Despite a recent ceasefire agreement, violent clashes broke out on Tuesday between AFC-M23 rebels and Wazalendo self-defense groups in Nyangezi, a locality in Walungu territory, South Kivu province, plunging the area into a renewed security crisis.

Residents reported heavy and light weapons fire echoing across the towns of Irhaga, Bwenda, Chiyanja and Businga, south of the Nyangezi trading center, as fighting continued into Wednesday. Fear has gripped local communities, with economic and educational activities brought to a near standstill.

The United Nation (UN) sponsored radio reported that the Weza School Complex, run by the Marist Brothers, remained shut on Wednesday, while other schools in the Munya area opened only under close security monitoring.

Thousands of civilians have fled their homes towards Bukavu, the provincial capital, seeking safety. Others have stayed behind, moving cautiously amid the sporadic gunfire. Local sources said at least seven civilians have been killed since the fighting began.

The main Nyangezi–Bukavu road remains open, but the route linking Nyangezi to Kamanyola has been closed since Sunday, disrupting humanitarian access and population movement.

The latest fighting follows recent attacks in Mazigiro, a locality in Kamisimbi, where Wazalendo positions were reportedly burned by AFC-M23 forces.

Local authorities and aid organizations have been urged to respond swiftly to assist the displaced and prevent further escalation in a region already weakened by years of armed conflict.

Since 2022, rhe M23, composed mainly of Tutsi defectors from the Congolese army, has seized significant territories, including Goma and Bukavu, leading to widespread displacement and humanity.

Multiple international bodies and governments have accused Rwanda of backing the M23 rebels.

Rwanda has consistently denied supporting the M23, asserting that its involvement in eastern Congo is a defensive measure against Hutu militias, particularly the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), which is linked to the 1994

genocide against the Tutsi.

The DRC government has accused the M23 of committing ethnic cleansing in areas like Rutshuru and Masisi, where local populations have been violently expelled.

The DRC and the M23 rebel group have signed a ceasefire agreement. On July 19, 2025, both parties signed a “Declaration of Principles” in Doha, Qatar, facilitated by Qatar and witnessed by international observers, including the United States, the African Union, and the United Nations. This agreement aimed to end the ongoing conflict in eastern Congo and restore state authority in rebel-held areas.

However, the implementation of the ceasefire has faced challenges. Fighting has continued between government forces and the M23 rebels, with each side accusing the other of violating the ceasefire terms.

In an effort to enforce the ceasefire, on October 14, 2025, the DRC government and the M23 agreed to establish a monitoring and verification mechanism in Doha. This body is tasked with investigating ceasefire violations and convening within seven days of its establishment.

Despite these efforts, the situation remains fragile, with ongoing tensions and violations reported. The international community continues to monitor the situation closely, hoping for a lasting resolution to the conflict.