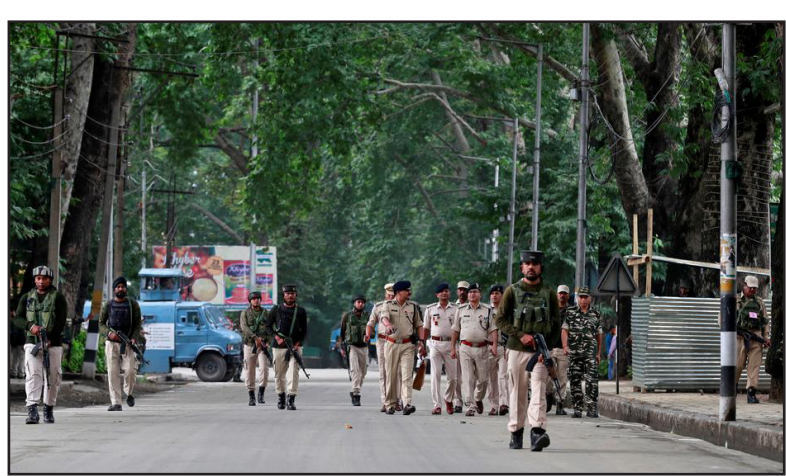


# India Reimposes Kashmir Restrictions After Easing Them



Indian security force personnel patrol a road during restrictions after the government scrapped the special constitutional status for Kashmir, in Srinagar August 15, 2019.

NEW DELHI (AP) — Restrictions continued in much of Indian-administered Kashmir on Sunday, despite India’s government saying it was gradually restoring phone lines and easing a security lockdown that’s been in place for nearly two weeks.

Soldiers manned nearly deserted streets and limited the movement of the few pedestrians who came out of their homes in Srinagar, the region’s main city.

The security crackdown and a news blackout were cracked following an Aug. 5 decision by India’s Hindu nationalist government to downgrade the Muslim-majority region’s autonomy. Authorities started easing restrictions on

Saturday.

But the Press Trust of India news agency said authorities reimposed restrictions in parts of Srinagar after violence was reported on Saturday.

About 300 Kashmiris returned to Srinagar on Sunday from a Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. Many of them became emotional while reuniting with their family members who met them at the city’s airport. Due to the security and communications lockdown, many travelers were unable to contact anybody in the Kashmir region.

“Neither us nor our relatives here knew if we were dead or alive,” Muhammad Ali said after returning from the annual

Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca.

Public transport buses started operating in some rural areas in Indian-controlled Kashmir on Saturday. Cellphone and internet services resumed in some districts, but news reports said that happened only in the Hindu-dominated Jammu region, which was not threatened by anti-India protests.

The New Delhi government’s decision on Kashmir’s status has touched off anger in the region and raised tensions with Pakistan. Kashmir is divided between Pakistan and India, but both claim the region in its entirety. The nuclear-armed archrivals have fought two wars over the territory.

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan demanded that United Nations observers be deployed to the troubled region.

“This threatens 9 million Kashmiris under siege” in Kashmir, “which should have sent alarm bells ringing across the world with UN Observers being sent there,” Khan said Sunday on Twitter.

Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh dismissed the idea, and said that if talks are held between New Delhi and Islamabad they would only be on Pakistani-administered Kashmir, not on India’s part of the region.

An exchange of gun and mortar fire between Indian and Pakistani forces was reported on Saturday across the militarized Line of Control that divides Kashmir between the countries. India said one of its soldiers was killed in the exchange.

## Fire Guts Thousands of Homes in Dhaka Slum



People look on to the slum that burnt out in Dhaka, Bangladesh, August 17, 2019.

DHAKA (Independent) -- Tens of thousands of people have been left homeless in Bangladesh after fire tore through a slum in the capital of Dhaka.

About 15,000 homes were destroyed in the blaze, which hit the Mirpur area late on Friday and left 50,000 people homeless, according to the BBC.

Atiqul Islam, mayor of the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), has said victims of the fire will be looked after in temporary shelters until they can be rehoused.

“All basic needs for the homeless people will continue till their rehabilitation,” Islam told the local newspaper Dhaka Tribune after visiting the scene.

He added that “permanent establishments” were being erected nearby to house the victims of the blaze, which raged for six hours.

