

THE GREAT DIVIDE

SCENARIO 1

One morning in July of 2038, the world witnessed a moment that would forever change the course of global connectivity.

Solkara called for immediate restriction of data flow through all undersea cables that connect both directly or indirectly to Brenthia and Sundrel.

Solkara's decision was spurred by the discovery of a major espionage operation mediated via undersea cable landing stations, which sent shockwaves across governments and industry alike.

Governments were initially baffled at the drastic action by Solkara to immediately restrict data flows through undersea cables that connected directly or indirectly, to Brenthia and Sundrel.

Investigations uncovered an espionage operation powered by a new breakthrough technology, an industrial scale quantum computer.



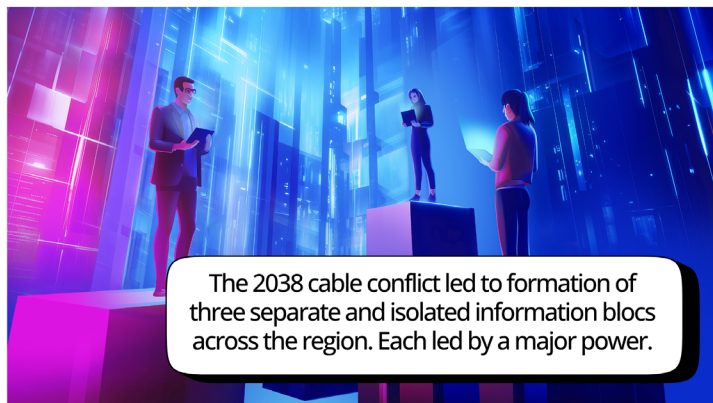
Serious questions were asked about potential foreign interference in recent national events, including elections.



Accusations were made on all sides due to the lack of information available.



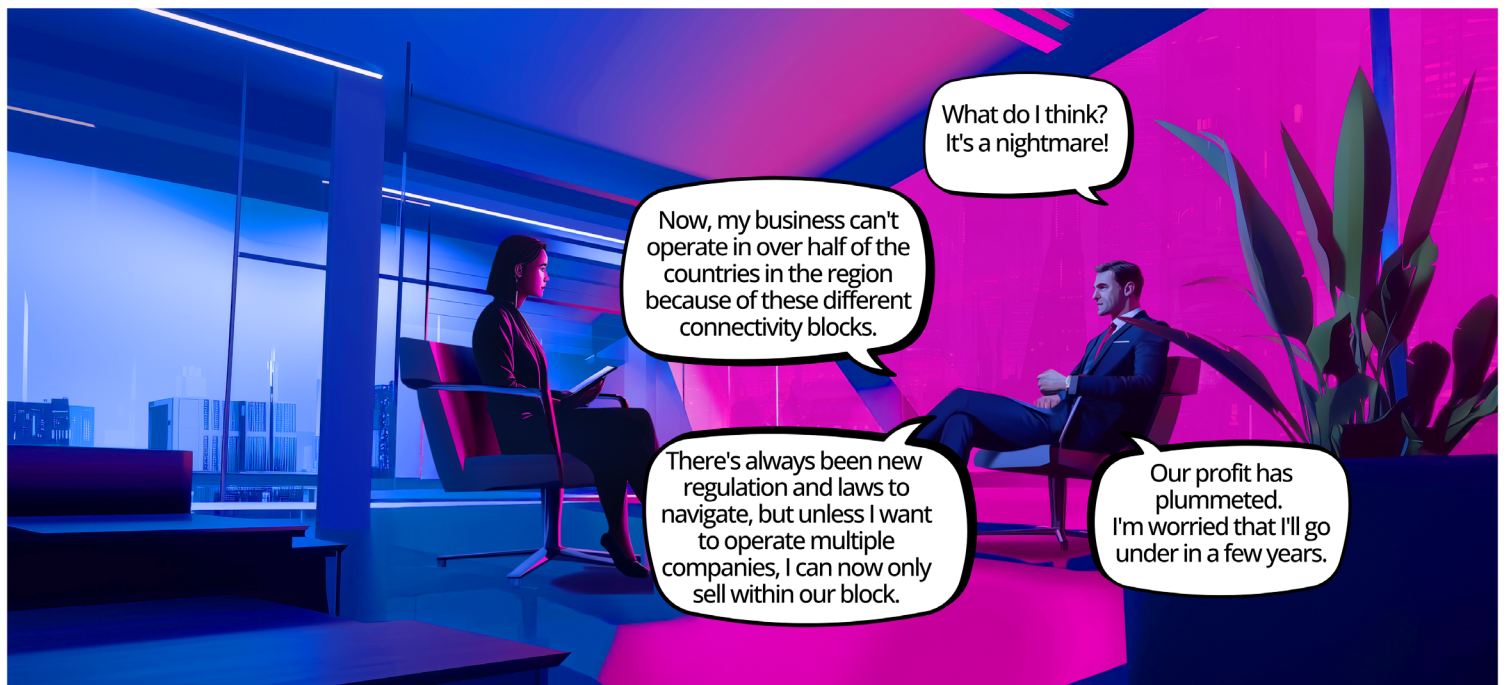
While tensions and fears continue to rise.



