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**Gunmen kidnap Haitian political leader - witnesses.**

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335 words

28 April 2005

10:15 pm

Reuters News

English

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PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, April 28 (Reuters) - Gunmen kidnapped a Haitian political leader on Thursday, witnesses said, raising more doubts about the prospect for elections set for October and November.

Dr. Jean Enold Buteau, head of the Movement for National Reconstruction and brother of Education Minister Pierre Buteau, was abducted in the parking lot of his medical clinic in the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, the witnesses said.

Buteau's vehicle was abandoned on the street, police sources said.

The poorest country in the Americas has been plagued by political and gang violence since its former president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was ousted in February 2004.

At least 675 people have died in the violence since September, and the number of abductions for ransom of professional and business people has increased in recent months.

Jessie Coicou, a spokeswoman for the Haitian National Police, said some police officers are members of criminal groups responsible for the recent spate of kidnappings.

"We call on the population to denounce them to the authorities," Coicou said.

Politicians and observers have questioned the ability of Haiti's appointed interim government to hold national elections as planned. Ballots are scheduled on Oct. 9 for local offices and on Nov. 13 for the presidency and legislative posts.

Despite the presence of a U.N. peacekeeping force sent to Haiti to restore stability following Aristide's departure, some areas of the country are controlled by members of the rebel force that ousted him.

Evans Paul, a leader of the Democratic Unity Convention party, said the security problem should not prevent Haiti from holding elections.

"We should not capitulate in the face of bandits who want to foil the transition process that goes through elections," Paul said.

Others say the elections should be postponed because of violence and lack of preparations.

"How can we go to to elections, how can we campaign in such insecure conditions?" asked Pierre Prince of the Haitian Democratic Reformer Movement.

Document LBA0000020050429e14t001rz