Many residents were reportedly away from the city celebrating the Muslim festival of Eid al-Adha at the time of the fire.

No deaths have been reported from the blaze so far, although several people were injured.

The fire is thought to have spread quickly as many homes in the slum are made from wood or bamboo and have plastic roofs.

There is no information yet on the cause of the fire but an investigation has been launched, with a report expected within 15 working days.

Residents of the area affected are mostly low-wage earners, such as garment workers and day laborers, who moved to the city for work but sometimes leave for religious holidays.

On Saturday morning, some residents reportedly returned to their homes to see if there was anything from the ruins they could sell.

Although the BBC’s world news service has reported 15,000 homes were destroyed in the fire, earlier local news reports suggested a lower number of damaged homes.

Dhaka Tribune said more than 1,000 shanties were burned in the fire, quoting fire service officials and local people, on Friday.

In February, at least 80 people were killed and 50 others injured in Dhaka after a fire broke out at a residential building that was storing flammable materials and spread to a densely-packed historical district of the city.

## China Blasts ‘Gross Interference’ by U.S. in Hong Kong

BEIJING (Dispatches) -- China has blasted statements by U.S. lawmakers supporting riots in Hong Kong, denouncing them as a “gross” interference in the vast Asian country’s domestic affairs.

Numerous American senators and Congress members, including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, have over the past days expressed support for the crippling protests in Hong Kong.

You Wenze, a spokesman for China’s ceremonial legislature, on Sunday censured the comments as “a gross violation of the spirit of the rule of law, a blatant double standard and a gross interference in China’s internal affairs.”

You said Hong Kong’s 7.5 million people and the Chinese population as a whole rejected the actions of a “very small group of violent protesters” as well as “any interference of foreign forces.”

The condemnation came as tens of thousands of umbrella-toting protesters started marching from a packed park in central Hong Kong, where unrest has become a regular weekend activity over the past couple of months.

The crowd in Victoria Park, where the rally started, was peaceful. One protester shouted at others who were jeering at police, “Today is a peaceful march! Don’t fall into the trap! The world is watching us,” prompting the group to move on.

The Chinese-ruled territory was first hit by protests ten weeks ago, when people took to the streets to protest a proposed bill which would have allowed suspects to be extradited and stand trial in mainland China.

While the proposed bill has been suspended, protests have continued and morphed over time into unruly riots.

Earlier this week, spokesman for the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office of the State Council Yang Guang said the city had reached a “critical juncture” as rioters started showing signs of “terrorism.”

During the past week, the world’s commercial hub has witnessed ugly scenes as protesters occupied the city’s airport and violently beat up several people whom they wrongly suspected to be spies.

On Saturday, a demonstration in support of the government attracted what organizers said was 476,000 people.

Beijing has accused foreign countries including the United States of fomenting unrest.

Scenes of Chinese paramilitary troops training this past week at a stadium in the city of Shenzhen, which borders Hong Kong, gave a clear warning that mainland intervention by force is possible.

Hong Kong has been governed under a “one-country, two-system” model since the city — a former British colony — was returned to China in 1997.

## Russia Not to Deploy Missiles If U.S. Shows Restraint



Russia's Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu attends the opening ceremony of the International military-technical forum ARMY-2019 at Patriot Congress and Exhibition Centre in Moscow Region, June 25, 2019.

MOSCOW (Dispatches) -- Russia will not deploy new missiles as long as the United States shows similar restraint in Europe and Asia, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said on Sunday, after Washington’s withdrawal from a Soviet-era arms pact.

The United States formally left the Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty with Russia earlier this month after accusing Moscow of violating the treaty and deploying one banned type of missile, allegations the Kremlin denies.

Russia has also pulled out of the deal, but Shoigu said it had no plans to deploy new missiles.

“We still stick to that. Unless there are such systems in Europe (deployed by Washington), we won’t do anything there,” he told the Rossiya-24 TV channel, according to Interfax news agency.

The pact banned land-based missiles with a range of between 310 and 3,400 miles (500-5,500 km), reducing the ability of both countries to launch a nuclear strike at short notice.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has warned that Moscow would start developing short and intermediate-range

land-based nuclear missiles if the United States started doing the same after the demise of the arms control treaty.

The U.S. has been deploying its missiles in Eastern Europe and near Russia’s western borders, a provocative move denounced by the Kremlin.

