

BURUNDIAN LIGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS "ITEKA"

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Weekly bulletin « ITEKA N'IJAMBO » n°475 of the Burundian Ligue of Human Rights "ITEKA"

Week from from 19-25 May 2025



In memory of Madam Marie Claudette Kwizera, Treasurer of Iteka, reported missing since December 10 2015. From December 2015 to 25 May 2025, Iteka has documented at least 734 cases of enforced disappearances

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ACRONYMS

CNDD-FDD	: <i>National Council for the Defense of Democracy-Forces for the Defense of Democracy</i>
CNL	: <i>National Congress for Liberty</i>
DCE	: <i>Communal Directorate of Education</i>
DRC	: <i>Democratic Republic of Congo</i>
EAC	: <i>East African Community</i>
FDNB	: <i>Burundi National Defense Force</i>
M23	: <i>March 23 Movement</i>
OPJ	: <i>Judicial Police Officer</i>
OTB	: <i>Burundi Tea Board</i>
PRODEFI	: <i>Sector Development Program</i>
PRODER	: <i>Rural Entrepreneurship Development Program</i>
PSR	: <i>Special Traffic Police</i>
RN	: <i>National Road</i>
SNR	: <i>National Intelligence Service</i>
UPRONA	: <i>Union for National Progress</i>

0. INTRODUCTION

This bulletin describes the human rights situation that prevailed in Burundi during the week of May 18-25, 2025. It describes a context dominated by a political electoral situation marred by numerous irregularities from the ruling party and its members.

It exposes a situation of human rights violations during a tense electoral period. It reports the 7 people died, including an eight-month-old infant and two

women. This bulletin also reports five cases of abduction followed by disappearance, 2 cases of rape, and one case of domestic violence.

The alleged perpetrators of these violations are largely administrative officials, police officers, soldiers, and young Imbonerakure members of the ruling party.

1. CONTEXT

1.1. POLITICAL CONTEXT

Cultural dancers under pressure: "banned from performing for other parties, poorly paid by CNDD-FDD"

Makamba, May 2025 — Traditional dance groups, particularly those dedicated to "Agasimbo" dances of Buragane region, highlight the pressure imposed by the ruling CNDD-FDD party during the election period. These groups claim to be restricted in their ability to perform for other political parties, despite more attractive financial offers.

According to their testimonies, a group of acrobatic dancers meant to support the CDP opposition party at its campaign launch this Sunday in Burunga province was banned to attend. The reason? A strict instruction from local CNDD-FDD representatives prohibiting any performances for rivals during this election period.

However, according to the artists, the ruling party offers them an insufficient payment of 40,000 Bif for a full day of performances, which means less than 3,000 Bif per dancer, while some opposition parties are offering up to 200,000 Bif per performance. This disparity is considered significant by these artists, most of whom live in extremely precarious conditions.

"Most of us depend on small jobs such as security, farming, or brick-making," explains a member of an acrobatic group from Kayoba hill in Makamba commune. The instruments and costumes used are also purchased and maintained by the dancers

themselves, despite the continued price inflation.

They denounce unfair treatment and a lack of recognition for their contribution to promoting Burundian culture, especially during election campaigns when their art is often used for free as a campaigning tool.

Manhunt for opposition members in Makamba commune and Nyanza Lac commune

During this election period, the hunt for individuals supporting opposition political parties has become a daily reality. Following events occurred in Kabo and Buheka hills, it was Kazirabageni's turn on May 16, 2025, where Simeon Ndikumana, a member of Burundi Bwa Bose coalition, was attacked by a group of about 10 young Imbonerakure, led by Niyomwungere and Salvator, both from Kazirabageni hill.

The incident took place in the evening, as he was going to a bar and as he was looking for money to pay for his lemonade, a coalition card fell to the ground, visible to everyone, including the two young Imbonerakure present. The latter immediately accused him of sharing opposition cards and campaigning at night, which is illegal. A few hours later, the same group of youths followed him home, demanding to open the door. He was physically assaulted, his arms and legs roped, before being taken to the police station to spend the night there. The next day, he was transferred to the police station with bleeding injuries, but the communal

commissioner demanded that he be examined by a doctor before being questioned. The alleged perpetrators of this attack remain free, and we expect OPJ BIZIMANA, who is handling the case, to take necessary steps to arrest them.

2025 elections: The CENI and the local administration conspire to steal votes for CNDD-FDD party

Since the distribution of voter's cards and the start of the election campaign, several voters, particularly those from opposition parties, have claimed to have missed their voter's cards. According to one source, this shortage is not a mere coincidence and is intended to rig the election results, in which CNDD-FDD would emerge as the loser if there were transparency.

The role of the CENI

According to a source from the ruling party, it is difficult, if not impossible, to believe that technical errors caused the lack of cards only for members of opposition parties.

1. Cards were hidden to simulate CENI technical errors.

Shortly before the distribution started, the agents responsible for distributing these cards, mainly members of CNDD-FDD, received orders from their party, with names, to remove some cards of people suspected of not voting for CNDD-FDD. It should be noted that these agents collected these cards from CECI, one day before the distribution started, to take them home, which, logically, is questionable.

