Etat in October 2009. She is wanted by the Rwandan government as a fugitive responsible for the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.
- According to a spokesperson for the Genocide Fugitives Tracking unit (GFTU), "we welcomes the development, since she is a high-profile Genocide fugitive whom we have indicted...at some time [we wish] she will be extradited to come and face trial for her crimes—at the place where she committed them."

Rwanda News Agency (RNA)—25 May 2011: Rwandan genocide suspect arrested in northeastern DR Congo

- The UN has announced that Bernard Munyagishari, one of the most sought-after suspects of the 1994 Genocide, has been arrested in the DR Congo.

- Munyagishari is accused of exacerbating ethnic tensions between the Hutu and the Tutsi, alleging specifically that the Tutsi had poisoned water to kill all Hutus in the Gisenyi prefecture (Northern Province). During the 1994 Genocide, he was president of the Interahamwe militias in Gisenyi and is alleged to have recruited, trained, and led militiamen in mass killings and rapes of Tutsi women between April and July 1994.
- According to the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), Munyagishari was arrested as a result of a joint operation mounted by the DR Congo Armed Forces and the OTP Tracking Unit in North Kivu.
- Munyagishari was indicted by the ICTR in June 2005 on charges of genocide, crimes against humanity, and several violations of international humanitarian law.
- The accused is currently being detained in Goma, pending transfer to the ICTR in Arusha, Tanzania.

**This story was also covered by the French news agency, AFP as well as the Burundi news agency, Net Press.*

Rwanda News Agency (RNA)—31 May 2011: Rwanda plans own media index to undermine watchdogs

- The Rwandan government is working to establish an index to rate the Rwandan media, as a way to compete with the annual indices released by groups such as Reporters Without Borders (RSF).
- The Media High Council (MHC) is currently in the process of selecting a company or institution to develop the index; bidders include the National University of Rwanda School of Journalism and Communication, and Transparency Rwanda.
- The push for a national press freedom index comes as a result of heavy criticism by the international community of Rwandan media censorship in recent years; the Government of Rwanda, however, disagrees with the claims, stating that they are “baseless and not backed by any objective and empirical evidence.”
- Indeed, according to the MHC, the American Freedom House index bases its assessments on “hearsay” from people who have never “set foot in Rwanda,” and that “there is hardly any national or even regional objective, scientific, comprehensive and in-depth descriptions of the state of media and media environment in [Rwanda].”
- According to the tender document released, “the existence of known and agreed upon indicators will also enable media professionals, policy makers regulators, development partners, civil society and freedom advocacy bodies to analyze and identify areas within the media system where reform and/or support is required.”
- Once an agency is chosen to design the index, they will have two months to complete and publish it.