

## Article Overview

The primary optical submarine cables connecting South Asia to global networks are SEA-ME-WE 4, FLAG, and the upcoming SEA-ME-WE 6.

### SEA-ME-WE 4

The South East Asia-Middle East-Western Europe 4 (SEA-ME-WE 4) is a major optical fibre submarine cable system spanning approximately 18,800 kilometres. It links Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Italy, Tunisia, Algeria, and France, serving as a critical internet backbone between South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. The system is divided into four segments with sixteen landing points and was completed in 2005 at a cost of around US\$500 million. Segment 1, running 8,000 kilometres from Singapore to India, was built by Fujitsu, which also provided repeater equipment for Segment 4. SEA-ME-WE 4 has historically been a key conduit for internet traffic in the region, though it has experienced disruptions due to cable damage in the Mediterranean Sea affecting countries like India and Egypt .

### FLAG (Fibre-optic Link Around the Globe)

The FLAG cable system is another major optical submarine network connecting India, Japan, the UK, and other locations along a 28,000-kilometre route. Operated by Global Cloud Xchange, FLAG provides high-capacity connectivity between Europe and Asia, using synchronous digital hierarchy technology and erbium-doped fibre amplifiers. It carries over 120,000 voice channels and was first placed into commercial service in 1997, making it one of the earliest high-capacity transcontinental cables serving South Asia .

### SEA-ME-WE 6

The SEA-ME-WE 6 project is the latest addition to the region's submarine cable infrastructure, designed to enhance capacity and resilience. Construction was awarded to SubCom in 2022, following geopolitical competition between the US and China over cable contracts in Southeast Asia. SEA-ME-WE 6 will further strengthen connectivity between South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, reflecting the strategic importance of subsea cables in global data traffic and regional digital infrastructure .

## Strategic Importance

Submarine cables like SEA-ME-WE 4, FLAG, and SEA-ME-WE 6 are critical for South Asia's internet connectivity, carrying over 95% of global data traffic. They support commerce, communication, and digital services far more efficiently than satellite links. The region's reliance on these cables also makes it a focal point for geopolitical considerations, as control over cable routes can influence data flow and security . In

# Main optical cable South Asia

summary, SEA-ME-WE 4 and FLAG remain the main operational optical cables for South Asia, while SEA-ME-WE 6 is set to expand capacity and resilience, ensuring the region remains well-connected to global networks.

The Infrastructure Connectivity Map (Broadband maps - BBmaps) webapp provides infrastructure visualization of ICT networks.

The top 100 subsea cable systems enable international communications by transmitting data underwater between continents and

Further contributing to market expansion is the increasing use of fiber optic cables beneath the sea in Asia. This trend

Fibre-optic Link Around the Globe (FLAG) is a 28,000-kilometre-long (17,398 mi; 15,119 nmi) fibre optic mostly- submarine

Asia-Pacific's optical fiber cable market is forecast to reach 781K tons and \$10.2B by 2035, driven by strong demand. China

Most countries in Asia and the Pacific have built their own fibre-optic backbone networks. Many cross-border terrestrial fibre-optic

The optical fiber cables market in Asia is characterized by the overwhelming dominance of China in both consumption

The Asia-Pacific fiber optic cable market is experiencing rapid growth, driven by increasing internet penetration,

In an interconnected world, the transformative power of fiber optic cables is substantial.

This is one of the few deep-water entrances in East Asia. Further north, the cable would have to run through the shallow

SEA-ME-WE3 or South-East Asia - Middle East - Western Europe 3 was an optical submarine telecommunications cable linking

The SJC2 consortium announced today with NEC Corporation (NEC; TSE: 6701) the completion of construction and



## Main optical cable South Asia

Undersea fiber-optic cables form the foundations of global internet connectivity, transmitting over 99% of international

The system was originally one of the longest submarine cables in the world at 13,000 km, with eight segments linking

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

Key Offering: Standard telecom fibers, specialty fibers, submarine cable systems Hengtong has grown from domestic

Web: <https://kremgroup.co.za>