2. Fictitious voters, soldiers in the DRC will vote.

Through the party's collaboration, the CENI has planned everything to ensure a first-round victory for CNDD-FDD. Fictitious names, as well as soldiers who will be in the DRC on election day, will vote. While the electoral law is controversial regarding proxies, they undeniably represent the only way to win the June 5 elections.

The role of local administration

Since the hill heads are the first to know their localities, they worked alongside CENI agents during

the four days of card distribution to identify the deceased, those who had been hospitalized for long periods, and the many people, particularly young people, who are in countries of the region for economic reasons. The cards of these people were distributed to the Imbonerakure across the country to use them on election day.

Despite all these measures, the realities on the ground show that CNDD-FDD party is far from winning these elections if there is transparency. Other as-yet-unrevealed methods are to be expected, such as buying the consciences of opposition party representatives and power outages between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m., to which we have become accustomed since the beginning of May.

Incidents related to CNDD-FDD party's election campaign in Bugendana commune, Gitega province.

On May 19, 2025, CNDD-FDD party campaigned in Bugendana commune, Gitega province. Campaign activities took place mainly in Mutoyi, Bugendana, and Bitare zones. On that day, complaints were recorded regarding violations of citizens' rights.

- ◇ Traders, particularly those operating along Mutoyi–Bugendana road, were forced to close their shops to participate in CNDD-FDD campaign.
- ◇ All schools in the areas crossed by the campaign were closed before noon. Teachers were forced to suspend classes and get students out.
- ◇ They were forced by principals to line up students along the road to greet campaigning party members.
- ◇ People not participating in CNDD-FDD campaign were criticized, particularly in schools and public places, as if they were committing a mistake by not joining the ruling party's demonstrations.

Visit of the secretary general of CNDD-FDD party to Busoni commune during the election campaign.

On May 20, 2025, in Busoni commune, Renga hill

at Nyarunazi stadium, CNDD-FDD rally took place with guest of honor Reverien Ndikuriyo, who has consistently urged the population to stop collaborating with its neighboring enemy, Rwanda.

It should be noted that all schools in Busoni commune were forced to close and participate in this meeting, meaning principals, teachers, and students must attend the meeting regardless of political affiliation.

The population of Kirundo province was forced by the Imbonerakure to go to Nyarunazi to welcome the CNDD-FDD secretary. In all communes, the Imbonerakure started whistling at 2 a.m. to wake up members of the ruling party, particularly other members of opposition parties, specifying that the latter would be punished if they failed to go to Nyarunazi.

Paralysis of public services during this election campaign in Bugenyuzi commune.

Since the start of the election campaign on May 13, 2025, public services have not functioned normally. For example, CNDD-FDD member teachers and their students always carry party flags. The markets close temporarily when the aforementioned party's meetings take place nearby. It seems that all the traders are CNDD-FDD supporters.

The worst happened on May 22, 2025, when the party's first national secretary came to Bugenyuzi commune. Imbonerakure from across the province had spent the night at the stadium to welcome him, and all activities were paralyzed. The population is lamenting this incessant manipulation.

Intimidation of opponents in Mishiha commune.

On May 21, 2025, information reached Ligue Iteka that since the beginning of the election campaign, there has been intimidation of opposition party members. Young members of CNDD-FDD party, the "Imbonerakure," patrol day and night. They go from house to house, asking opposition party members for voter's cards to vote for them. They do this on all the hills of Mishiha commune. Among the victims were UPRONA party members, Mr. Daniel Ndayisenga, according to the president of the party in Mishiha commune.

On May 13, 2025, UPRONA party flag, which was hoisted on Mugera hill, Mugera zone, in Mishiha commune, was stolen by Imbonerakure at night. The perpetrators are not yet known.

On Rutsindu hill, Munzenze zone, Mishiha commune, the Imbonerakure recovered the voter's cards of those who were not CNDD-FDD members during the night of May 18, 2025, to vote for them on election day. For example, Eric Macumi and his wife, and Bernard Mugoranyi and his wife, all UPRONA members, were stripped of their voter's cards. This is a widespread movement.

Another example: in Mishiha commune, Munzenze zone, Rutsindu hill, on May 18, 2025, Ntahomvukiye Claver, who heads UPRONA, was threatened by the communal administrator Ndayisaba Frédéric to prevent him from continuing to teach his party throughout the hill and forcibly joining CNDD-FDD. Otherwise, he would be deboned and thrown into Ruvubu River to serve as fish feed. He resisted. On the evening of May 19, 2025, the Imbonerakure massively came to dance at his house, right near the compound, to further intimidate him. However, he did not give in to this intimidation.

Disruption of CNL party activities in the new province of Butanyerera.

According to our sources, since the beginning of the election campaign in Kayanza commune, supporters of the pro-Agathon RWASA CNL have faced threats and intimidation from young CNDD-FDD Imbonerakure. Some have been beaten, while others have had their CNL party badges and voter's cards confiscated. The CNL party president in Kayanza commune is calling on the relevant authorities and the Independent Provincial Electoral Commission to enforce the electoral code for members of all parties.

Also in Kayanza province, on Kiryama hill, on the night of May 22, 2025, a strange thing happened. Several households of pro-Rwasa CNL members were attacked by the Imbonerakure (young people affiliated with CNDD-FDD). The latter ordered them to hand over their voter's cards. Many of them realized that this was an organized theft of voter's cards, especially against members of opposition parties.

