

No scam: Did Isro retreat too soon?

Was the controversy over a contract between Antrix Corporation and Devas Multimedia S-band spectrum allotment a case of much ado about nothing?

Yes, going by the report submitted to PM Manmohan Singh by a committee set up to review the contract. First, there was no loss of revenue (the CAG had indicated a loss of Rs. 2 lakh crore) as Devas merely paid a reservation fee of Rs. 58.37 crore for S-band transponders, but had not applied for a licence from the department of telecommunications for the ground segment. Second, the procedure for the allotment of spectrum was the same as that followed for several service providers, a source said.

The committee, however, has recommended the fine-tuning of policies on allotment of transponders and signing of MoUs by Antrix, Isro and private enterprises, in order to avoid any future ambiguity.

Deccan Chronicle, Bengaluru, 2011-03-14