International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI)

IFJ List of countries that blocked media and Internet access*

*Until September 25 2019

Europe – 8 countries

Source: Council of Europe platform for the protection …., IFJ, EFJ and Disk Basinis Press Almanak

1. BULGARIA – 17/09: Suspension of Bulgarian National Radio Broadcasts points to Vulnerability of Editorial Independence.

2. TURKEY –
   - At least 170 media outlets have been closed down since 2016 over claims they spread “terrorist propaganda”. Access to thousands of websites and platforms has been blocked after a government decree authorising removals and blockages of websites without judicial oversight.
   - As of 10/01, 161 journalists are in prison, and 2,500 journalists are out of work after more than 130 media outlets were closed as part of the state of emergency
   - 16/07: Court Imposes Access Block on News Portals and Social Media.

3. BELGIUM – 19/07 The Daily Newspaper 'L'Avenir’ Locked Out

4. UKRAINE - 18/09: Ukrainian court rules to block access to 17 online media

5. RUSSIAN FEDERATION –
   - 6/08: In a news feature, BBC Russian reveals that a corresponding blocking order was issued to internet providers, confirming that Internet in central Moscow was “disabled at the request of law enforcement agencies” during Saturday’s protests. The reported disruption has been qualified as “the first state-owned shutdown in Moscow’s history”

6. ROMANIA - 01/03: Romanian Media Regulator Imposes 10-minute Blackout on Realitatea TV

7. HUNGARY –
   - 31/01: Largest opposition daily suspended in Hungary

8. MALTA - 16/01: Cyber attack against Maltese online news platform The Shift, following the publication of an investigation on corruption in the government deal with three of Malta’s public hospitals.

Africa – 10 countries
1. ZIMBABWE January 2019: Total internet shutdown during protests over a 150% increase in the price of fuel. The Government claimed it shut down the internet because it was “being used to coordinate the violence”.

2. GABON - 7/01: The Government shut down the internet following an attempted coup.

3. DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC): - 20/01: Internet access was shut down by the government following the threat of a protest march organized by the Catholic Church. The internet was blocked for 20 days in January after the disputed presidential elections.

4. SUDAN:
   - December 2018 – Now: The Bashir Government prior to its demise blocked social media services in Sudan amid protest calling on him to step down.
   - 3/06: The Military Transitional Council ordered the shutdown of internet mobile access in the country. “The two major mobile service providers, MTN and MOBITEL blocked internet services in a country where the majority of users access the internet via mobile services”.

5. BENIN - April 2019: Internet access was cut for at least 24 hours “following an executive order from the government” as the country prepares for its parliamentary election.

6. MALAWI - May 2019: the Government disrupted internet services for at least six hours during the counting process of the votes.

7. SOMALIA:
   - 13/5: the Government announced the blocking of internet and social media access “to stop students from cheating during exams”.
   - September 2019: Independent news websites blocked by Somaliland and Puntland authorities

8. LIBERIA - 7/06: The Weah Government blocked social media for 12 hours amidst threats of protest from civil society. Government later stated that the shutdown “ was a measure instituted by the Government for public safety and national security.”

9. ETHIOPIA - 22/06: Following reports of an attempted coup in the Amhara region, the Ethiopian Government shutdown the internet for close to 100 hours.

10. MAURITANIA - 25/06: protests began, the local ISPs put a complete Internet shutdown in place on the evening of June 25.

**Latin America: 1 country**

Source: NetBlocks
1. VENEZUELA:
   - 17/06 Streaming services restricted in Venezuela
   - Twitter and Instagram restricted in Venezuela during National Assembly sessions
   - 26/01 Total internet outages across Venezuela, affecting much of the southwest and east of the country. The outages, which began at 5:30PM UTC 26 January 2019 have lasted 28 hours
   - 23/02 Web platforms blocked in Venezuela-Colombia border standoff