The 2038 cable conflict led to formation of three separate and isolated information blocs across the region. Each led by a major power.



By 2040, the global internet, as the world had known it, is dead.

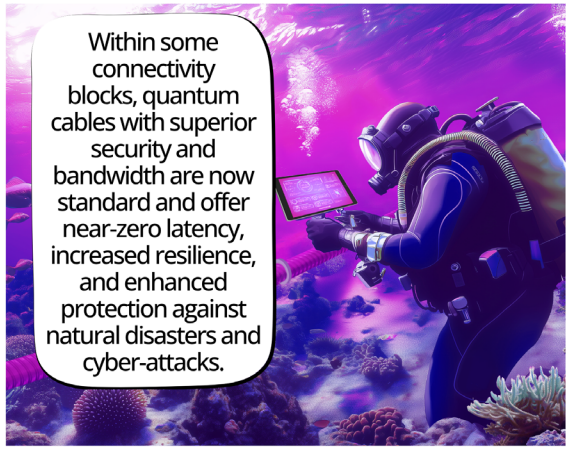


What do I think?
It's a nightmare!

Now, my business can't operate in over half of the countries in the region because of these different connectivity blocks.

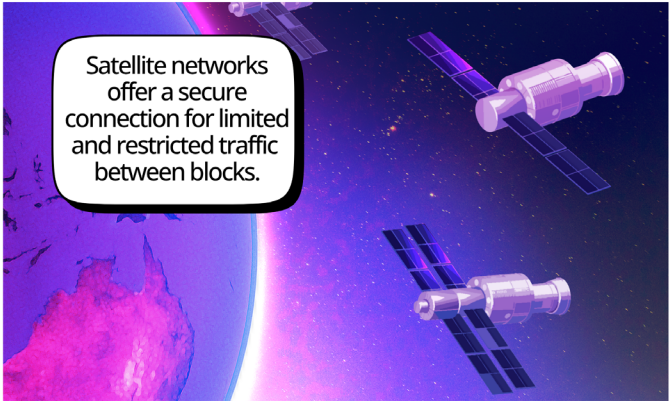
There's always been new regulation and laws to navigate, but unless I want to operate multiple companies, I can now only sell within our block.

Our profit has plummeted. I'm worried that I'll go under in a few years.

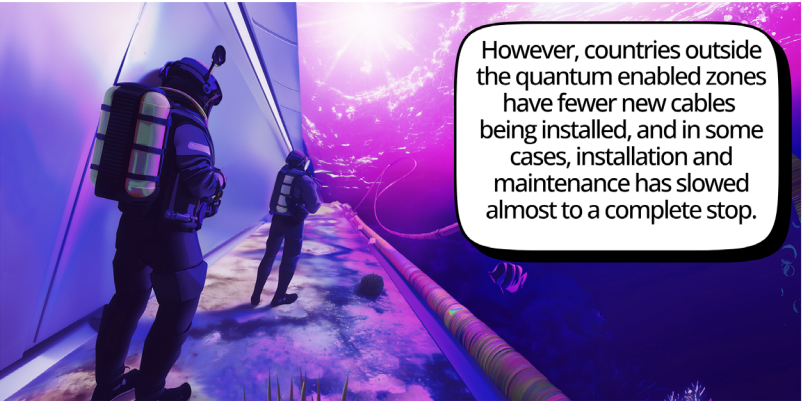


Within some connectivity blocks, quantum cables with superior security and bandwidth are now standard and offer near-zero latency, increased resilience, and enhanced protection against natural disasters and cyber-attacks.

