

Saturday, 01 August 2009

Interior ministry says magazines violated media code
Morocco seizes magazines for king opinion poll



Moroccan seizes two magazines over for king opinion poll

RABAT (AFP)

Two Moroccan magazines were taken off news stands on Saturday after they published an opinion poll on the 10 years under the reign of King Mohammed VI, officials said.

TelQuel and Nichane, which are among the country's biggest independent publications, published a poll that was conducted with France's Le Monde newspaper on the first decade of Mohammed's rule.

Morocco's communications minister said Le Monde would not be allowed to sell any edition with the poll.

"This poll reveals that 91 percent of Moroccans who were interviewed say that the performance of the reign of King Mohammed VI is positive or very positive," TelQuel director Ahmed Benchemsi told AFP.

The poll coincided with the celebrations on Thursday of the 10th anniversary of Mohammed's accession to the throne after the death of his father Hassan II.

Benchemsi said Le Monde is expected to publish the poll in its Tuesday edition.

The Interior Ministry said TelQuel and Nichane, which have respective circulations of 35,000 and 50,000, were seized for violating the country's media code. It did not provide another explanation.

Communications Minister Khalid Naciri warned that any Le Monde edition with a poll on the king would not be sold in Morocco.

"The same treatment will be applied to anyone who will publish this poll," he told AFP.

"The monarchy in Morocco ... cannot be the object of debate even through a poll," he said. "If Le Monde

publishes this poll, it will not be able to be sold in Morocco. It's a question of consistency."