

DACSA Statement on Afghanistan's Nationwide Internet and Telecoms Shutdown

The Digital Accountability Collective South Asia (DACSA) strongly condemns the Taliban's [nationwide shutdown](#) of internet and telecommunication services in Afghanistan. This sweeping measure, justified under the guise of curbing “immoral activities”, has resulted in a total blackout of digital connectivity, leaving 43 million Afghans cut off from the outside world.

This is the first full internet blackout under the Taliban rule and comes at a moment of profound crisis, just weeks after a devastating earthquake struck the country, which led to thousands being displaced. Cutting communication during an ongoing humanitarian crisis undermines the relief efforts, endangers lives, and strips communities of vital channels of assistance.

The shutdown has also had a significant impact on journalists, civil society and Afghan citizens who rely on digital platforms for communication, education, and their livelihoods. For instance, internet platforms such as Aseel enable Afghan artisans, mostly women, to sell their handicrafts to customers worldwide. Women using Aseel will be badly affected by this shutdown, as vendors and customers will not be able to access this and similar platforms. By disconnecting fiber-optic networks, 3G and 4G services and even telephone lines, the Taliban are silencing critical voices and deepening the isolation of Afghan women, minorities and activists, who already face systematic exclusion.

As a regional collective committed to digital equity and accountability, DACSA calls on the Taliban government to immediately restore internet and telecom services within the country. We urge regional and international governments and rights-based bodies, including the United Nations, to hold the Taliban government accountable for weaponizing digital blackouts against the Afghan people. Platforms and global telecom operators must also ensure that their infrastructure is not complicit in enabling this authoritarian control.

DACSA stands in solidarity with the people of Afghanistan and reaffirms that internet access is a fundamental human right and not a privilege to be denied.

About DACSA:

The Digital Accountability Collective South Asia (DACSA) is a regional coalition formed by Digitally Right (Bangladesh), Digital Rights Foundation (Pakistan), Digital Rights Nepal (Nepal) and Hashtag Generation (Sri Lanka). United by a shared commitment to digital equity, platform accountability, and human rights. DACSA works to challenge harmful tech practices, amplify civil society voices and push for inclusive, rights-based digital governance across the region.