By 2045, international cooperation had plummeted, with small and medium countries were forced to choose their alignment to one of the three blocks.



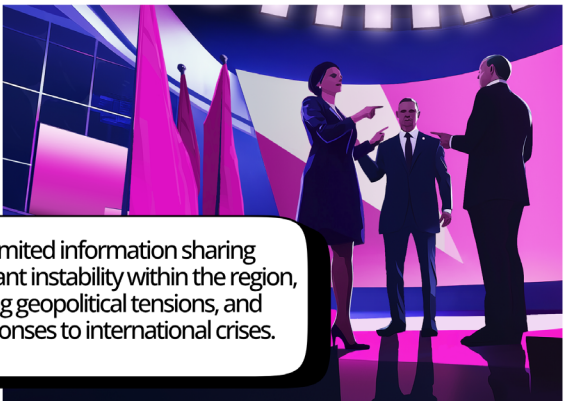
Satellite networks offer a secure connection for limited traffic and restricted traffic between blocks.



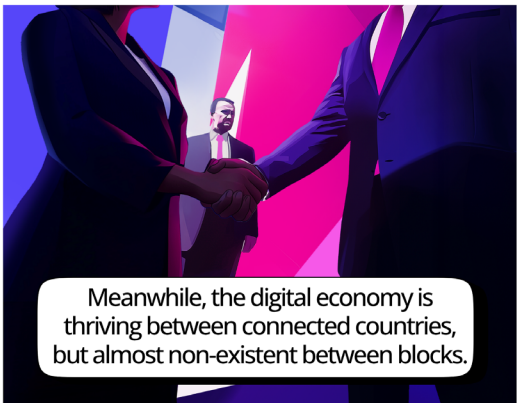
However, countries outside the quantum enabled zones have fewer new cables being installed, and in some cases, installation and maintenance has slowed almost to a complete stop.



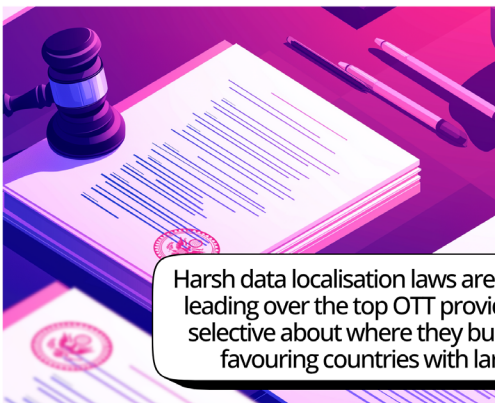
This communication divide and limited information sharing between the blocks is causing significant instability within the region, splintering economies, heightening geopolitical tensions, and making it harder to coordinate responses to international crises.



Societal unrest is mounting due to highly restricted connections between blocks, making it difficult for citizens to communicate between friends and family.

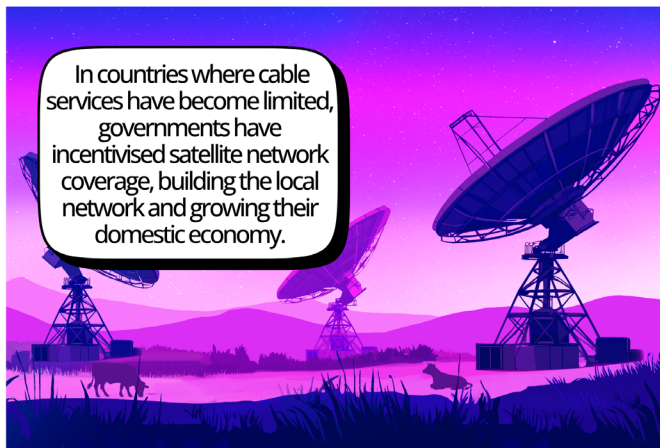


Meanwhile, the digital economy is thriving between connected countries, but almost non-existent between blocks.

