

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/india-kashmir-indian-government-imposes-22-04-2015,47800.html>

Asia - India

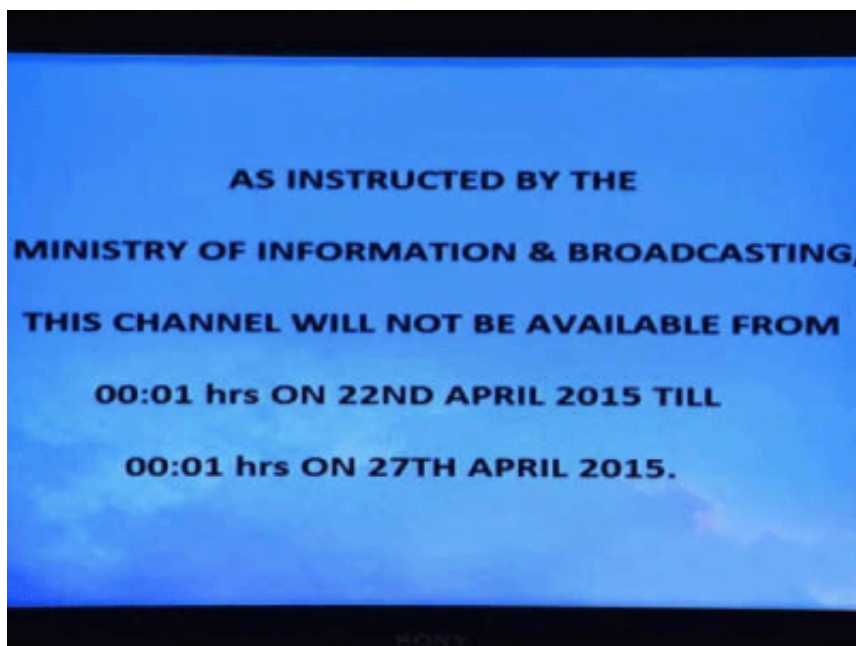
Censors without borders

Kashmir – Indian government imposes geopolitical vision on media

22 April 2015

Reporters Without Borders condemns New Delhi's censorship of Al-Jazeera, which has been banned from broadcasting in India for five days from today for displaying maps in which India's border with neighbouring Pakistan in Kashmir did not correspond to its territorial claims.

Since suspending broadcasts today at the information ministry's behest, *Al-Jazeera* has been transmitting a blue screen with a message referring to the temporary suspension order.



"This sanction should never have been imposed on Al-Jazeera and just reflects the government's growing intolerance of any journalism it does not agree with," said Benjamin Ismail, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Asia-Pacific desk.

"The Indian government has every right to state its position on this border, and it does so frequently, but there is no justification for censoring the different viewpoints that are reflected in the media. We call for the immediate resumption of broadcasting by Al-Jazeera."

Ever since India's partition and the creation of Pakistan in 1947 and then the proclamation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Kashmir's borders have been a very sensitive subject for both the local and foreign media.

In May 2011, the Indian customs department [forced *The Economist* magazine to alter 28,000 copies of its 21 May](#) issue before permitting their distribution within India. It contained a map showing the territory claimed by India and Pakistan without taking sides.

Ranked 135th out of 180 countries in the [2015 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#), India continued to register many media freedom violations last year, especially in certain regions such as Kashmir, where several journalists were attacked while covering legislative elections.