CNL Party members intimidated and tortured in Kayanza by Imbonerakure militia

The intimidation suffered by CNL party members in Kayanza province is growing daily, laments Salvator Bigirimana, the provincial secretary of the party.

On May 16, 2025, in Gatara commune, on Muhingira hill, a man nicknamed Bora was attacked by Imbonerakure on this hill, who demanded to hand over his CNL uniform to unconditionally join the ruling party.

According to Salvator Bigirimana, secretary of CNL party in Kayanza, on May 21, 2025, at Karambi hill in Gatara commune, an Imbonerakure named Minani attacked a CNL member under the orders of Nkorerimana, a representative of the ruling party, and Karambi hill head Marie Ngozirazana, to take away his voter's card.

On the same Karambi hill, this CNDD-FDD party representative threatened to take away the voter's cards of two CNL party members, including Jean Marie and Emmanuel.

In Rango commune, also in Kayanza province, CNL party members are still being tortured by the ruling party's youth militias.

Spirate from Rango hill was tortured by two young Imbonerakure named Eric and Ignace while he was on his way home from work. These same Imbonerakure also attacked a CNL member from the same hill named Ntiruyaga and stripped him of his party uniform.

The same situation is also occurring in Muhanga commune, where on May 21, 2025, Havyarimana Deogratias, a CNL party representative in Muhanga commune, had to go through the forest to reach his home after receiving information that an Imbonerakure named Diomède, alias Buduri, was waiting for him along the way to attack him.

CNL party members in Kayanza are living in despair and fear during this election campaign period. Bigirimana Salvator, secretary of CNL party, says they have invented strategies to campaign in secret because if they appear in public places like others

after the campaign, the young Imbonerakure threaten CNL members to death if they do not agree to leave CNL and unconditionally join CNDD-FDD party.

Disruption of economic activities in Kirundo commune.

According to our sources, as of May 22, 2025, all the traders of the market and shops in Kirundo town were forced to participate in CNDD-FDD campaign, and the Imbonerakure Yusufu, Biboni, and Rurema went door to door to intimidate the traders who had not yet closed their doors. Ngobonziza, Nizigama, Gasongo, and Muheto, who had asked these Imbonerakure if they would close their doors during the other political parties' campaigns, were warned that they would be placed on the ibipinga list and closely monitored by the Imbonerakure.

The population is lamenting this behavior during this election period and the way the Imbonerakure close shops for CNDD-FDD party only.

Disappointment among opposition party representatives after their voting rights are revoked in Gitega province

On May 22, 2025, information received by Ligue Iteka reported frustration among opposition party representatives in Mutaho commune, Gitega province. They reported that their voter's cards were stolen by members of the ruling party in Mutaho commune. The perpetrator of this theft was a man named Jean de Dieu, a nurse at Mutaho health center. He demanded that all these representatives give their voter's cards. He said that CNDD-FDD members would vote for them.

These representatives are protesting against this decision, which deprives them of their right to vote. They claim that the June 5 election is neither democratic nor transparent.

Disruption of campaign activities by other opposition parties in Buhiga commune

Information received on May 24, 2025, on Buhiga hill, indicates that since 6:00 a.m., during a CNDD-FDD meeting in Kirwati quarter, the zonal

secretary holding the meeting, Alexis Bandyatuya-ga, pointed the finger at two CNL party members, pro-Honorable Rwasa, and APDR members, respectively: Gilbert from CNL and Daphrose Ndayisenga from APDR. He accused them of causing insecurity in the zone.

He then urged his members to prevent them from campaigning. This caused panic among these individuals, as they feared that the Imbonerakure could harm or even kill them. We await the rest of this message.

On the same day, Saturday, 24 May 2025, a team of CNDD FDD members commanded by the aforementioned zonal secretary went to Magamba hill, Buhiga zone and commune around 10 a.m. to raise awareness among the population of this hill about the upcoming elections. Our source told us that this hill has 150 households not registered for the elections. This shocked the local authorities and the ruling party. They subsequently formed a team of 8 people from other hills to go there to ask them the reasons for the non-registration. But according to the same source, those concerned did not attend this meeting.

Opposition members deprived of their vote's cards in Cibitoke province

Political tensions are intensifying in Cibitoke province ahead of the communal and legislative elections scheduled for June 5, 2025. Reports indicate intimidation, violence, and confiscation of voter's cards targeting opposition members, particularly those from UPRONA, CNL, and the Burundi bwa Bose coalition. This situation raises concerns that the elections could lack inclusivity and serenity.

According to local sources, opposition members are facing pressure and intimidation, which several reports say is orchestrated by the young Imbonerakure of the ruling CNDD-FDD party.

In the communes of Rugombo, Mugina, Murwi, and Mabayi, approximately one hundred opposition supporters have had their voter's cards confiscated. This operation, according to many observers, is aimed at weakening competing political forces in these strategic zones. Moreover, it is reported that cards are being acquired from opposition members for 5,000 Burundian francs each, according to the

same sources.

