

Briefs: Security concerns shut UTL's Nepal telecom

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Nepal's government Thursday shut down telephone service from India's United Telecom Limited amid a crackdown on a planned opposition party rally.

All cell-phone service as well as UTL's landlines remained offline as security forces tracked down organizers of the rally, which was scheduled for Friday in defiance of a government ban on demonstrations in areas of Katmandu.

The shutoff was the second government-ordered cut for UTL, a joint venture of two Indian telecoms and a Nepalese firm that was the first private communications company in the mountain kingdom.

Nepal maintains control over the country's telephone lines and, according to the Economic Times, cut service to UTL cell phones and mobile service from Spice Nepal as well.

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