

Algerian writers denounce ban on Egyptian books

ALGIERS: Several Algerian writers and intellectuals have signed a petition denouncing organisers of Algeria's international book fair for banning books from Egypt in a dispute over football.



Intellectuals based in Algeria, Europe and North America signed the petition, initiated by Ahmed Bensaada, a doctor of physics and author living in Canada, dismissing the decision as "abhorrent."

The signatories said the ban on Egyptian books was a "unilateral attempt to punish Egyptian literature and Algerian readers whereas the Algerian team continued to play football, the initial source of the conflict, with the Egyptian team."

Bad feelings still linger between Algeria and Egypt after the teams clashed last year in 2010 World Cup football qualifying matches that triggered off-field violence.

On November 12, a bus transporting the Algerian team in Cairo was pelted with stones, injuring three players. Two days later in Algeria, Egyptian business premises were attacked and their houses were ransacked.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak paid a "friendly" visit to Algiers on June 4 in an effort to solve the dispute.

Source: AFP