

DRC's TP Mazembe have reportedly 'rejected' the chance to use services of one of the Confederation African Football (CAF) sponsorship partners ahead of the start of African Football League (AFL).

Africa's new flagship tournament is set to get underway this Friday with eight teams from across the continent ready to compete for a lucrative \$4million in prize money for the winner.

Ordinarily, Mazembe would have played the game in Lubumbashi, but a last-minute change saw the game moved to Dar es Salaam.

Both sides will meet on Sunday, in the first leg of their quarter final that was rescheduled by the AFL after the DRC government refused to give visa clearances for CAF's broadcasting equipment and certain dignitaries.

The match was set to take place in Lubumbashi but has since been transferred to neighbouring Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

In the other contentious incident, it reported that TP Mazembe have turned down CAF's offer to travel with Rwandair and to wear the "Visit Rwanda" on their jersey against Esperance FC.

CAF recently signed a partnership deal with Rwandair whereby they would be the air transport partner for the football tournament, and would take eight participants in teams to and from matches free of charge, but the Ravens have declined the offer, preferring to use their presidential airplane.

The refusal is said to be down to the fact that DRC accuses Rwanda of supporting M23 rebels, a radical military group that opposes the current administration in Kinshasa.

TP Mazembe will not play their African Football League (AFL) quarter final home leg match in their Lubumbashi base due to what the club's owner and president Moise Katumbi termed as "politics.

Unfortunately, they put politics into Congolese football. We have forgiven them, but they did everything for us not to play at home," said Katumbi.

He added; "I want to thank the Tanzanian authorities for welcoming us and allowing us to use the Stadium in Dar which is our second home."

In the meantime, Katumbi is confident that the new AFL tournament will help improve football in the continent, as it offers improved monetary investments for teams and players as well.

“We fought a lot to have this and I want to thank the FIFA and CAF presidents for playing their role in seeing us have this. It was not easy but we are here now. This is the pride of Africa,” Katumbi said.

“This tournament has the ability to change African football. Players will now be encouraged to remain in Africa because there is good money. If this continues, very soon, an African country will be in the final of the World Cup.” He highlighted.