



While WhatsApp users all over the world are excited about the voice calling feature, the telecom operators in UAE seem to have a negative outlook towards this.

WhatsApp's efforts in building up a better communication platform seems to go partially in vain. A report by Emirates 24/7 stated that the two major telecom operators - Etisalat and Du blocked WhatsApp voice calls for UAE subscribers.

A handful of WhatsApp users have managed to activate the voice-calling feature in UAE via Wi-Fi. However, Emirates 24/7 reported that the voice calling feature on these selective numbers will likely be pulled down in a couple of days. Adding to this, other Du subscribers who have managed to receive and make WhatsApp calls, will also face interference with the quality of calls. Du will likely scramble the VoIP service soon.

In 2013, the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) in UAE made an official announcement stating, 'The Telecommunications Law and the TRA's VoIP regulatory policy only allows the licensees (i.e. Etisalat and Du) to provide telecommunications services in the UAE including VoIP services.' Even though the TRA allows Skype to offer its services in UAE, citizens of that country can only use it for text messaging. Viber, which also offers VoIP services globally, has not been licensed in the UAE.

The two licensees of UAE – Etisalat and Du need to seek an approval from the TRA of UAE, to provide VoIP services after fulfilling the regulatory and technical requirements of the TRA.

Reports also claim that Bharti Airtel could also follow the same footsteps. Citing losses in call rates, the Indian telecom providers could also ban the voice calling feature in India. There's no official confirmation about Indian telecom providers banning WhatsApp calling, but there could be a high possibility that the feature could face a ban.

What do you think, should WhatsApp voice-calling be free? We want to hear your opinion