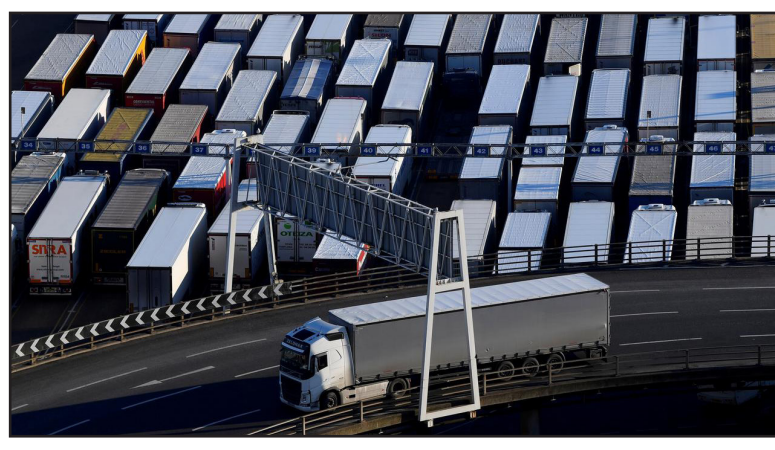
Moscow has repeatedly warned Washington not to deploy such missiles in the vicinity of Russia’s borders, vowing to deploy its own missiles, capable of reaching all parts of Europe in response.

The INF was signed toward the end of the Cold War in 1987 by then U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. It banned all land-based missiles with ranges of between 500 and 5,500 kilometers and included missiles carrying both nuclear and conventional warheads.

The INF — which was seen as a milestone in ending the Cold War arms race between the two superpowers — led to the elimination of 2,692 missiles from both sides, ridding Europe of land-based nuclear missiles.

However, the hard-fought INF collapsed on August 2 after the U.S. officially withdrew from it, triggering fears of a new arms race.

## UK Faces Food, Fuel, Drug Shortages: Leaked Doc



A lorry is driven past dozens of others parked after travelling by ferry between Britain and France at the Port of Dover, Britain, February 14, 2019.

LONDON (Reuters) -- Britain will face shortages of fuel, food and medicine if it leaves the European Union without a transition deal, according to leaked official documents reported by the Sunday Times, but whose interpretation was contested by ministers.

Setting out a vision of jammed ports, public protests and widespread disruption, the Times said the forecasts compiled by the Cabinet Office set out the most likely aftershocks of a no-deal Brexit rather than the worst case scenarios.

But Michael Gove, the minister in charge of coordinating no-deal preparations, challenged that, saying that the documents did set out a worst case scenario and that planning had been accelerated in the last three weeks.

The Times said up to 85% of lorries using the main channel crossings “may not be ready” for French customs, meaning disruption at ports would potentially last up to three months before the flow of traffic improves.

The government also believes a hard border between the British province of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, an EU member, will be likely as current plans to avoid widespread checks will prove unsustainable, the Times said.

“Compiled this month by the Cabinet Office under the codename Operation Yellowhammer, the dossier offers a rare glimpse into the covert planning being carried out by the government to avert a catastrophic collapse

in the nation’s infrastructure,” the Times reported.

Responding to one of the authors of the Sunday Times article on Twitter, Gove said: “Yellowhammer is a worst-case scenario - v significant steps have been taken in the last 3 weeks to accelerate Brexit planning.”

A government source blamed the leak on an unnamed former minister who wanted to influence negotiations with the EU.

“This document is from when ministers were blocking what needed to be done to get ready to leave and the funds were not available. It has been deliberately leaked by a former minister in an attempt to influence discussions with EU leaders,” said the source, who declined to be named.

Earlier, asked about the Yellowhammer documents, energy minister Kwasi Kwarteng told Sky News there was “a lot of scaremongering around” and that Britain would be fully prepared for an Oct. 31 no-deal exit.

The United Kingdom is heading towards a constitutional crisis at home and a showdown with the EU as Johnson has repeatedly vowed to leave the bloc on Oct. 31 without a deal unless it agrees to renegotiate the Brexit divorce.

After more than three years of Brexit dominating EU affairs, the bloc has repeatedly refused to reopen the Withdrawal Agreement which includes an Irish border insurance policy that Johnson’s predecessor, Theresa May, agreed in November.