Middle East and Arab World – 3 countries

Sources: IFJ and NetBlocks

1. EGYPT:
   - Since the al-Sisi regime took power in 2017, it has worked to block or shut down websites that are critical of the government.
   - 9/04: the Egyptian government restricted access to voiceonline.net, an opposition campaign petition website, after it reached 60,000 signatures to protest proposed changes to the Egyptian constitution.
   - 16/04: Over 34,000 different websites were suffering intermittent partial or complete blocks. Fortunately, citizens were able to use VPNs to access these sites. BBC News, Facebook, Alhurra News were among the websites blocked.
   - June 2019: Egyptian media company Al-Tahrir was blocked for unknown reasons
   - 18/04: Bitly link shortener blocked in Egypt, affecting the access to millions of websites.
   - 25/09: BBC Arabic version blocked, twitter and Facebook Messenger restricted

2. ALGERIA - 22/02: the Algerian government implemented regional blocks as protestors took the streets to call for the Algerian president to step down. These regional blocks continued intermittently until March 2. The Internet blackouts were mostly centered on cities that are traditionally considered to be opposition party strongholds.

3. IRAQ - 26/06: Iraq’s internet was partially cut on the morning of Wednesday 26 June 2019 in compliance with a decision the Council of Ministers seeking to prevent cheating during national school exams.

Asia-Pacific – 8 countries

Sources: IFJ, NetBlocks, Dawn News and The Diplomat

1. PAKISTAN
   - 7/09 – Azad Kashmir
     Pakistan cut the Internet following the protest against the decision of India’s revocation of Article 370.


   - 15/08 - Azad Kashmir - between 7.am-8.pm local time
Internet shutdown as a response to protests against India’s decision to revoke Article 370

- 19/03 – Bajaur tribal district – the restoration news
The mobile internet service has finally restored in Bajaur tribal district after suspension of around three years. The internet was suspended in the district since June 12, 2016 due to security reasons.

- From late February 2017 – until now – Kech district, Balochistan province
The access of 3G and 4G services in the area remain suspended for security reasons.
Source: https://thediplomat.com/2019/03/balochistans-great-internet-shutdown/

2. INDIA
Source: IFJ, Internetshutdowns.in
Region: Jammu and Kashmir, India

- 5/01 - Pulwama District, Jammu and Kashmir
Internet services have been blocked following the launch of a cordon-and-search operation (CASO) to chase three militants in Atrial village of Tral in Pulwama district
Source: https://freepresskashmir.com/2019/01/05/search-operation-launched-in-tral-internet-suspended-in-pulwama/

- 9/01 - Pulwama District, Jammu and Kashmir
Authorities blocked the internet service after the killing of a militant in Chowduribagh.
Source: https://kashmirlife.net/internet-service-suspended-in-south-kashmirs-pulwama-197534/

- 12/01 - Kulgam district, Jammu and Kashmir
Internet suspended in Katapora village of Yaripora in south Kashmir’s Kulgam district after two militants were killed in a gunfight.
Source: https://freepresskashmir.com/2019/01/12/intense-clashes-erupt-near-kulgam-gunfight-site/

- 21/01 - Budgam district, Jammu and Kashmir
Internet services of all cellular companies have been suspended for security reasons after wo militants were killed.
Source: https://www.thedispatch.in/2-militants-killed-in-an-encounter-in-budgam/

- 22/01 - Shopian district, Jammu and Kashmir
The internet service has been blocked after a gunfight in the area of Heff Shirmal.

Source: https://kashmirlife.net/shopian-gunfight-internet-service-suspended-in-district-199382/

- 26/01 - Jammu and Kashmir

Access of internet from mobile devices suspended to anticipate the celebration of Republic Day. However, the services of mobile phone was still working.


- 3/02 - Jammu and Kashmir

Internet has been blocked for nearly 20 hours as a precautionary measure of Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit.

Source: https://kashmirlife.net/mobile-internet-services-restored-2-200598/

- 12/02 - Jammu and Kashmir

Internet access from mobile devices was suspended after two Indian army officers and a militant were killed in a gunfight.


- 14/02 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile Internet was blocked in South Kashmir after the attack to the security forces in Pulwama district. At the same time, the services in Srinagar area was cut to 2G level to unable users to share videos.


- 15/02 - Jammu and Kashmir, India

The internet service was cut following the attack from militant in the district of Pulwama.

