



Philippines ranks 73rd in worldwide freedom index

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The Philippines ranked 73rd out of 162 countries in the Human Freedom Index (HFI), a study by Canada's Fraser Institute, Germany's Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, and the Cato Institute in the United States showed.

The country slid two spots from its previous ranking in the fourth edition of the annual index, which uses a 10-point scoring system.

The index "captures the degree to which people are free to enjoy important rights such as freedom of speech, religion, association, and assembly, and also measures freedom of movement, women's freedoms, crime and violence, and legal discrimination against same-sex relationships."

HFI ranks the countries based on 79 distinct indicators of personal, civil, and economic freedom, using data from 2008 to 2016, the most recent year for which sufficient data are available.

In the 2018 Index, the Philippines registered a score of 6.92, at par with the global average Human Freedom rating of 6.89.

The country scored 6.50 in the "Personal Freedom" category, 7.34 in the "Economic Freedom" and 6.92 in the "Human Freedom" category.

Its aggregate score of 6.92 was 0.13 points below its previous ranking in 2015-16, the study noted.

New Zealand topped the rankings followed by Switzerland, Hong Kong, Australia, and Canada.

Among the South Asian countries, the Philippines ranked third, just behind Singapore (8.16) and Cambodia (7.20).

The Philippines was also named 100th in Personal Freedom, 49th in Economic Freedom, and 73rd in Human Freedom,

In the foreword of the report, authors claimed that "aspiring authoritarian rulers in nations such as Poland, Hungary, and the Philippines may have little interest in imposing their despotic vision of 'good governance' outside their borders—but the real evangelists of authoritarianism are emerging elsewhere. It's a bit like cancer—all cancer is bad, but metastasizing cancer can be lethal."