



BLACKOUT & OUTAGES:

Is our digital world crumbling?



India's internet just hit the slow lane after undersea cables in the Red Sea were cut off on 7 August. The reason? Unknown. Power blackouts and internet failures are fast becoming the new normal. Incidentally, the World Economic Forum in 2021 flagged cybersecurity breakdowns as the decade's top threat and warned of a "catastrophic cyber event" by 2025. It may be recalled that the WEF promptly predicted a Covid-19-like pandemic in 2019.

SALAR NEWS TAKES A LOOK AT THE OUTAGES OF 2025

PAKISTAN

2 JAN, INTERNET OUTAGE

CAUSE: A fault in Asia-Africa-Europe-1 (AAE-1) submarine cable near Qatar. The AAE-1 system is a 25,000km long Internet cable connecting Southeast Asia to Europe.

DURATION: 2 hours.

RUSSIA

7 JAN, INTERNET OUTAGE

CAUSE: Russia's biggest pvt internet provider Nodex faced complete failure, reportedly due to a cyberattack by the Ukrainian Cyber Alliance.

DURATION: 2 hours.

NEPAL

2 FEB, INTERNET OUTAGE

CAUSE: Bharti Airtel cut bandwidth to Nepali internet service providers, causing outage. This was allegedly over a payment dispute.

DURATION: 5 hours.

SRI LANKA

9 FEB, POWER OUTAGE

CAUSE: A monkey encountered a grid transformer at Pandura electrical substation, which caused an island-wide power and internet outage. Over 2.2 crore people were affected.

DURATION: 6 hours.

CHILE

25 FEB, POWER BACKOUT

CAUSE: The nationwide outage was triggered by a malfunction in software protection systems, leading to failure of a 500 kV high-voltage transmission line. **Restored on 26 Feb.**

- 14 out of 16 regions of the nation, and 98% of the population was without power.
- Transportation and mining industry were heavily hit.
- An overnight curfew and emergency of 8 hours was imposed.

EAST AFRICA

4 MARCH, INTERNET OUTAGE

CAUSE: Under water cable PEACE was cut in the Red Sea, around 1,450 km from Zafarana, which affected internet in Economic Zones of Egypt, Singapore, and Sudan. It was repaired only by mid-April.

12 MAY

- Two submarine cables, SEACOM and EASSY, were damaged by a ship anchor, off South African coast. Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Mozambique, Malawi, and Madagascar were affected. It was repaired by 3 June.

BUENOS AIRES

5 MARCH, POWER OUTAGE

CAUSE: Sudden failure of a high-voltage power line led to two massive power failures in a day.

- 6 lakh were left suffering without electricity during a heatwave. Traffic was clogged up; subway passengers were stranded as several substations went offline.

DURATION: Several hours.



LONDON

21 MARCH, POWER OUTAGE AT SUBWAY STATIONS

CAUSE: Massive fire at power substation near Heathrow Airport, led to power grid failure.

- Airport shut for 1 day, leading to 120 flight diversions and cancellations; affected 2,00,000 passengers.

DURATION: 7 hours.

12 MAY, POWER OUTAGE

CAUSE: National Grid failure led to the shutdown of the metro stations.

- Some rail lines were either suspended or faced delays. Also, the Transport for London website crashed at the same time leaving, thousands of passengers stranded.

DURATION: Restored after a few hours.

OUTAGES CRIPPLE 'X'

10 MARCH, X HACKED

CAUSE: X faced a massive global outage, which Elon Musk later said was a cyberattack by an IP address originating in Ukraine. Musk hinted that a group or a country was behind it. Hacktivist group Dark Storm Team reportedly claimed credit.

DURATION: 24 hours.

28 MARCH, US OUTAGE

CAUSE: X recovered after a brief outage affecting 53,000+ users in the US; Reddit also experienced a simultaneous service disruption.

DURATION: Few hours.



23 & 24 MAY, GLOBAL OUTAGE

CAUSE: Issues at the data centre led to login/signup failures, delayed notifications, and premium feature disruptions. Reports also suggested a fire incident near a data centre in Hillsboro, Oregon in the US, may have contributed to the disruption.

DURATION: 48 hours.

PUERTO RICO

16 APRIL, POWER BLACKOUT

CAUSE: All the energy plants across the island unexpectedly shut down amid the nation's crumbling power infrastructure.

- Genera, the country's power generator, said all its facilities had gone "offline".
- 1.4 crore customers were without electricity, while 3.28,000 were without water.

DURATION: 2 days.

IBERIAN NATIONS

28 APRIL, POWER BLACKOUT

CAUSE: Europe's biggest outage shut down hospitals, flights, factories, nuclear plants, traffic lights and transport in Spain, Portugal, Andorra, France, Morocco and Greenland.