## News in Brief

WASHINGTON (Reuters) -- Police in Portland, Oregon arrested at least 13 people on Saturday as a right-wing group marched to a downtown waterfront park and anti-fascist counterprotesters scuffled with officers who tried to keep the two sides apart. A rally by hundreds of supporters of the right-wing Proud Boys organization was met by a similar number of “antifa” opponents, and isolated clashes broke out between both sides and between antifa and police as the gathering wrapped up. At least six people suffered minor injuries, according to police. One person was taken to a hospital. Officers said they seized weapons including chemical sprays, shields, metal and wooden poles, knives, and a stun gun from multiple groups. At the peak of the demonstrations there were an estimated 1,200 protesters on the streets of the downtown district, said Portland Police Chief Danielle Outlaw. Right-wing and anti-fascist factions have clashed in Portland several times in recent months, including a rally that turned violent in July last year.

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PARIS (AP) -- Three riot police officers, a police commander, a police academy teacher — all are among eight French police officers who have killed themselves recently. That makes 64 so far this year — and the number just keeps on climbing. Deaths by suicide for French police now outnumber deaths in the line of duty. The protectors need protecting, say police unions, which are demanding more help to stop the problem. Those who choose to end their lives are from everywhere in France and of all ages, many with young children. The latest death came Wednesday in the Ardeche region in southeast France. Why they step across what one police union calls the “thin blue line” remains a question that French authorities have so far been unable to answer. A parliamentary inquiry made public in July lists a multitude of reasons for the stress and despair among French police, including overwork since a series of terrorist attacks that started in January 2015 and the weekly, often extremely violent, anti-government protests since November by the yellow vest movement seeking more economic and social justice. It does not single out any one reason. “Given the situation today, 2019 could be the worst in the last 30 years,” said Denis Jacob, head of the Alternative Police CFDT union. A Senate report last year said the French police suicide rate was 36% higher than the rate for France’s general population, but also uncovered no single reason behind the suicides.

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PARIS (AFP) -- A customer shot a waiter dead at an eatery on the outskirts of Paris, apparently enraged at being made to wait for a sandwich, a source close to the investigation said Saturday. The waiter’s colleagues called police after he was shot in the shoulder with a handgun in the Noisy-le-Grand suburb east of Paris on Friday night, the source said. Attempts to revive the 28-year-old failed and he died at the scene. The gunman, who a witness said lost his temper “as his sandwich wasn’t prepared quickly enough,” fled the scene. Police told AFP a murder investigation has been opened. With the shooter still on the run Saturday, shocked residents gathered outside the pizza and sandwich eatery. “He was killed for a sandwich?” one asked in disbelief. It is sad, said a 29-year-old woman. “It’s a quiet restaurant, without any problems. It just opened a few months ago.” But others noted high crime levels in the area, notably drug-dealing and public drunkenness.

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MOSCOW (Reuters) -- Block 4 of Russia’s Beloyarsk nuclear power station in the Urals mountains was switched off on Sunday following a “false” response by the safety system, a subsidiary of state nuclear corporation Rosatom said. “The stoppage was carried out under a routine algorithm,” Rosenergoatom said in a statement, adding the radiation background at the station and surrounding areas was in line with usual levels. The plant was opened in 1964. Last month, a Russian nuclear power plant northwest of Moscow turned off three of its four generating units after a transformer short circuited. They have returned to operation since.

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KHARTOUM (Reuters) -- Sudan’s opposition coalition on Sunday named five people as civilian members of the country’s sovereign council to be sworn in on Monday, a source within the coalition told Reuters. A power-sharing agreement signed on Saturday paves the way for a transitional government and eventual elections. It provides for a sovereign council as the highest authority in the country but largely delegates executive powers to the cabinet of ministers. According to the agreement, the opposition coalition is allowed to choose five members of the council and the military another five, with the two sides jointly choosing a civilian as an eleventh member. The Forces of Freedom and Change (FFC) chose Aisha Mousa, Siddig Tower, Mohamed Elfaki Suleiman, Hassan Sheikh Idris and Taha Othman Ishaq, the coalition source said. On Saturday the spokesman for the Transitional Military Council (TMC) said that TMC head Lieutenant General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, his deputy General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo and Lieutenant General Yasser Al-Atta will serve as three of the five military members. It has yet to announce the other two chosen members.