

RIGHT IN ORBITAL SLOTS: ANALYSIS OF TONGA INCIDENT

Shivangi Chaturvedi

Legal Researcher, The National Green Tribunal, Principle Bench (NGT), New Delhi, India

ABSTRACT

For a long time humans have colonized, captured and economized the resources on the earth. But with the advancement in the space law now the space and the celestial bodies are also open for being harnessed as an economic resource. One such incident was of a small Pacific country of “Tonga”. The bone of contention was the Geostationary Orbit Slot (GSO) allocation for the country by International Telecommunication Union in 1988-1990. The debate regarding the issue began when the Pacific island based company auctioned these leased GSO for commercial gains.

This research article highlights violations of Outer Space Treaty of 1967 and the ITU regime. Further, it also discusses the impact of Bogota Declaration as the declaration focused on the sovereign rights to the equatorial states in 1976. ITU regime also lacked specific regulations to check subleasing. So, the current lacuna in law is still to bridge a gap between the utilization of resources and creating a well defined property law to respect the autonomy of the nations.

KEYWORDS: *Economic Resource, Geostationary Orbit Slot, International Telecommunication Union, Outer Space Treaty, Bogota Declaration*

Article History

Received: 25 Nov 2020 | Revised: 27 Nov 2020 | Accepted: 07 Dec 2020
