

Article Overview

Heavy rains and flash floods in Sudan's Red Sea state have damaged a key fiber optic hub, causing widespread internet and telecommunications disruptions across the country.

Cause of the Outage

The recent telecom disruption in Sudan is primarily due to floods and heavy rains in the Haiya area of Red Sea state, a critical junction for fiber optic cables connecting multiple regions, including Port Sudan, Atbara, and Kassala. The extreme weather damaged the infrastructure, making maintenance and repairs difficult for engineers. This area serves as a major hub where railways and roads converge, amplifying the impact of the outage.

Affected Areas

The fiber optic cut has caused intermittent or complete service loss in several states, including Red Sea, Kassala, New Halfa, El Gedaref, El Obeid, En Nahud, Sennar, White Nile, El Gezira, Khartoum, Bahri, Kordofan, and Darfur. Major cities like Omdurman and parts of River Nile state also experienced interruptions before partial restoration. The disruption has affected millions of subscribers, with some relying on costly satellite alternatives like Starlink, which are not always available due to security or military restrictions.

Context and Impact

Sudan's telecom sector has been under severe strain due to the ongoing civil war between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). Both sides have previously targeted fiber optic cables and telecom towers to disrupt communications. The current outage exacerbates existing challenges, including limited access to banking, government services, and humanitarian communications. The RSF has reportedly ordered major telecom companies to disconnect services in some regions, further complicating connectivity.

Mitigation and Resilience

Despite the widespread disruption, Port Sudan has emerged as a digital lifeline, with undersea cables and satellite backups routing most of the country's international data traffic. Engineers there are actively rerouting data and activating emergency satellite links to maintain connectivity for government offices, media, humanitarian groups, and citizens. Additionally, Sudan, along with Djibouti and Ethiopia, has signed agreements to develop a new cross-border fiber-optic corridor to enhance regional connectivity and reduce reliance on a single access route, which will improve resilience against future outages.

Sudan Telecom Fiber Optic Cable Cut

Summary

The fiber optic cable cut in Sudan is a result of natural disasters compounded by ongoing conflict, affecting large parts of the country's telecommunications network. While emergency measures in Port Sudan and future regional fiber projects aim to mitigate the impact, millions of Sudanese remain vulnerable to intermittent or complete internet and communication blackouts .

Engineers who spoke to Radio Dabanga attributed the cable outage to floods and heavy rains that swept through

Before the conflict, Sudan had a fairly-developed broadband infrastructure (four undersea cables and approximately 24,000 km of

The most recent such disruption occurred on August 26, when they experienced two different cuts on their fiber optic

By late September, fibre optic disruptions halted travel bookings, education platforms, and business operations, which also affected

An expert and former official in the Sudanese Communications Authority revealed that the Rapid Support Forces have ordered two

Across large parts of the country, fighting crippled fiber-optic networks, knocked out data centers and satellite stations,

Topline At least four undersea fiber optic cables, which carry approximately 97% of all

This was publicly denied by the sources in the telecommunications sector and Zain Company, who justified the

Cable outages attributed to heavy rains and flash floods in the Haiya area of Sudan's Red Sea state, have continued across much of

The Sudani and MTN telecommunication and Internet networks continued to be cut off

As countries continue to roll out fibre optic infrastructure further into the hinterlands and last-mile access to

South Sudan plans to lay a fibre-optic cable to bring broadband Internet to its citizens in the next two years, its minister

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Sudan's national fibre optic backbone and international fibre connections have placed its telecommunication

Sudan's communications infrastructure has been heavily impacted since the outbreak of conflict on 15 April 2023, as a

Undersea cable cuts in the Red Sea disrupted internet access in parts of Asia and the Middle East, experts said

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