



Refugee Documentation Centre (Ireland)
LEGAL AID BOARD

Democratic Republic of the Congo – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 8 September 2011

Any information on recent treatment of supporters of General Faustine.

An article published by the independent news network *Great Lakes Voice* states:

“Last month, DRC police revealed 126 people to the media, claiming that they were involved in a February 27 coup attempt against President Joseph Kabila who was not at his palace at the time. After many theories, the police told the media that the February 27 coup attempt was organized and executed by the exiled General Faustin Munene who is in Congo Brazzaville.” (Great Lakes Voice (4 April 2011) *Gen. Faustin Munene, a thorn in Brazzaville and Kinshasa relations?*)

An article published by the *West Africa Newsletter* states:

“According to our sources, the attack resulted from an improbable alliance between two people currently under house arrest in Brazzaville: Faustin Munene, the nephew of Pierre Munene, a former comrade-in-arms of Laurent Kabila, and Udjani Mangbama Mambenga, the head of the Enyele militia group from the Congolese province of Equator, who has fallen out with the authorities in Kinshasa. The two are understood to have brought together some 60 men, including 20 fighters close to Munene who trained in Angola. The attack happened at around 1.30pm at Kabila's residence in Camp Kokolo, in the Congolese capital, when a group of five Enyele arrived at the entrance and told the president's guards that they had a meeting with the Swiss ambassador to Congo, whose residence is close to the president's. When they saw the visitors were carrying machetes the guards opened fire, killing three of the men.” (West Africa Newsletter (10 March 2011) *Kagame at Kabila's side*)

An *Agence France Presse* report states:

“Around 100 fighters were behind simultaneous attacks Sunday on the home of the Democratic Republic of Congo president and an army base that left about a dozen people dead, officials said. One of those arrested after the assault carried a DR Congo military identity card and was a former opposition member, a government spokesman said Monday, as a UN official said some of the group may have arrived from neighbouring Republic of Congo. The men who launched the brazen lunchtime attack, which officials have said was an attempted coup, were armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles, rocket launchers, machetes and bows and arrows, the government spokesman said. About 100 attackers split into two groups to storm President Joseph Kabila's home in the capital Kinshasa and the army's logistical base at Kokolo further south, the UN source said separately, citing security forces. Kabila's presidential guard killed 10 of the attackers and around 30 were arrested, 16 of them on Sunday night, the UN source said on condition of anonymity.”

(Agence France Presse (28 February 2011) *Around 100 fighters said behind DR Congo attacks*)

See also *Agence France Presse* report which states:

“There is a link between the attackers and (General Faustin) Munene and Ondjani (Mangbama),’ two Congolese from the DR Congo detained in Brazzaville, which has refused to extradite them, the source said. The Republic of Congo ‘lacks the will to cooperate with us to pacify the region, by turning these people over to us,’ the source added. General Munene, who has been accused by the DR Congo of an ‘attempted coup d’etat’, was arrested in mid-January in Pointe-Noire, the economic capital and second city of the Republic of Congo. Ondjani Mangbama, accused of having led an insurgency at the end of 2009 in the northwest of the DR Congo, has been detained in the Republic of Congo since May 2010. During the clashes on February 27, 11 of the attackers and eight loyalist soldiers were reported killed, and more than 100 people were arrested in the aftermath of the clashes. About 100 attackers split into two groups to storm Kabila’s home in the capital and the army’s logistical base at Kokolo further south, a United Nations source said at the time, quoting security forces. Kabila’s presidential guard killed 10 of the attackers and around 30 were arrested, the UN source said on condition of anonymity.” (Agence France Presse (25 March 2011) *Kinshasa says recalling envoy to Brazzaville after clashes*)

An *Africa Confidential* article states:

“The government called it a terrorist attack but what actually happened is still not clear. The raid on one of President Joseph Kabila’s homes came in the early afternoon of 27 February, a Sunday, when a couple of dozen soldiers forced their way past a roadblock manned by the Garde republicaine in the smart Gombe district of central Kinshasa and were stopped at a second barrier. First reports said that six of the attackers died, along with one Republican Guard. This was later revised to eleven attackers and eight Guardsmen, according to police Spokesman, Colonel Lole Onyondo. Day by day the number of alleged raiders rose, eventually reaching 126, of whom 80 were arrested. On the following day, Kabila summoned his *Conseil superieur de la defense*, which described the incident as a ‘terrorist offensive’, while Information Minister Lambert Mende Omalanga said the attackers had hoped to ‘spread fear across the nation’. Some captives were persuaded to confess that they had followed commanditaires (masterminds), Congolese and foreign, but two weeks later these remained unidentified. The government media claimed that some of the raiding party had carried machetes for chopping up their victims and amulets to make themselves invisible and invincible. By 7 March, the police Spokesman was claiming that the airport and television station had also been targets and that soldiers, probably from the same group, had tried and failed to get into the army’s main munitions store at Kokolo Camp, five kilometres away.” (Africa Confidential (18 March 2011) *Real bullets, phoney coup*)

This article also states:

“None of this is widely believed. In that same afternoon, a big crowd went to the stadium near Kokolo for a football match between the Vita Club and visitors from Zanzibar. Everything was calm, with no signs of official alarm. A

veteran journalist thinks the authorities gradually worked up the notion of a great conspiracy. The arrested suspects whom the authorities showed to reporters on 7 March said they were innocent and had been picked up from their workplaces. No questions were allowed. Officials claim that the attackers were heavily armed with rocket-launchers and a machine-gun but the only shots heard came from Kalashnikov assault rifles. It looks as if the government tried to exploit the event to justify a purge." (ibid)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

References:

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