

## Satellite Internet Access Guide: Bangladesh

*October 2023*

### Using this Guide

**Question:** This column contains the relevant question to be addressed under (Response).

**Response:** Information addressing the question identified under (Question) is contained in this column.

**Additional Information:** This column contains any clarification or added information necessary to better understand the information under (Response).

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*October 2023*

### Abbreviations for Legislation

- The Bangladesh Telecommunication Act 2001 Act No. XVIII of 2001 as amended by the Amendment (2010) of Telecommunication Act 2001 (**Telecommunication Act**)
- Digital Security Act 2018 Act No. 46 of 2018 (**Digital Security Act**)
- The Wireless Telegraphy Act 1993 Act No. XVII of 1933 (**Wireless Telegraphy Act**)
- The Telegraph Act 1885 Act No. XIII of 1885 (**Telegraph Act**)

## Satellite Internet Access Guide: Bangladesh

October 2023

S/N	Question	Response	Additional Information
1	Does the member state have law(s) relating to internet service provisioning and access?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Telecommunication Act</a></li> <li>2. <a href="#">Digital Security Act</a></li> <li>3. <a href="#">Wireless Telegraphy Act</a></li> <li>4. <a href="#">Telegraph Act</a></li> </ol>	
2	Are there restrictions on use or access to internet?	Under Section 8 of <a href="#">Digital Security Act</a> , the government can request the Bangladesh Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (BTRC) to remove or block information that 'hamper the nation'. The provisions of this law have been relied on in justifying the arrest of online journalists and internet users who criticised the government, thus creating a de-facto online self-censorship atmosphere.	BTRC has in the past ordered internet service providers to <a href="#">throttle</a> internet speeds or <a href="#">suspend</a> internet access, in order to quell protests. Based on this, Bangladesh has been classified as a partly free country, scoring 43 out of 100 on freedom house's Freedom on the Net 2022 <a href="#">Report</a> .
3	Is satellite a medium used to provide internet access in the member state?	Bangladesh currently has in the geostationary earth orbit its first launched satellite ( <a href="#">Bangabandhu-1</a> ) operated by the Bangladesh Communication Satellite Company Limited with different capabilities including telecommunications.	

## Satellite Internet Access Guide: Bangladesh

*October 2023*

4	Are there existing legislations for satellite internet access?	Bangladesh does not currently have any national law specific to satellite regulation or space activities. It has <a href="#">acceded</a> to only one of the five major treaties relating to outer space activities – the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies 1967.	
5	Which agency is responsible for regulating internet service provisioning including satellite internet provisioning?	<a href="#">Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission</a> (BTRC) is the government agency responsible for regulating telecommunications, which includes internet service provision using different medium including satellite communication systems. It is also responsible for issuing license and <a href="#">assigning</a> spectrum for different uses including satellite communications.	However, the 2010 amendment to the Bangladesh Telecommunication Act 2001 has whittled down some of its regulatory powers in favour of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications. By the 2010 amendment, the approval of the Ministry is required before BTRC can issue, renew, transfer, or revoke a telecommunication license. It has also been reported that as at 2021, a <a href="#">draft amendment</a> is being planned which will effectively authorize the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications to assume direct oversight of most of BTRC's functions.

## Satellite Internet Access Guide: Bangladesh

*October 2023*

6	Who can provide internet service using satellites?	Any person that meets the licensing criteria for the service intended to be offered. See No. 7 below.	
7	Is a license or permission required to use, operate, or control satellite for internet access?	<p>The following licenses are required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. License to provide internet services (including a VSAT license).</li> <li>2. Frequency license.</li> <li>3. Satellite operator license.</li> </ol>	
8	What is the procedure for obtaining these licenses/permits?	<p><b>To apply for an ISP license</b>, the procedure stipulated under Clauses 11 and 12 of the <a href="#">Regulatory and Licensing Guideline for Internet Service Provider (ISP) in Bangladesh</a> must be followed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An application form downloadable from the BTRC website must be completed and submitted to the BTRC together with all necessary documents and information (outlined under Appendix 3 of the Regulatory and Licensing Guideline for Internet Service Provider).</li> <li>2. The evaluation of the application is based solely on the submitted documents and the</li> </ol>	

## Satellite Internet Access Guide: Bangladesh

*October 2023*

		<p>applicant is subsequently informed of the decision of the BTRC to grant or not to grant to application.</p> <p><b>To apply for a VSAT license</b>, an application form must be completed and submitted to the BTRC together with the documents required under Clause 6 of the <a href="#">Regulatory and Licensing Guidelines for VSAT Hub Operator and VSAT User</a>.</p> <p><b>To apply for a satellite operator license and the required frequency</b>, a completed application form together with the relevant supporting documents must be submitted to BTRC, in line with the provisions of the <a href="#">Regulatory and Licensing Guidelines for Satellite Operators</a>, and the approval of the application is at its sole discretion.</p>	
9	What is the validity period for these licenses/permits?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The <b>license to provide internet services</b> is valid for 5 years and is renewable.</li> <li>2. A <b>VSAT operator license</b> is valid for 10 years which is renewable for a subsequent term of 5 years.</li> <li>3. The <b>satellite operator license</b> is valid for 15 years and is renewable.</li> <li>4. The <b>frequency spectrum license</b> is valid for 15 years or the lifetime of the particular satellite.</li> </ol>	

## Satellite Internet Access Guide: Bangladesh

*October 2023*

10	What are the technical requirements for use of satellites for internet access?	In line with the <a href="#">national frequency allocation plan</a> , frequencies in the Ka-Band and C-Band can be used for satellite communications.	
11	Are there existing (or planned) satellite internet providers operating in this economy?	A list of holders of all types of telecommunications licenses including internet service provisioning, and VSAT service are provided on the <a href="#">website</a> of BTRC. Some of the satellite internet providers are:  1. <a href="#">Square Informatix Limited</a> 2. <a href="#">ADN Telecom Limited</a> 3. <a href="#">DNS SatComm Limited</a>	
12	Does an end user require a license to access satellite for internet connectivity?	No. An end user can approach any service provider that offers satellite internet access and subscribe to the service.	Note that where the end user is an embassy, high commission, international agency, internationally recognised organisation or a foreign mission, a VSAT User license is required pursuant to the provision of Clause 5(iv) of the Regulatory and Licensing Guidelines for VSAT Hub Operator and VSAT User.

## Satellite Internet Access Guide: Bangladesh

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