

*By Jeje Muhinde;*

Mali scored three goals to progress to the final round of the Africa World Cup qualifying by routing 10-man Rwanda 3-0 on Thursday in Kigali.

Moussa Djenepo, Ibrahim Kone and Khalifa Coulibaly scored the goals for the Eagles at the Nyamirambo Regional Stadium as Rwanda played with over 10-men for more than seventy minutes following Djihad Bizimana early red card.

Mali was dominant from then on; Southampton winger Djenepo broke the deadlock after 19 minutes when he hit a shot in off the post for the lead.

Kone profited from a dreadful mistake from Rwanda goalkeeper Emery Mvuyekure, who gifted him the ball in front of the goal, to double the lead two minutes later into the recess.

The second half was more of game management for the Eagles nonetheless Khalifa Coulibaly put the icing on the cake with powerful thunder volleyball home from way out for 3-0, minutes from time to compound Rwanda's misery.

Mali players danced around the corner flag to celebrate their progression to the final playoffs, they top this group with 13 points, four points ahead of Uganda who they take on this Sunday in Morocco.

With the job done, Mali joined Senegal and Morocco to reach the playoffs that will take place in March. Thursday was the first of six days of qualifiers in Africa to bring the group phase to an end and decide the last 10.

Uganda earlier drew 1-1 with Kenya in the same group, and the Mali victory ensured Uganda was eliminated.

Kenya was playing just hours after its government announced it was disbanding the national soccer federation and firing its leaders amid allegations of mismanagement of money.

Federation president Nick Mwendwa refused to recognize the government's order, setting the two parties on a collision course.