In addition to the deprivation of electoral documents, opposition parties warn of death threats against their members. Some members have already reportedly left the province, or even the country, to seek refuge in countries bordering Burundi. The Burundi Bwa Bose coalition is also expressing concerns about what it calls an "organized terror campaign" by youth members of the presidential party.

These political parties are appealing to the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI), asking it to fully fulfill its regulatory role. However, several voices are raising concerns about the bias of this institution, the majority of whose local officials are reportedly affiliated with CNDD-FDD.

Intimidation of UPRONA party members in Giharo commune

On May 24, 2025, at 3:30 p.m., on Mutwana hill in Butezi zone, Giharo commune, Rutana province, the hill head named Nemerimana Vincent terrorized a UPRONA party member named Athanase Niyungeko.

Since the latter was teaching how to vote on the electoral map, Nemerimana Vincent came and told him that he did not have authorization to teach UPRONA party on the hill he leads.

This UPRONA party members asked him to know what legal basis allowed him to stop their meeting. The zone head told him that he was in collusion with his superior, who had ordered him to arrest him and transfer him to the cell. This is not happening on this hill only. Similar acts are occurring across Giharo commune.

Opposition party members are demanding an immediate end to this bad behavior by CNDD-FDD party members in Giharo commune.

Death threats against UPRONA party members in Mishiha commune

Since May 17, 2025, Gasage Mathias and Karenga Silas, both UPRONA party leaders on Gitanga hill, in Gitanga zone of Kigamba commune, have been subjected to death threats and the risk of being killed and thrown into Ruvubu River if they continue their campaign for UPRONA. They are being

pressured to join the CNDD-FDD, but they are resisting.

Leading those intimidating them is an Imbonerakure named Kawenda. UPRONA representatives in Kigamba commune, Kanyarushatsi Venant and Seshahu Séverin, have already brought these threats to the attention of Kigamba local administration and UPRONA provincial representative, Birahanyi Ferdinand.

Intimidation against opposition party members in Giharo commune.

On May 19, 2025 at 7:00 a.m., Ntibahezwa Damas, head of Butezi zone; Kinunda Emile, CNDD-FDD

party representative on Kabingo hill, Butezi zone; and Ruhoranyi Léonard, CNDD-FDD party representative on Kibimba hill, Butezi zone, went to Cyprien NITEGEYEKO's home to terrorize his wife Pauline Barikeka. Pauline is a member of UPRONA party. The three local representatives of the ruling party told her that she will die if she does not agree to join their party (CNDD-FDD).

She categorically refused, saying she could not leave her mother's party to join a party she did not feel comfortable with.

And then they forced her to wear their CNDD-FDD party jersey and obliged her to attend ceremonies the next day.

1.2. SECURITY CONTEXT

A fire ravaged a carpentry workshop in Rutana commune

Electrical machines used in the carpentry workshop, worth approximately 30 million Burundian francs, as well as a large number of planks and various materials, were completely damaged by a fire that engulfed the entire workshop and everything inside. This workshop is located in Birongozi quarter in Rutana city. This fire occurred around 2:00 a.m. Since the fire truck supposed to be assigned to Rutana had been sent to Ngozi, another arrived around 4:00 a.m. from SOSUMO in Gihofi. This demonstrates the State's inability to protect property and its owners. The government has a responsibility to protect both property and people. Otherwise, it constitutes a violation of human rights (namely, the right to property and security). It is important to note that this is the third time a devastating fire has occurred at this location.

More than 600 Burundian soldiers cross the border into Uvira in the DRC to block the M23 advance

More than 500 Burundian soldiers crossed the Rusizi River on May 22 and 24 to assist the Congolese army and its allies in the face of the M23 offensive. This deployment, marked by an escalation of fighting in the eastern region of the DRC, is causing serious concern among border populations.

Tension is rising at the border between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

According to concordant security sources, a battalion of 624 Burundian soldiers from the Burundi National Defense Force (FDNB) crossed the Rusizi River on May 22 and 24, via the new bridge currently under construction on the street 6, at Kaburantwa hill, in Buganda commune (Cibitoke province).

This military movement, seen as reinforcement for the DRC Armed Forces (FARDC), is part of joint operations against the M23 rebels. These forces are also joined by local militias such as the Wazalendo, the Imbonerakure, and the FDLR. The latter are accused of involvement in the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

An intensification of clashes has been reported in Imbo Plain, a strategic area close to the border. In addition to the land crossing at Kaburantwa, other Burundian units also reportedly transited via Lake Tanganyika, as well as the border posts of Gatumba, Vugizo-Warubondo, towards the coastal city of Uvira.

A military source, requesting anonymity, confirmed that intense assaults are being prepared against M23 positions. This military coalition, born out of an emergency following the loss of several key cities such as Goma, Bukavu, and Kamanyola, is currently attempting to halt the rebel advance towards Uvira, a key city in the region.

But some observers, such as this military strategy

specialist based in Bujumbura, remain skeptical. He cites the heavy losses recently suffered by the FDNB around Walikale in mid-May, where several Burundian soldiers were reportedly killed or captured. A surviving soldier, for his part, spoke of the capture of around fifty of his companions and the seizure of a many equipment.

When asked about these human losses, a senior commander of standby troops in Cibitoke preferred to evade the question, simply referring to "elements ensuring border security."

