

Local militiamen have regained, Monday October 9 morning, the towns of Kitshanga and Burungu, territory of Masisi in the North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

According to local reports, the towns had previously been held by M23 rebels, an armed group active in the region since last year.

The rebels had captured several villages along the road connecting Kitshanga to Goma, resulting in a tense standoff with local militias and the DRC army.

Reports suggest that the M23 rebels vacated Kitshanga and Burungu to bolster their position in the Tongo axis of the Rutshuru territory, where their comrades in arms fell into an ambush by the militia.

The same sources spoke of detonations of heavy and light weapons heard between 5 a.m. and 7 a.m. local time, in the villages of Kanaba and Kisangani, in the Tongo group.

Some of their comrades were reported to have previously fallen into an ambush. This strategic move has allowed local militiamen to regain control of the cities. The sound of heavy and light weapons being fired in the Kanaba villages, Kisangani, in the Tongo group was reported, indicating intense fighting.

The upheaval caused by the conflict has seen the local population seeking refuge near the EAC forces base. With the constant state of flux and violence, the wellbeing and safety of civilians have become a pressing concern. The recent fighting has resulted in casualties, including one reported death and two injuries.

Already last Sunday, these militiamen reoccupied certain villages around Kitshanga and Burungu, sources say.

A man was killed during fighting between the two camps on Sunday on the Kinyandonyi-Ngwenda axis, northeast of Kiwanja.

The same day, two other people including a pregnant woman and a man were injured in Kitshanga by bullets and shrapnel.

M23 rebels are among the many active armed groups in the mineral-rich eastern region of the DRC, a region that has been a hotbed of conflict for years.

The presence of these groups has led to strained relations with neighboring countries, notably Rwanda, which the DRC accuses of supporting M23 rebels. Rwanda denies the claims.

This ongoing conflict has produced a humanitarian crisis, affecting thousands of innocent civilians and creating a sense of insecurity in the region.