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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia 140th for Free Press

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Russia has risen 13 places in the annual press freedom rating released by Reporters Without Borders but still had a poor record, the watchdog said.

The country occupies 140th place among 178 entrants on the list released in New York on Tuesday.

"The system remains as tightly controlled as ever, and impunity reigns unchallenged in cases of violence against journalists," the report said about Russia. The increase was because of a particularly bad preceding year, not systemic improvement, it said.

The freest countries are Finland, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, with Turkmenistan, North Korea and Eritrea coming at the bottom of the list. ◙

(AP, MT)

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