In the field, fighting rages, and heavy weapons echo as far as the other side of Rusizi River. This situation is forcing hundreds of Congolese civilians to flee to the communes of Rugombo and Buganda. Worried and exhausted, the region's residents are calling on the international community to initiate peace talks between the different parties involved to end the violence in eastern Congo.

Weapons distribution to the Imbonerakure to intimidate the opposition in Cibitoke

As the communal and legislative elections scheduled in less than two weeks approach, tensions are rising in Cibitoke province, western Burundi. Several security sources report that a massive arms distribution is underway, targeting young Imbonerakure members of CNDD-FDD presidential party.

According to these reports, rifles, mainly Kalashnikovs, are being distributed in the province's six communes, with an average of around ten per com-

1.3. JUDICIAL CONTEXT

The principal of Rumonge communal High School is wanted by the courts

The principal of Gatete Al Maktoum Communal High School, in Rumonge commune, has been on the run since Friday, May 16, 2025. He is reportedly wanted by the courts in connection with the theft of 15 laptops from this school two months ago.

The parents of the students attending this school are demanding that a new, honest and competent principal be appointed to head this school, which will become a boarding school. It should be noted that two school watchmen are being jailed in Murembwe prison, accused of complicity in the theft

of computers from this school. According to the same source, more than 100 weapons have already been distributed to young members who recently completed military training combining theory and combat tactics.

"The first weapons were distributed on Tuesday, May 20, around 11 p.m., namely at Buganda stadium and the party's provincial office, which is currently under construction," confided a young Imbonerakure member on condition of anonymity. He stated that further distribution phases are planned, including small and large-caliber weapons.

But this militarization of the presidential party's youth is not unanimous, even within their ranks. Some Imbonerakure fear abuses: thefts, settling of scores, or murders, facilitated by illegal possession of firearms.

Army vehicles and administrative officials have reportedly been seen at night transporting the weapons, according to the same sources. This situation is forcing several opposition members, particularly those from Agathon Rwasa's CNL, to flee to Burundi bordering countries.

Supporters of other opposition parties, namely those of Burundi Bwa Bose coalition led by Frodebu, Uprona, and others, say they live in constant fear, threatened daily. As the election date approaches, this situation raises serious concerns about the security of the electoral process and the possibility of a free, peaceful, and inclusive election.

of computers from this school.

TGI Rutana sits in fragrance

On May 9, 2025. A 10-year sentence with a fine of 500,000 Bif is the verdict by Rutana High Court in a fragrance trial. This judgment was handed down against Metussera Mugisha, a 22-year-old accused of theft. He was caught on May 5, 2025 running in Birongozi quarter, with a stolen goat after cutting off its head.

The accused did not deny the charges against him and said he had been caught even earlier, red-handed, stealing two goats on Rongerero hill in Rutana commune. It should be noted that Mugisha

Metussera is a repeat offender, having just received a presidential pardon.

Arrest of a CNDD-FDD member in Buhiga Commune

On Wednesday, May 21, 2025, on Mwoya hill, Buhiga zone and commune, a 36-year-old CNDD-FDD man named Banzirumuhito tore up his voter's

card and that of his wife. Subsequently, his wife went to complain to the quarter head, who, in turn, arrested the man and took him to the zone head. The latter took him to a police officer, who imprisoned him. And then the prosecutor came to pick him up and took him to the provincial police station cell around 5 p.m.; he is awaiting a franchise trial there.

I.4. GOVERNANCE CONTEXT

Breaches during the election campaign in Muyinga commune

It is crucial to emphasize that this week was marked by serious violations of election campaign rules perpetrated by the ruling party. During this election campaign, the use of State vehicles, including those of State institutions, was widespread, namely the OBR's Suzuki car, as well as a Burundian army vehicle (a TOYOTA HILUX, Double Cab). Mem-

bers of the defense corps, namely senior officers of the Burundian army, also participated in rallies organized by CNDD-FDD party. This was evident this Wednesday, May 21, 2025, in Cumba and Gassave, Cumba zone, Muyinga commune. Members of the opposition parties do not dare to express their willingness to participate openly in their party rallies. Because they are intimidated by the Imbonerakure and fear reprisals that may follow them.

II. CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

II.1. RIGHT TO LIFE

II.1.1. Voluntary homicide

A body of an 8-month-old baby found in Gitega commune

On Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at around 5:40 p.m., the body of an 8-month-old female infant was discovered in the toilets of ECOFO Jimbi, located on Jimbi hill, Mungwa zone, Gitega commune and province.

The police quickly arrested the alleged perpetrator of the murder, a young woman named Nahimana Ornella, aged 21.

According to our sources, the body was removed from the toilet and buried in dignity on Wednesday in Jimbi cemetery. The same sources add that this girl had dropped out of 9th grade early the second term of this school year. She is currently being jailed in the provincial police station cell in Gitega pending further investigation.

According to Nkeshimana Emmanuel, head of Mungwa zone, the reasons behind this act are not yet known.

II.1.2. Bodies found

A young woman found hanged in her room in Bukeye commune

On May 20, 2025, on Kigereka hill, Bukeye commune, the body of a woman was found hanging from a mosquito net in the master bedroom.