- Multiple investigations ruled out a cyberattack. Preliminary analysis suggested "low frequency power swings" between the Iberian Peninsula and the European grid caused disconnection and transmission instability. The exact cause remains under investigation till date.
- 8 deaths occurred due to medical equipment failures.

DURATION: 7 to 10 hours.

FRANCE

24 MAY, POWER OUTAGE

CAUSE: A group of anarchists set fire to 1 high-voltage substation.

- 1,60,000 households were affected. Final day screenings of Cannes Film Festival were disrupted as well.

DURATION: 5 hours.

25 MAY, POWER OUTAGE

CAUSE: Another high-voltage electrical transformer was set ablaze, affecting 45,000 people in Nice. **DURATION:** 4 hours.

CHATGPT

10 JUNE AND 16 JULY, GLOBAL OUTAGE

CAUSE: Users in India, the US, the UK, Canada, Australia and parts of Asia faced issues as free and paid ChatGPT, Sora, and Chatbot services stopped working.

- OpenAI blamed an internal issue, which was causing errors and slow responses across ChatGPT and its Application Programming Interface. It said the engineers found the root cause, but no detailed explanation was given.
- Experts attributed it to a possible server-side overload or technical fault.

DURATION: 16 hours.

GOOGLE CLOUD

12 JUNE, GLOBAL OUTAGE

CAUSE: A misconfigured quota update in Google Cloud's system caused cascading failures in backend Application Programming Interfaces, disrupting multiple services worldwide.

- Gmail, Drive, Meet, Calendar, Chat, Cloud Console, Spotify, Discord, Snapchat, Replit, Shopify, GitHub, and others service were hit.

DURATION: 24 hours.

AT&T

16 JUNE, SERVICE OUTAGE

CAUSE: Services were disrupted due to internal misconfiguration during a routine network expansion.

DURATION: 24 hours.

US

19 JUNE, INTERNET OUTAGE

CAUSE: The govt blamed the massive outage on technical failure. Major service providers including CenturyLink, Quantum Fiber and Brightspeed were hit, but no official cause was disclosed.

- 45,000 customers lost broadband access across multiple states, especially in Colorado. Users experienced full connectivity loss and slow internet speed.

DURATION: 2.5 hours.

PRAGUE & CZECH REPUBLIC

4 JULY, POWER BLACKOUT.

CAUSE: A high-voltage phase conductor on the main transmission line snapped, causing cascading failures at multiple substations and grid fragmentation.

- Up to 1 million customers affected; metro lines halted; trams, trains, elevators, traffic lights, ATMs and factories disrupted; hospitals resorted to backup generators; over 215 elevator rescues reported.

DURATION: Power restoration began within 3 hours; full repairs were completed in 6-7 hours.

STARLINK

24 JULY, GLOBAL OUTAGE

CAUSE: Elon Musk's Starlink faced failure in key internal software services that led to a system crash. Starlink is a satellite internet constellation by SpaceX that uses thousands of low Earth orbit satellites to provide high-speed internet.

- 60,000 users across the US, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia lost connectivity, including residential, commercial, and military users (notably Ukraine's armed forces).

DURATION: 2.5 hours.

INDIA'S UPI OUTAGES

12 MARCH

CAUSE: Unified Payments Interface aka UPI faced its 1st outage in 2025, affecting digital payment platforms such as Google Pay, Paytm, PhonePe and several banks. Over 60 lakh transactions disrupted. Technical glitches were cited as reason.

DURATION: 95 minutes.

26 MARCH

CAUSE: Technical issues at National Payments Corporation of India, an umbrella organisation for operating retail payment, disrupted transactions across Google Pay, PhonePe, Paytm and banks. Downdetector saw around 2,750 reports.

DURATION: 1 hour 45 minutes.

31 MARCH

CAUSE: Banks faced technical issues



due to the financial year-end rush, leading to the servers crashing down.

- 1.5 crore failed transactions reported.

DURATION: 25 minutes.

2 APRIL

CAUSE: Google Pay, Paytm, and PhonePe faced outages due to increased UPI network latency, causing transaction delays and failures.

DURATION: 30 minutes.

12 APRIL

CAUSE: The longest outage happened because some banks sent too many transaction status requests to NPCI, causing the system to overload. About 2,300 complaints were reported.

DURATION: 5 hours.

MUMBAI AIRPORT

9 AUG, DATA NETWORK OUTAGE

CAUSE: A third-party network failure triggered outage at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport's check-in counters, which delayed flights. The airport is operated by the Gautam Adani Group.

DURATION: An hour.



BROADBAND, INTERNET OUTAGE

18 AUG & 24 AUG; AIRTEL, JIO FACE MASSIVE OUTAGES

CAUSE: Network outage affected mobile calls and mobile internet across multiple cities including Bengaluru, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Patna, and Ahmedabad.

- Complaints ranged from call drops to slow internet speeds and signal loss.

DURATION: Outage started around 3pm. By 10.30pm, most issues were resolved in various areas.