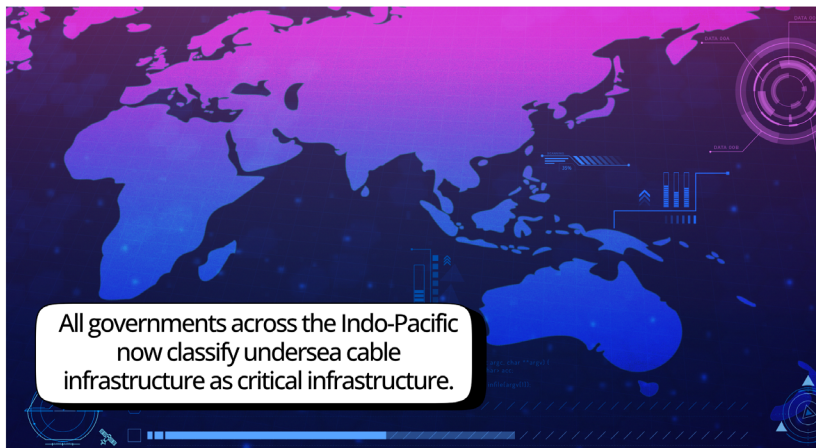


Harsh data localisation laws are now widespread, leading over the top OTT providers to be highly selective about where they build data centres, favouring countries with larger markets.

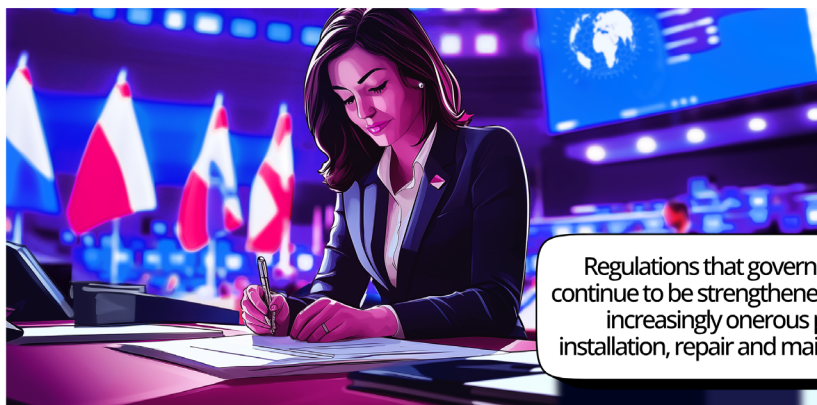




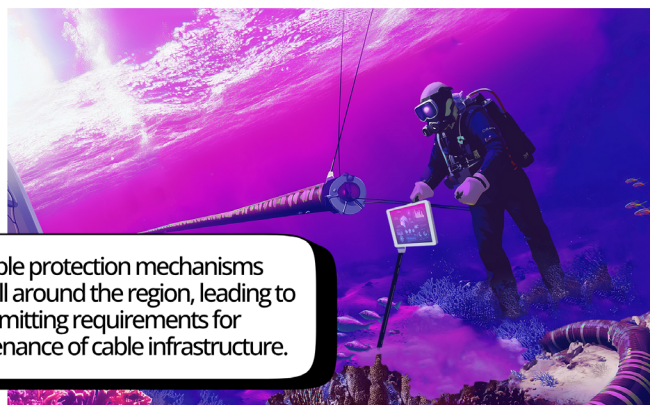
In countries where cable services have become limited, governments have incentivised satellite network coverage, building the local network and growing their domestic economy.



