

Sudan occupies bottom 10 of Press Freedom Index - Report

For the second year in a row, Sudan occupies one of the worst positions in the press freedom index 2013 published on Wednesday, 30 January 2013 by Reporters Without Borders. Out of the 179 countries included in the list, Sudan occupies number 170.

A Sudanese journalist, Faisal Mohamed Saleh, told Radio Dabanga from Khartoum that various factors influenced in Sudan's poor qualification in the press freedom index.

"The security services exercise direct control on newspapers and on media houses. They prevent journalists from writing articles or confiscate and prevent editions from being printed. This causes severe financial losses for media houses' owners" he said.

In addition, many daily papers were shut down for no legal reasons, the journalist pointed out. These newspapers, according to him, are: Rai al-Sha'ab, Gerida, Alwan and Ajas Alhurria.

The government of Sudan controls "everything" Saleh said, stressing that this hinders the population in obtaining information.

The journalist said the indicators above will "always put Sudan in low positions" especially when compared to other Arab or African countries.

'Ruthless reprisals'

"The Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders does not take direct account of the kind of political system but it is clear that democracies provide better protection for the freedom to produce and circulate accurate news and information than countries where human rights are flouted," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Christophe Deloire said.

He added that "[i]n dictatorships, news providers and their families are exposed to ruthless reprisals (...)".

It is stated in the report that "Omar al-Bashir's Sudan, where more newspapers were seized and the arrests of journalists continued during the summer, is stuck firmly in 170th place, in the bottom 10 of the index."

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