

Ngalula Ambush: Attack on Chinese Mining Convoy in South Kivu (September 2023)

Ngalula Village / Kimbi River Road, Fizi Territory, South Kivu, DRC

4°57'56.9"S, 28°48'52.6"E

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Incident Date: 1 September 2023

Fatalities: 4

Injured: 3

Victim(s) Profile: Chinese nationals and mine employees, Congolese soldiers, 1 Ghanaian driver.

Aggressor(s): Unidentified armed group, reported to originate from neighbouring Maniema Province; specific militia/organisational affiliation not established

On the morning of Friday, 1 September 2023, a four-vehicle convoy belonging to TSM Mining, carrying gold from the company's site at Ngalula toward Tanganyika Province, was ambushed on the road near the Kimbi river in Fizi Territory, South Kivu Province. Four people were killed: two Chinese nationals, a Congolese soldier, and a Ghanaian driver. Three others were wounded, including a Chinese mine employee, a Congolese mine worker, and a second Congolese soldier. The attackers, reported to have come from neighbouring Maniema Province, stole gold from the convoy and withdrew into the surrounding bush. No specific militia or organisation was identified as responsible.

TSM Mining operated an artisanal gold panning site at Ngalula, a village in Fizi Territory mapped by IPIS as an artisanal mining location, though IPIS's own data gives no further

locational detail beyond the village itself – consistent with the limited infrastructure such sites typically require. Around 11:00 local time on 1 September 2023, a convoy of four vehicles left the Ngalula site carrying gold bound for Tanganyika Province. The convoy was ambushed on the road near the Kimbi river. Sammy Badibanga Kalondji, the top Congolese official in Fizi Territory, said the attackers stole parcels of gold and carried them away into the bush. Four people were killed in the attack: two Chinese nationals, a Congolese soldier, and a driver identified in this case file as Ghanaian. Kalondji said three further people were wounded (a Chinese mine employee, a Congolese mine worker, and a second Congolese soldier) and stated that the attackers were local fighters from the neighbouring Maniema region, though no specific militia or armed group was named as responsible in any source reviewed.



IPIS's own research on the wider area notes that villages in this part of Fizi Territory, including Ngalula, have experienced interference from both FARDC elements and the FDLR (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda), though this report did not

establish a direct link between either force and the individuals who carried out the 1 September ambush specifically. Separately, Ngalula was the site of a fatal landslide at a gold quarry on 14 May 2021, in which one person was killed and two injured; New Civil Society coordinator Justin Wakati identified the affected site as the “Bikuma” quarry. It is not established whether this is the same quarry associated with TSM Mining's 2023 operations at Ngalula.

This ambush was the first in a series of attacks on TSM Mining and other Chinese-linked operations in Fizi Territory in the second half of 2023, including a direct attack on a TSM concession at Kachemba, in the Misisi mining area, on 9 October 2023, which killed a further four people (documented separately).





Two photos from the AFP X account from a post discussing the attack. Unclear whether this is the exact location of the attack. There is no street view data for this region. Alexis Huguet is a photographer working in the DRC capturing images of human rights injustices, so likely these photos were taken in the DRC.

<https://x.com/AFP/status/1697951254876667917/photo/1>

There was a landslide at a gold quarry in the same village, Ngalula on 14/05/21. A news article discussing the event quotes New Civil Society coordinator Justin Wakati who says that there is a gold quarry there called Bikuma. It is not clear if this is the same quarry.

<https://copperbeltkatangamining.com/landslide-in-a-gold-quarry-kills-one-and-two-injured-in-ngalula-fizi-south-kivu-drc/>

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