Kwizerimana Diane, aged 24, mother of a 7-month-old child, was married to Kazirukanyo Damascene, aged 31, a farmer and member of CNDD-FDD party. According to local sources, the latter returned home around 8 p.m. from his party's election cam-

paign meeting in Bukeye commune city. Arriving home, according to the same sources, he called his wife but received no answer. When he broke down the door, he found his wife dead, hanging in the bedroom.

He immediately called the hill head, Kigereka Mpa-wenayo Gérard, who arrived quickly. The next day, the body was buried in Kigereka hill cemetery. No investigation has been conducted to date.

The same sources indicate that the young couple

lived in perfect harmony.

An elderly woman found dead in Gitega province

The body of a woman named Charlotte Nyanduza, aged 84, was found hanging from a rope on the roof inside her house. She was seen on the afternoon of Saturday, May 24, 2025, on Rutanganika hill in Makebuko commune in Gitega province.

This information was confirmed by Daniel Bitungimana, Rutanganika hill head, who described it as suicide. According to this hill head, the reasons that urged this elderly woman to commit suicide are still unknown. However, he added that Makebuko police had gone to the scene for investigation purposes. The victim was quickly buried on the same Saturday, May 24, 2025.

Two bodies found in Cibitoke

On May 24, 2025, residents of Gisaba hill, in Buhindo zone of Murwi commune, woke up in shock. Two fresh bodies were discovered not far from a gold mining site. The victims, known as Marc Nzeyimana, aged 30 and Juventus Kubwayo, aged 28, were also known to be active gold miners in the region. Both wore the uniforms of CNDD-FDD ruling party.

According to local security sources, the two young men were returning from a presidential party meeting held the day before in Cibitoke province town. They were in possession of a few grams of gold, a

loot that would have attracted their executioners. "They were murdered in cold blood, then robbed," a local source revealed. The assailants allegedly used bladed weapons such as machetes, knives, and a rope to strangle the victims.

The identity of the perpetrators remains unknown, although several Gisaba residents point the finger at some of CNDD-FDD's Imbonerakure youth league members. "They are regularly cited in cases of theft and intimidation. This is not the first time that violence has been attributed to their group," accuses a resident of Gisaba hill.

According to the same local source, Murwi communal administrator, Melchiade Nzokizwanayo, acknowledges the facts and calls on the population to cooperate fully with security forces to ensure the investigations are completed. However, he firmly denies any involvement of the Imbonerakure, calling the accusations against them "unfounded lies."

Pending the results of the investigations, residents are demanding justice and protection in the face of the growing insecurity plaguing Cibitoke province.

A body found in Muyinga commune

On Saturday, May 17, 2025, Ligue Iteka source revealed that the body of an elderly man was found in Gakashi, in Swahili quarter of Muyinga zone and commune. According to sources close to the area (where the body was found), the deceased was allegedly the victim of a settling of scores, as he was suspected of sorcery.

II.1.3. People killed following the settling of scores

A person killed by his son in Giharo commune

At Rutana High Court on May 20, a sentence of 20 years of penal servitude was handed down against Turufu Ndayishimiye, a 23-year-old man from Giharo hill, in Giharo zone and commune, for brutally killing his own father, Melance Ndikumana, an octogenarian (80 years old).

This occurred during a trial on the grounds of fra-

grance held on Wednesday morning. During this trial, the public prosecutor in Rutana province reported that on the night of 15 May 2025, Turufu Ndayishimiye used a hoe handle to hit his father on the head, killing him instantly.

According to information from the scene, the perpetrator of this parricide wanted to seize his father's property, especially since he was an only child. Turufu did not deny the charges against him.

II.1.4. Abductions and/or enforced disappearances

A returnee abducted in Gitega province

On May 21, 2025, Ligue Iteka received information regarding the abduction of a 44-year-old man, married and father of three children, named Eric Niyongère. He lived in Rango quarter, in Gitega province town. According to our source, Eric Niyongere had recently returned to Burundi in early April 2025, after spending nine years in exile.

On Tuesday morning, April 20, 2025, residents of Rango quarter noticed two pickup trucks parked on a road, accompanied by soldiers moving along the road. Several people, including Eric Niyongere, came out to investigate. According to the same source, the soldiers were moving through the quarter, leading Eric to be unaware that he was the target. Suddenly, soldiers forced him to kneel with their weapons before forcing him into one of the vehicles. Shortly after, the soldiers quickly left with the two pickup trucks, without anyone being able to identify them or intervene. They also took two cell phones: Eric's and his wife's. Since that day, no information has been released regarding Eric's whereabouts.

A friend of Eric in the Scout movement indicates that some quarter and commune officials may be aware of the events, but so far, administrative and police authorities have remained silent on the matter. It has also been reported that such behavior by

the military is not common in this region. During searches or security operations, it is usually the police who take the initiative. Since this incident, Bertyne, Niyongere Eric's wife, has remained completely silent and appears deeply affected. Our source adds that Niyongere Eric had no background of conflict or known problems in the community.

Abductions of 4 deportees from Rwanda and detained in the Judicial Police cell in Kirundo commune

On 22 May 2025, at 11:30 a.m., four people who were jailed in Kirundo P.J. cell were taken into a double-cab pickup truck (with tinted windows) by the provincial head of the National Intelligence Service (SNR) to a location that is still unknown.

