

Worries increase regarding safety of Egypt – Algeria World Cup Match

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The volatile nature of the fixture and the unkind attitudes from both sides in the build-up to the game is prompting fears concerning the safety and security of the encounter

As football pride continues to heat up the situation in North Africa ahead of the November 14 match in Cairo between Egypt and Algeria - a fixture that will decide which team qualifies for the 2010 World Cup - the match is now something of a security concern.

Goal.com Arabic editor Mohammed Awaad explained, "Due to the stressful environment created by the media concerning the Egypt-Algeria match, there is now great worry surrounding the security situation and especially the safety of Algerian fans."

Following the first qualifying match in Algiers, commentaries in the media in both countries have gone beyond football, sometimes touching on issues to do with national pride and history.

"The Algerian media have attacked Egyptians by means other than football, and they used politics and history, not sports in their articles," Awaad continued. "This situation has created a reaction from the Egyptian media and the Egyptian FA's Sameer Zahir has said, "You can do anything with Algerians, but we want to qualify."

"These words from Zahir translated in Algeria as an invitation for violence, and now all media and social experts are very worried concerning crazy actions from both sides."

In the last round of matches Egypt continued their march towards an elusive World Cup spot, beating Zambia 1-0. This tied them at the top of Group 3 with Algeria, who moved ahead again a day later by virtue of a 3-1 win over Rwanda, setting up an incredibly exciting finale.

The match is a do-or-die situation for the Egyptians, who trail Algeria by three points and will need to win the match by a three goal margin to assure qualification. Algeria would qualify with any result better than a 1-0 loss.

A 2-0 home win could see the need for play-off fixtures, or the stalemate could be resolved by the drawing of lots.

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