Kenya plunged into turmoil on Tuesday as thousands of protesters stormed parliament buildings in Nairobi, clashing with police and leaving several dead. The violence erupted in response to a controversial finance bill proposing new taxes, sparking outrage over the rising cost of living.

Frustrated by soaring prices for fuel, food, and other essentials, demonstrators demanded legislators reject the bill. The situation escalated as protesters overwhelmed police barricades, breached parliament security, and set fire to a portion of the building. Reports from medical personnel indicate at least five fatalities, with some deaths occurring as protesters provided aid to the injured.

President William Ruto condemned the incident as “treasonous” and vowed to quell the unrest “at whatever cost.” The Kenyan military has been deployed to support police and secure critical infrastructure.

The proposed tax increases fueled anger amongst citizens, particularly young people who had supported Ruto based on promises of economic relief. This anger manifested in widespread protests across the country, targeting government buildings and disrupting daily life.

The Kenyan Human Rights Commission condemned the use of lethal force by police and urged President Ruto to halt the killings. Additionally, reports of internet disruptions and threats against media outlets raise concerns about freedom of expression during this critical time.

President Ruto is expected to sign the finance bill into law in the coming days, despite calls from religious leaders and others to reconsider. The violence underscores the economic hardship faced by many Kenyans and raises questions about the government’s ability to address public grievances. It remains to be seen if the bill will be implemented, and how Kenya will navigate the social and political fallout from this tumultuous day.