The security situation in Kanyabayonga and surrounding areas remains tense despite a fragile calm on Sunday, June 9. This comes after sporadic mortar fire rattled Kanyabayonga on Saturday afternoon, with the source believed to be from the south of Lubero territory bordering the northern Bwito chiefdom in North Kivu.

While consistent reports suggest Congolese army control of the area, concerns remain. M23 rebels reportedly re-entered Bwito villages on Saturday, June 8, after a temporary occupation by armed groups on the Kikuku axis on Friday.

Sources detail a Friday evening clash between M23 rebels and a coalition of three local armed groups, resulting in the temporary capture of Mirangi, Lusuli, and Kyahala (approximately 20 km southwest of Kanyabayonga) by the local fighters. However, numerous accounts confirm the rebels' swift return with reinforcements the following day.

As of Sunday midday, M23 rebels maintained control over most of the Bwito chiefdom, extending from Bulindi village (10 km southwest of Kanyabayonga). Conversely, the Congolese army and its allies hold the Kilambo-Bitongi to Kanyabayonga corridor.

Meanwhile, civil society representatives from Bwito, who traveled to Kanyabayonga, urged for immediate assistance for displaced people in southern Lubero. They emphasized the urgent need for stability in this highly volatile region.

The M23, also known as the March 23 Movement or the Congolese Revolutionary Army, is a rebel group operating in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), primarily in the eastern province of North Kivu, which borders Rwanda and Uganda.

Formed in 2012 by dissidents from the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP), the M23 is a predominantly Tutsi rebel group. They gained notoriety for their armed conflict against the DRC government in 2012-2013. After a period of dormancy, the group re-emerged as a significant force in late 2021.