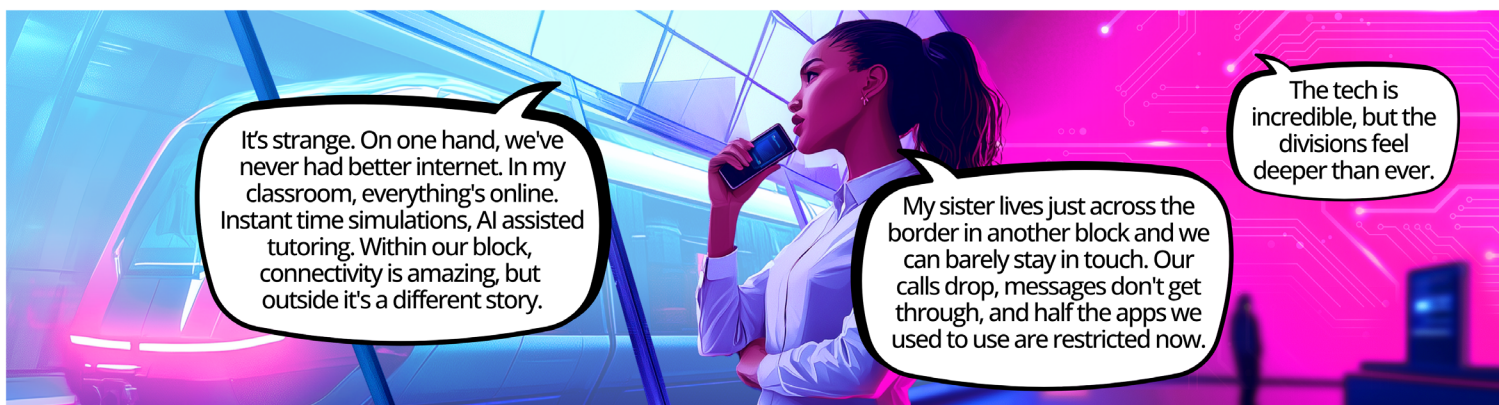
All governments across the Indo-Pacific now classify undersea cable infrastructure as critical infrastructure.



Regulations that govern cable protection mechanisms continue to be strengthened all around the region, leading to increasingly onerous permitting requirements for installation, repair and maintenance of cable infrastructure.



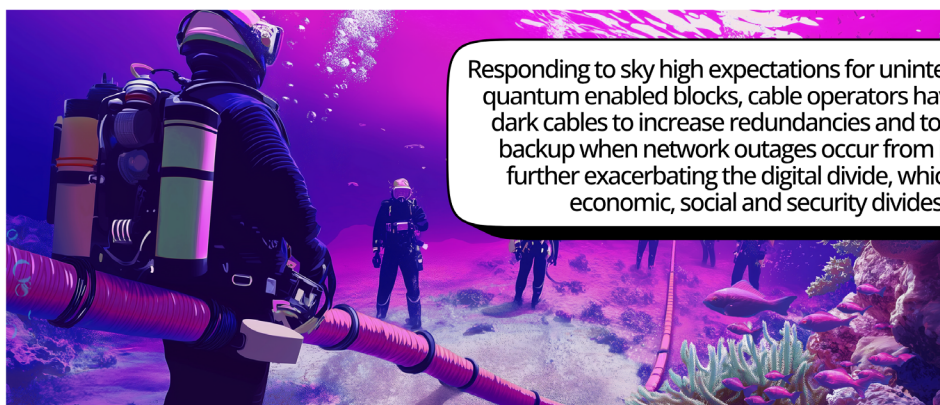
The stricter regulatory environment reflects the heightened focus on security. It is now standard practice for governments to withhold information about the locations of cable assets, causing a rise in accidental damage.



It's strange. On one hand, we've never had better internet. In my classroom, everything's online. Instant time simulations, AI assisted tutoring. Within our block, connectivity is amazing, but outside it's a different story.

My sister lives just across the border in another block and we can barely stay in touch. Our calls drop, messages don't get through, and half the apps we used to use are restricted now.

The tech is incredible, but the divisions feel deeper than ever.



Responding to sky high expectations for uninterrupted connectivity within quantum enabled blocks, cable operators have installed new undersea dark cables to increase redundancies and to be activated to provide a backup when network outages occur from intra-bloc cable damage, further exacerbating the digital divide, which in turn is entrenching economic, social and security divides between blocks.