Of the four, only one person has been identified by the Kirundo population. He is Emmanuel Nsabiye-ra, 32 years old; son of Joseph Nkuranga, an IDP of 1993 at Kagege hill site, Busoni commune. The victim had been living in Rwanda since 2003 to look for work, after passing the national examination, of course. His family lacked the means to pay school fees. The other three have not been identified.

According to reliable sources, they had been returned by Rwandan police on 20 May 2025 via Gasenyi border.

II.2. PHYSICAL AND/OR MENTAL INTEGRITY

II.1.1 Rape

A girl raped in Kabezi commune, Bujumbura province

On May 22, 2025, at around 7:00 p.m., a child named N.A.B., daughter of Nduwimana Tharcisse and Ndarusanze Léa, from Kabezi commune and hill, Bujumbura province, was raped by a 39-year-old single trader known as Harimenshi Médard.

According to information from Kabezi, the 14-year-old victim is a student at Ecofo Kabezi I. She was a

loyal customer of this shopkeeper, who took the opportunity to invite her to his home. She visited the alleged perpetrator, and he took advantage of this opportunity to rape her. The victim tried to seek help but was unsuccessful. She returned home in anguish and despair, which prompted her to share everything that happened to her with her parents. The perpetrator was arrested and jailed in Kabezi communal cell. As for the victim, she received all the necessary care at Kabezi district hospital.

II.2.2. Intentional wounding

A Priest attacked by an Imbonerakure at Sainte Marie Immaculée High School in Buhonga

On May 24, 2025, at Buhonga Catholic parish, in Kanyosha commune, Father Jules Kubwimana, head of Sainte Marie Immaculée High School in Buhonga, was attacked by an Imbonerakure.

According to an eyewitness, the incident occurred while he was trying to create an atmosphere conducive to his students' study.

Testimonies from the scene indicate that Imbonerakure had entered the school grounds for a soccer match, despite the administration's explicit prohibition.

The priest reportedly politely asked them to interrupt the match due to upcoming exams.

However, the situation quickly escalated. Rodrigue, nicknamed Moruta, one of the Imbonerakure, attacked the priest and violently beat him, even breaking his glasses. Other members of the group reportedly watched the scene without reacting.

Alerted by the screams, students and teachers rushed to rescue the priest and managed to subdue the attacker. Refusing to hand the suspect over to his group superior, the parish leaders chose to inform the police. Rodrigue Moruta was arrested and spent the night in detention in Ruyaga zone.

II.3.3. Domestic violence

On May 19, 2025, on Nemba hill, in Kayanza commune and province, a 70-year-old man was violently assaulted by his partner. André Ntazina, aged 70, was violently attacked by his wife, Fredianne Niyonkuru, who is in her thirties. According to testimonies from local residents, verified by the hill administration, this tragic incident occurred following a drunken evening amid ongoing domestic conflict. The victim, seriously injured, was taken to the hospital for medical treatment. Meanwhile, the suspect fled, provoking intense anger within André

Ntazina's family.

Tensions began to rise, fueling fears of mob justice. Fortunately, the rapid intervention of security forces helped defuse the situation. Godefroid Niyonizigiye, the communal administrator of Kayanza, confirmed that a search for the suspect is underway. He urged the victim's family and the local community to trust justice. This case continues to spark outrage in Nemba, where residents are calling for increased vigilance in the face of increasing domestic violence.

III. ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

III.1. RIGHT TO HOUSING

In a difficult economic climate where Burundians face shortages of necessities, civil servants are struggling to cover their monthly needs. This problem is worsened by the government's policy of increasing rents in Bujumbura, without consideration for possible salary increases for civil servants. This situation raises significant questions about the economic viability of households.

In Bujumbura, the recent rent increase announced by the Government of Burundi through the Office of Urban Planning, Housing and Construction, is causing growing concern among tenants. A note dated May 22, 2025, issued by the Commissioner General of OBUHA, Dr. Ir. Lt Col Léonidas Nibigira, revealed an increase in rates of around

2.22, which reflects the inflationary trend in the real estate sector, according to the National Institute of Statistics of Burundi, based on the reference rents of August 2018. This information was perceived as a blow by a population that had expectations of price reduction measures, following the promises made by the Minister of Infrastructure in June 2023, concerning the construction of 33,000 housing per year to promote urbanization in line with an emerging Burundi by 2040. However, the prospects for realizing these ambitions seem compromised, given that the Government's priority seems to be focused on the development of Uvinza-Musongati-Gitega-Bujumbura-Uvira-Kindu railway network.

The increase in rents observed since 2021 has been reinforced by the destruction of illegal buildings, leaving many residents looking for housing, creating an imbalance between an already limited supply and growing demand. Furthermore, the rising cost of living, particularly the increase in the price of building materials and the devaluation of the Burundian currency, contributes to complicating this situation. Between 2023 and 2024, the Burundian franc suffered a significant devaluation of approximately 25% against the US dollar, reaching record rates on the black market. At the same time, the deteriorating security situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has led to a considerable influx of refugees into Bujumbura, with some people even offering to pay their rent in dollars, which allows some landlords to increase their rates.