Source: https://kashmirlife.net/lethpora-attack-internet-services-suspended-in-jammu-201743/

- 18/02 - Jammu and Kashmir

Internet services were suspended following the killing of four army officers in Pulwama district.
22/02- Sopore, Jammu and Kashmir
Internet services were blocked after two militants were killed in Warpora area of Sopore.
Source: https://indianexpress.com/article/india/sopore-encounter-live-updates-jammu-and-kashmir-5595723/

23/02- Rajouri and Poonch district, Jammu and Kashmir
The internet services suspended after some unidentified masked men burned two shops and two vehicles.

7/03- Jammu and Kashmir
Internet services have been suspended due to killing of one militant.

16/03- Jammu and Kashmir
The internet services have been blocked for “precautionary measures” following the brief gun battle in Kumar Yaripora village, Kulgam district.
Source: https://kashmirlife.net/yaripora-shootout-internet-services-suspended-in-kulgam-204731/

19/03- Jammu and Kashmir
The internet services have been suspended after Rizwan Asad Pandit, 28, a private school teacher, died in police custody in Awantipora town.
• 20/03 - Jammu and Kashmir

The internet services were suspended in Shopian and Baramulla district due to an encounter between security forces and the militants.


• 20/03 - Jammu and Kashmir

The internet services were suspended in Srinagar and Budgam district following the killing of Rizwan Asad Pandit in the police custody.

Source: https://kashmirlife.net/high-speed-internet-services-suspended-in-kashmir-parts-3-204992/

• 22/03 - Jammu and Kashmir

Internet services were blocked following the killing of six militants and a 12-year-old-boy in Bandipora district


• 28/03 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services were suspended after the killing of three local militants in Yarwan area.


• 1/04 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services suspended in Pulwama district following the killing of four militants.

Source: http://www.ddinews.gov.in/national/jk%C2%A0four-terrorists-killed-encounter-pulwama

• 5/04 - Jammu and Kashmir

The local administration has suspended internet services in Srinagar and reduced the speed in South Kashmir following a clash between the staff members of the prison and inmates at the Srinagar Central Jail.
7/04- Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services in Pulwama district were suspended following the encounter between the militants and security forces.


9/04- Jammu and Kashmir

The internet services were suspended after a shot injured the leader of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) Chandrakant Singh and his personal security officer.


18/04, Srinagar

Mobile internet services were snapped in Srinagar and other parts of the Valley as a precautionary measure, as Srinagar and Udhampur parliamentary constituencies go to vote in the second phase of the Lok Sabha elections.


25/04- Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile Internet services were suspended in Anantnag district after two militants were killed.


29/04 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services were suspended in the south Kashmir area as a voting began for the second phase of polls.


3/05- Jammu and Kashmir
Internet services were snapped in most parts of southern Kashmir after the killing of one militant.


- 10/05- Jammu and Kashmir

Internet services were suspended in the Sopore Area of Baramulla district following the killing of a local militant in Amshipora-Ramnagri village

Source: https://kashmirlife.net/shopian-gunfight-shutdown-in-sopore-internet-suspended-209443/

- 12/05- Jammu and Kashmir

Authorities snapped the internet services after two militants were killed.

Source: https://kashmirlife.net/spo-turned-militant-among-two-killed-in-shopian-gunfight-internet-suspended-209585/

- 22/05- Jammu and Kashmir

Authorities suspended mobile Internet services in Kulgam district after two militants got killed.


- 23/05- Jammu and Kashmir

The mobile internet suspended in Pulwama district following the killing of Zakir Musa in an encounter with security forces.


- 29/05- Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile Internet was snapped in Kulgam district following a gunfight between militants and security forces.


- 30/05- Jammu and Kashmir

Authorities suspended mobile internet services in Sopore after two militants were killed in a gunfight with security forces.
31/05- Jammu and Kashmir

Internet services was suspended in Awantipora area of Pulwama district as a precaution after five militants killed and two policemen were injured in three gunfights.


31/05- Jammu and Kashmir

Authorities suspended mobile internet services after clashes erupted between demonstrators and security forces.


3/06- Jammu and Kashmir

Authorities suspended internet services in Kulgam area as a precautionary measure after two militants were killed.


