

Conflict intensifies in eastern DR Congo

Fierce fighting rages on in the Democratic Republic of Congo city of Goma, as M23 rebels and government forces exchange fire

MARCH 23 (M23) MOVEMENT

- One of about 100 armed factions vying for foothold in mineral-rich eastern DRC
- Rwandan-backed group consists primarily of ethnic Tutsis who failed to integrate into Congolese army
- Led major insurgency against DRC government in 2012, took up arms again in 2022. Group estimated to have 6,500 fighters

Jan 27-28, Goma: M23 rebels claim control of city, but reportedly facing pockets of resistance from army and pro-government militias

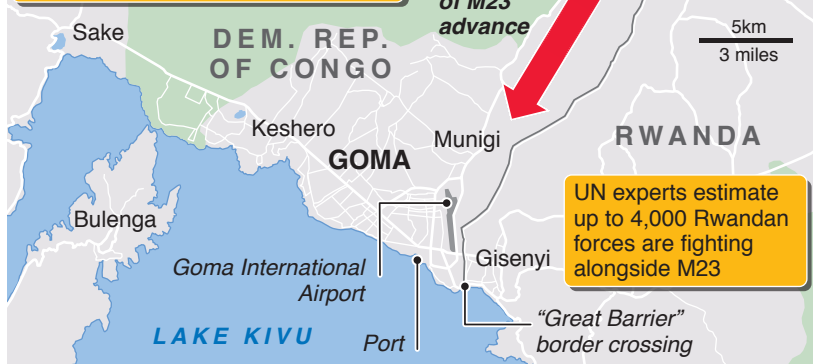


▲ Mount Nyiragongo

Direction of M23 advance



5km
3 miles



UN experts estimate up to 4,000 Rwandan forces are fighting alongside M23

■ Latest rebel advance has forced thousands to flee Goma – city of two million people is vital humanitarian aid hub for the region

■ UN and global powers fear conflict could spiral into regional war similar to those of 1996-1997 and 1998-2003 that killed millions