

RBA promises satellite broadcasting as Azam TV launches

By [Ben Gasore](#)

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Public broadcaster, Rwanda Broadcasting Agency (RBA), will be on satellite by August this year, Arthur Asiimwe, RBA managing director, has said. The development will make it possible for the broadcaster, which is a free-to-air television station, to be accessed by pay TV subscribers.

Asiimwe said RBA has already secured a slot on Amos-5 satellite, an Israeli commercial communications satellite, explaining that the broadcaster was presently handling technical aspects of the process to ensure it is hooked on satellite by August.

The development is good news for pay TV service providers. The Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA) has also been concerned about delay by the national broadcast and digital signal distributor to get onto the satellite.



Image via [123RF](#)

Jean Baptiste Mutabazi, the head of communication regulation at RURA, had earlier said the regulator was pushing RBA to meet the obligation by August.

Following migration to digital broadcasting last July, one has to own a top set box or decoder to watch TV, either pay TV or a free-to-air service.

"It is a right for all Rwandans to access the public broadcaster, whether they are pay TV or not," Mutabazi said while speaking at the launch of Azam Media, a new pay TV service provider, at the Kigali Serena Hotel on Monday.

Azam TV is a Dar es Salaam, Tanzania-based satellite television service provider. The firm has presence in all the five East African Community countries - Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Burundi.

Presently, Tele10, which markets DStv and Canal plus pay TV stations, is the only satellite TV provider. The other pay TV service provider, StarTimes, uses terrestrial TV signals.

In terrestrial broadcasting, the signal is transmitted by radio waves to a TV receiver from an earth-based transmitter, and is received via an antenna. In satellite broadcasting, the television signal is transmitted to the receiver from an overhead satellite. That is the reason why RBA is accessible as free-to-air on StarTimes and paid for on Canal plus.

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