Beat: Local

Rwandan rebels kill 5 civilians, injure 6 UN peacekeepers in DR Congo

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USPA News - Suspected Rwandan rebels on Wednesday carried out an ambush in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, killing at least five civilians and injuring six United Nations (UN) peacekeepers in addition to a local interpreter. The attack happened during the early morning hours when a group of gunmen, believed to be from the Rwandan rebel group Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), ambushed fish traders near the village of Buganza in North Kivu province, which is located in the eastern region of the country.

UN peacekeepers who were carrying out a patrol in the area heard the gunshots and responded to the scene, where they found the bodies of five fish traders before being fired upon. Roger Meece, the head of the UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), said six UN peacekeepers from India and one local interpreter were wounded in the attack. "This premeditated, targeted and deliberate attack is inadmissible. We will work with the national authorities to identify those responsible for this ignoble deed so that they are called to justice," Meece said. Sources in the region said the exchange of fire lasted about 30 minutes. The FDLR is composed almost entirely of ethnic Hutus who fled from neighboring Rwanda after the genocide of 1994, where an estimated 800,000 people were killed. The rebels have been accused of committing dozens of terrorist attacks and atrocities, including rapes and killings. In July, a UN peacekeeper from India was killed when he was caught in cross-fire during clashes between the Congolese armed forces and a rebel group known as the March 23 Movement (M23). The eastern provinces of North and South Kivu have witnessed increased fighting between troops and the M23, which is composed of renegade soldiers who mutinied in April. The fighting has displaced more than 300,000 people, including many who have fled to neighboring Rwanda and Uganda, as well as within the DRC.

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