8/06- Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet was suspended in parts of Anantnag as a precautionary measure following the killing of a militant.


12/06- Jammu and Kashmir

Authorities snapped mobile internet services following clashes between youth and government forces.


14/06- Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services were suspended in Pulwama district after two militants were killed
• 19/06 - Jammu and Kashmir

Authorities suspended mobile internet services in the Anantnag district on the 25th anniversary of founder of Ummat-e-Islami Mirwaiz Qazi Nissar Ahmad.


• 23/06 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services were suspended in the Sophia district following the gunfight.

Source: https://kashmirlife.net/gunfight-breaks-out-in-shopian-village-internet-suspended-213108/

• 26 / 06 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services were suspended after a gunfight

• 30/06 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services were suspended in Budgam after one militant killed


• 5 / 07 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile Internet services were suspended in the Sophian district following a gunfight.


• 8 / 07 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services were suspended to anticipate the 3rd year anniversary of the death of Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani.


• 17/07 - Jammu and Kashmir
The authorities suspended the internet services in Sopore town following a gunfight.

Source:

- 20 / 07 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services were suspended following the killing of a personnel security officer of Peoples Democratic Party leader Sajjad Mufti.


- 27/07 - Jammu and Kashmir

Mobile internet services were suspended following a massive search operation after the gunfight which was killed to militants.

- 1 / 08 - Jammu and Kashmir

Internet services suspended since 1 August up to 3 August 2019 following the encounter between security forces.


- 3 / 08 - Jammu and Kashmir

The mobile internet services were suspended following the death of a militant and a solidier during a gun battle.


- 4 / 08 - Jammu and Kashmir- has not fully restored until now

The government ordered total communications blackout in Jammu and Kashmir since the evening of 4 August, with no access to the internet access nor mobile phone networks and cable as well as to Kashmiri television channels ahead of revoking articles 370 and 35A.

According to these reports


landline phones have been restored in Central, South, and North Kashmir districts, whilst mobile telephone services and Internet remain unavailable.

b. Region: Odisha

- **24/ 01– Kendrapara, Odisha**
  
  Internet services were suspended in the district headquarter town of Kendrapara in Odisha a day after tension prevailed following a quarrel between two groups of youths, officials said. 
  

- **5/ 06– Kendrapara, Odisha**
  
  The Odisha government suspended Internet services in Kendrapara for 48 hours "as a preventive measure" following a skirmish between two groups on the eve the Eid-ul-Fitr and circulation of inflammatory messages on social media.
  

c. Region: Maharashtra

- **1 / 01- Maharashtra, India**
  
  Internet services have been shut down on the occasion of 201st anniversary of the battle of the Bhima Koregaon.
  

d. Region: Rajasthan

- **20 / 04- Sikar district, Rajasthan**
  
  The district administration suspended Internet services in Sikar district in Rajasthan in the wake of rising tensions after the abduction of a newly-wed girl.
  

- **2 /07 Sikar district**
  
  The internet was shutdown to prevent violence due to spread of rumours after a seven year old girl was raped in the city.

- **16 : 07 Udaipur district**
The Udaipur district administration suspended mobile internet services in many towns for 24 hours a day after over 30 people including policemen were injured in clashes over a youth’s murder.

Source: https://www.pinkcitypost.com/ramesh-patel-murder-case-internet-services-suspended-in-udaipur-for-24-hours/

- 18/07 - Udaipur district, Rajasthan

Internet service has been suspended in 10 cities for two days following the uproar of the killing of Ramesh Patel.


- 13/08 - Jaipur, Rajasthan

Mobile internet services were suspended in some areas in Jaipur to prevent the spread of rumours after two groups clashed over an attack on a bus ferrying pilgrims.


- 25/08 - Gangapur City, Rajasthan

The internet services were suspended in Gangapur City of Sawaimadhopur district after communal tension broke out in the city.

Source: https://www.pinkcitypost.com/gangapur-city-communal-tension-internet-services-suspended/

e. Region: West Bengal

- 17/04 - Asansol subdivision

The internet services were suspended in the Asansol subdivision of Paschim Bardhaman district to prevent rumours on the violence on social media.


