Hosts Rwanda made a near perfect start to the ICC Men’sT20 World Cup Sub Regional Africa A Qualifier in Kigali, as they defeated fancied Botswana by five wickets.

Martin Akayezu (four for 16) was the star with the ball, as his spell of four overs ripped Botswana out for 106.

Having been 63 for two at one stage, the Botswana innings was halted by accurate bowling on a pitch that had been quickened up by overnight rain. In pursuit of their target, Eric Dusingizimana (33 from 32 balls) and Orchide Tuyisenge (26 from 20 balls) made a blazing start, adding 52 in the powerplay.

Four quick wickets saw them slip to 80 for four, but Emmanuel Sebareme (14) managed to club a few calming boundaries, to see them home with 16 balls to spare.

In the other morning match, Lesotho was too strong for a plucky Mali side, defeating them by 31 runs. Mpiti Lerotholi (45 not out) lifted the principality to 138 for six in their allotted overs, with Waseem Yaqoob (21) and Mohammad Arbaaz Khan (17) chipping in.

Mali’s batting effort was built around skipper Cheick Keita, who clubbed a hearty 35 from 28 balls. But there was little support for him at the other end, as regular wickets undermined his best efforts. Yaqoob was exemplary with the new ball, snaring two for 7 upfront.

Ultimately, Mali was bowled out for 107, as Lesotho kept the pressure up and Mali got desperate. Afternoon action was abandoned due to rain, with Botswana well poised to bounce back with a victory over Seychelles. But rain had the final say on a day that started with an upset.

Rain continued to hamper the afternoon action on day 2 but hosts Rwanda still managed to bag a second consecutive victory.

They defeated St Helena by 54 runs, thanks to another fine team effort. Batting first, Rwanda notched 130 for eight in their 20 overs, thanks to a fast start from the in-form Eric Dusingizimana (52 from 43 balls) and Orchide Tuyisenge (18).

Emmanuel Sebareme then chipped in with a quick 22 not out, as Rwanda posted a competitive total. The St Helena discipline with the ball must be noted, as they

conceded just three extras. Andrew Yon was the star with the ball, with four for 30 in his spell of four overs.

In reply, Aiden Leo (24) and skipper Scott Fagan-Crowie (16) tried in vain to get something going, but Rwanda's bowling would not be denied. Sebareme picked up three for 15 with his off-spin, to secure a comfortable victory.

In the other completed match on day 2, Lesotho ran into a fired-up Botswana, still smarting from their upset defeat to Rwanda on day one. Botswana bowled out Lesotho for 91, with Dhruvkumar Maisuria taking the first five-wicket haul of the week.

Chasing the meagre target, skipper Karabo Motlhanka (52 from 23 balls) and Reginald Nehonde (28 from 25 balls) didn't need any help from the rest of the order, rushing to victory in 7.5 overs.

Motlhanka finished the match in style, clubbing a six to end proceedings.

There was frustration for both Kenya and the Seychelles, who were in control of their respective matches. Kenya had belted 209 for six against Malawi, with contributions right down the order, before rain had the final say. At the time the match was abandoned, Malawi were 11 without loss after three overs.

It was a similar story for the Seychelles, who posted 162 for three in their innings. They had Mali on the ropes, at 14 for two after four overs, but rain stopped their well-laid plans, with the match abandoned.

Botswana face Malawi this morning at Gahanga while Kenya take on Mali at IPRC.

In the afternoon hosts Rwanda face their toughest test yet when they come up against Kenya. Lesotho battled Seychelles in the other fixture.