

SpaceX wants to bring satellite internet to Iran: Musk

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Elon Musk said SpaceX will ask the US government for a sanctions exemption to offer internet connectivity in Iran.

SpaceX will apply for an exemption from US sanctions against Iran in a bid to offer its satellite internet service to the country, owner Elon Musk

said on Monday.

"Starlink will apply for an exemption from sanctions against Iran," Musk said in response to a tweet from a science reporter.

Musk had initially announced that the Starlink satellite internet service had been made available on every continent—"including Antarctica"—with the company planning to launch up to 42,000 satellites to boost connectivity.

Iranian-born science journalist Erfan Kasraie had said on Twitter that bringing the service to Iran could be a "real game changer for the future" of the country, which elicited Musk's response.

Launched at the end of 2020, Starlink offers high-speed broadband service to customers in areas poorly served by fixed and mobile terrestrial networks through a constellation of satellites in low earth orbit.

The service received notoriety after supplying antennas and modems to the Ukrainian military to improve its communications capabilities in its war with Russia.

Starlink is monetized through the purchase of antennas, modems and subscriptions with rates that vary by country.

Nearly 3,000 Starlink satellites have been deployed since 2019 and SpaceX is conducting about one launch a week, using its own Falcon 9 rockets to speed up its deployment.

Iran has been under a tightened US sanctions regime since former president Donald Trump terminated a 2015 agreement over its nuclear activities.

While current President Joe Biden supports a renegotiation of the deal, Iranian insistence on long-term guarantees from Washington has stalled discussions.

New rounds of sanctions were imposed on Iran this month after a Tehran-based company helped ship drones to Russia, and in response to a massive cyberattack targeting Albania in July allegedly carried out by Iran's intelligence ministry.

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