- 9/06 - Sandeshkhali, West Bengal

Internet services were suspended to stop the circulation of the clashes on social media

• 20 / 06 - Parganas district, West Bengal

Internet services were suspended after clashes broke out between two groups.


• 25 / 07 - Asansol, West Bengal

The internet services were suspended for 6 days -until July 30 following communal tensions in the area.


f. Region: Uttar Pradesh

• 13 / 02-Uttar Pradesh

The internet services were suspended following the clash between the students and a TV channel crew.


• 10 / 06- Tappal

The internet services were suspended following the murder of a two-and-a-half-year-old girl.


• 1/ 07- Meerut

Internet services were suspended between Monday, 1 July to Friday and 5 July following the charged by the police to the group of people protesting the lynching of a man.

Source: https://thewire.in/rights/meerut-tensions-high-after-lathi-charge-on-lynching-protesters-50-arrested

g. Region: Tripura

• 8 / 01- Tripura

Internet services were suspended following protests against the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Bill.
h. Region: Manipur

- 12 /02- Manipur

Internet services were suspended following the protests against the Citizenship Bill


i. Region: Arunachal Pradesh

- 23 /02

Internet services were suspended after the protests against the Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC) which will prove the permanent resident status to non-Arunachalese.


j. Region: Assam

- 10 /05- Barak Valley

Internet services were suspended following a communal clash between two communities.


SRI LANKA

- 21 /04

Social media, including Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, YouTube, Viber, Snapchat and Facebook Messenger, were blocked following the attacks targeting the churches and hotels. President Maithripala Sirisena lifted the ban on Tuesday, 30 April.

Source:


Access to social media was suspended to stop a spread of rumours following a clash between groups of civilians in Negombo, site of one of the bombings. The block was lifted on Monday 6 May.

Source:
https://netblocks.org/reports/social-media-blocked-again-in-sri-lanka-eBOgWDBZ

Social media access was suspended from Monday, 13 May after Christians attacked mosques and Muslims' shops. This was the third time the country’s blocked social media. The services were back on Friday, 17 May.

Source:
https://netblocks.org/reports/social-media-partially-restored-in-sri-lanka-following-third-block-r8Vg4QA5

INDONESIA

The government has limited the speed of the uploading and downloading photographs on social media platforms and online messaging apps following the election protests turned into riot in Central and West Jakarta. The services went back to normal on Saturday, 25 May.

Source:

https://netblocks.org/reports/indonesia-blocks-social-media-as-election-protests-escalate-XADE7LBg
• 21/08 – Papua and West Papua

The government blocked the internet access in Papua and West Papua provinces following protests against racial abuse of Papuans students. The government has restored the access in several districts in Papua and West Papua on 4 September. However, the access in some areas were only restored on 13 September.

Source:

• 3/09

The government has reduced the speed of the Internet in Wamena, Papua, Indonesia following the clashes in the area.

Source:

MYANMAR

• 21/06 - Rakhine and Chin States

The communication ministry ordered the telecom companies to cut down the internet services following the ongoing clashes between the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army. The access was partially lifted at midnight on 31 August. The Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business and its three partners have launched the campaign to highlight the impact of internet blackout in four townships in Rakhine State. On 30 September, the campaign will express solidarity to residents who have had no internet access for 101 days with “Myanmar Internet Blackout Day 101”.

Source:


IRAN
26/06 Widespread Internet disruption in Iran amid geopolitical crisis. Internet connectivity in Iran was significantly disrupted according to real-time network data, as of 8:00 p.m. UTC Wednesday 26 Jun 2019.

UZBEKISTAN

10/05 Multiple internet providers in Uzbekistan have restored access to international NGOs Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Reporters Without Borders, as well as news sites Deutsche-Welle, Voice of America, Fergana, EurasiaNet and Centre1 according to NetBlocks internet measurement data collected between Friday 10 and Saturday 11 May 2019. Some providers are still blocking Radio Ozodlik, the regional media outlet for Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty (RFE/RL).

KAZAKHSTAN

9/05 - Multiple internet providers in Kazakhstan have blocked access to major social networks and online platforms Facebook, Instagram and YouTube as well as news and campaign websites on 9 May 2019, according to NetBlocks internet observatory network measurements.