

Zimbabwe Telecom Fiber Optic Cable Fault

Article Overview

Zimbabwe's internet disruptions were caused by a fault on an undersea fiber optic cable in South Africa, which serves as the backbone for the country's connectivity.

Cause of the Fault

The internet degradation in Zimbabwe on June 3, 2024, was traced to a fault on an undersea fiber optic cable located in South Africa, which is a critical part of the infrastructure connecting Zimbabwe to global internet networks . As Zimbabwe is landlocked, its internet traffic relies heavily on fiber connections through neighboring coastal countries like South Africa and Mozambique . Any disruption in these cables can lead to slow speeds or complete loss of connectivity.

Impact on Connectivity

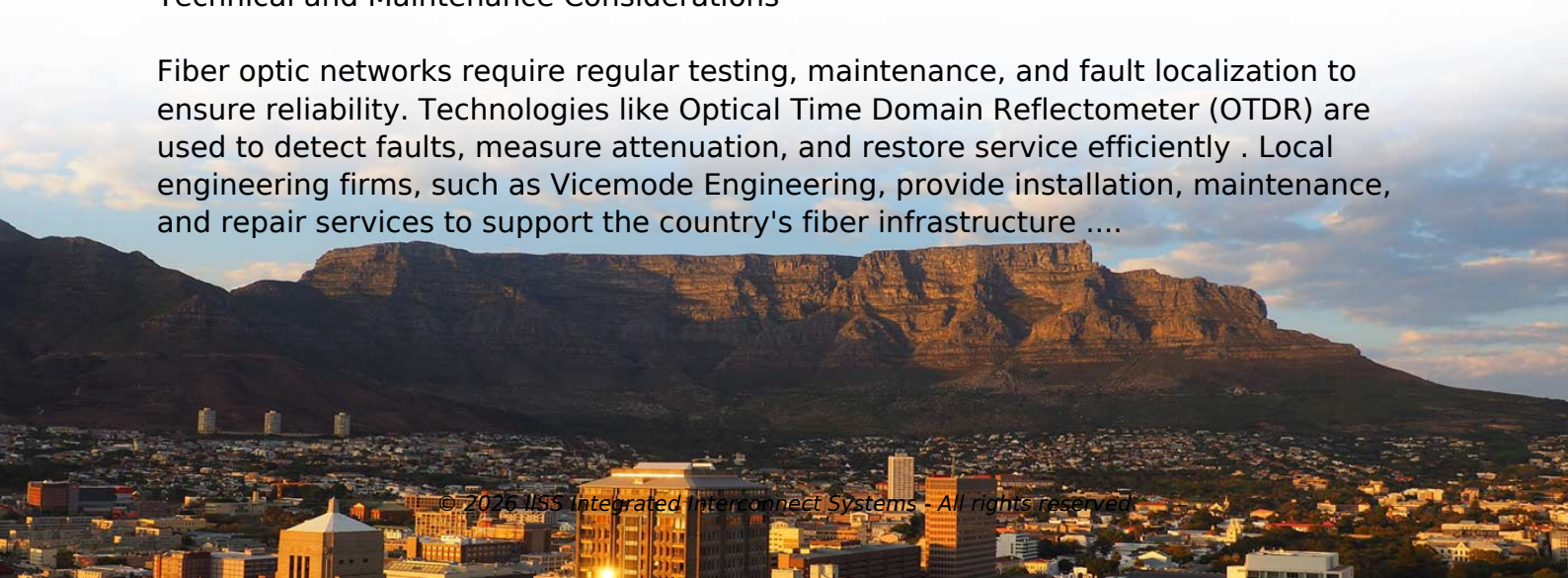
The fault caused significant internet disruptions, ranging from slow speeds to complete outages across all networks in Zimbabwe . Users experienced difficulties accessing online services, conducting business transactions, and communicating digitally. Even after initial repairs, connectivity remained unstable for some time, highlighting the vulnerability of relying on a single type of infrastructure .

Broader Context

Globally, 95% of data and telecommunications traffic is transmitted via undersea fiber optic cables, with satellites handling the remaining 5% . Zimbabwe's dependence on these cables underscores the importance of diversifying connectivity options, such as satellite-based services like Starlink and Eutelsat, which can provide alternatives during fiber outages .

Technical and Maintenance Considerations

Fiber optic networks require regular testing, maintenance, and fault localization to ensure reliability. Technologies like Optical Time Domain Reflectometer (OTDR) are used to detect faults, measure attenuation, and restore service efficiently . Local engineering firms, such as Vicemode Engineering, provide installation, maintenance, and repair services to support the country's fiber infrastructure



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Live status of leading providers (Liquid Telecommunications Ltd, Space Exploration Technologies Corporation, Telone

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Zimbabwe Telecommunication systems

domestic: consists of microwave radio relay links, open-wire lines, radiotelephone communication stations, fixed wireless local loop

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The root cause of these disruptions was identified as a fault on an undersea fiber optic cable located in South Africa.

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Training and specialized consultation further support efficient fault management, ensuring

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Submarine Cable Map

TeleGeography's comprehensive and regularly updated interactive map of the world's major submarine cable systems

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Fibre optic cable testing completed Story by Tichaona Kurewa IMPLEMENTATION of the Zimbabwe National

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Zimbabwe Begins Fibre Optic Project, Prepares To Become Africa's ...

Telecom infrastructure provider, Bandwidth and Cloud Services (BCS) Group has commissioned the first multi-million

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Dark Fiber Infrastructure: Zimbabwe's Silent Backbone

While land-locked Zimbabwe has made significant strides in improving its telecommunications infrastructure, the

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PowerTel to widen fibre optic network

The company operates a licensed optic fibre backbone network under the Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory

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Our Network

This is the transport layer that interconnects cities and towns in Zimbabwe. The countrywide transmission

Dec 23, 2025

Powertel Injects \$50 Million Into Zimbabwe's Fiber Network Expansion

Powertel Communications, a subsidiary of the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA Holdings Group), is

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