Faced with this situation, Ligue Iteka expresses its concerns about the precarious conditions of tenants, emphasizing that they are struggling to meet their basic needs in the face of soaring living costs. They are thus vulnerable to evictions without notice and rent increases deemed arbitrary, while their incomes stagnate or even decline. In this unstable climate, it is crucial that the Government of Burundi implement effective measures to regulate rents, protect tenants' rights against abuse, and promote the construction of social housing to meet the needs of low-income households.

III.2. DISRUPTION OF ECONOMIC LIFE FOR CNDD-FDD CAMPAIGN

Closure of businesses in Cibitoke

After ten days of campaigning for the legislative and communal elections of June 5, 2025, it is clear that the activities of Cibitoke residents are significantly affected. CNDD-FDD, the most active party in the field, continues to issue various threats, including murders targeting the opposition and those who choose to support other candidates.

Despite its media coverage, the ruling party's popularity has diminished and it must force people to attend its meetings. In addition to the restriction on participation, stores and other commercial units must close during meetings.

III.3. RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Exams stolen by the principal of the fundamental school in Rumonge

On Monday, May 19, 2025, the Communal Education Direction (DCE) of Rumonge issued a definitive expulsion order for five students, including three students in 3rd grade post-fundamental school at the urban communal high school. This disciplinary action was taken after these students were accused of being involved in the theft of English and social studies exam papers for the 7th grade during the second term of the current school year.

The incidents involved three schools in Rumonge city. According to information from the DCE, investigations have established that the principal of Kivumya fundamental school, Mugara hill, in Ga-

It is also worth noting the increase in the price of rice, which has reached 5,500 Bif per kilo since May 15, 2025. Recently, trucks from Kayanza and Ngozi have been supplying the market, leading to an increase in the price of this basic product for some population groups, from 4,800 to 5,500 Bif. According to a well-informed source, rice is used during campaigns to buy votes, particularly among residents of Muramvya, Kayanza, and Ngozi.

The population is worried about a possible economic crisis that could worsen due to the cessation of income-generating activities.

tete zone, Rumonge commune and province, is the key responsible for this fraud. He is said to have knowingly given the questionnaires to one of his students so that he could pass them on to some 7th-grade students, his evening classes students.

This situation has sparked a heated debate in Rumonge province. Many parents and teachers have expressed their anger at this perceived unfair sanction, highlighting the impunity enjoyed by the principal in question. Although he was arrested by the prosecutor's office, he was released a few weeks later. According to local sources, he reportedly received protection from some local school authorities due to his affiliation with CNDD-FDD ruling party.

Despite evidence of fraud and protests, no decision to cancel the exams in question has been made, a move strongly condemned by the parents of the punished students. They are demanding quick action from the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research to review this decision, punish the true culprit, and ensure fairness in the education system.

It should be noted that the expel decision contains anomalies, including:

1. The expel of a student on May 9, 2025, without a written document,
2. The expel, on May 19, 2025, of four students without a written document,
3. The expel decision was backdated and published on the morning of May 20, 2025,
4. The decision to expel three students in Grade 9 in Science at the Urban Communal High School, even though it verbally expelled four,
5. The expel decision did not contain any copy for information.

Uncertainty among students in final year classes (fundamental section) in Mwaro commune

As the National Examination for the 9th grade is scheduled for this Monday, May 26, 2025, to May 28, 2025, students in this grade at Mwaro I Communal High School will sit for this exam without having taken the Science and Technology subject since the beginning of the school year in September

2024.

The Science and Technology subject is composed of four sections: Biology, ICT, Chemistry, and Physics.

Since the beginning of this school year, Mwaro I Communal High School has had a new principal named Célestin Nduwimana holding a Bachelor's degree in Biology. He has not taught this subject, nor has he even given it to other teachers.

Yet, in previous years, this subject was taught by the previous principal, who held the same qualifications as this one. After resigning from this position, he is now a teacher at another school (Mwaro High School).

According to the parents of students at this school, at the beginning of the third term, the school principal gave it to a teacher if this school with Bachelor's degree in Biology named Kabuhungu. Since there was little time left before the end of the school year, he only taught the Biology part of this subject. Especially since it corresponded to his field of study.

Thus, these students will sit the national examination without any knowledge of ICT (Information and Communication Technology), Chemistry, or Physics.

The parents of these students lament that had they known, they would have transferred them to other schools to avoid being victims of this situation, which was not their fault.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ligue Iteka strongly denounces the persistent deterioration of human rights in Burundi and condemns the impunity enjoyed by perpetrators of crimes. It calls on the Burundian authorities to take all necessary measures and recommends the following:

To the Government of Burundi :

- ⇒ Prohibit intimidation activities by the Imbonerakure, especially during elections;
- ⇒ Guarantee the protection of fundamental rights and end violence committed by the Imbonerakure;
- ⇒ Conduct thorough, impartial, and transparent investigations into reported cases of arbitrary arrests, abductions, violence, and killings. Those responsible must be brought to justice in accordance with the law.

To the CENI and its branches :

- ⇒ Ensure the fair and accessible distribution of voter's cards;
- ⇒ Ensure the safety of all political actors and citizens;
- ⇒ Facilitate a fair and transparent electoral campaign.