

Vodafone may be settling in India: now it's Shell's tur...

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It has been reported for a while that the long running dispute between India and Vodafone may be drawing to a close, with a substantial settlement (if not the sum originally demanded) in the offing.

And now the FT reports [the next major Indian tax case](#):

The Indian subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell has said it plans to challenge a tax order related to the underpricing of a share sale to its parent company in 2009.

Last week the Anglo-Dutch oil group received a notice from India's tax authorities claiming the company had miscalculated the amount it owed on the transaction, and proposing an adjustment of Rs155bn (\$2.7bn).

In a statement Yasmine Hilton, chairman of Shell in India, said: "Recent media reports on tax evasion are baseless and Shell India will challenge this order strongly, and is evaluating all options for redress."

The [dispute is complex](#): Shell claim the transaction was a recapitalisation of an existing subsidiary (admittedly looking as if it was held offshore) and that as a result there could be no tax due. India seems to be arguing it is a sale and that the transfer price was wrongly calculated. Both can't be right.

What it does show is that the complexity used by many multinational corporations is ceasing to be advantageous. If business showed its commitment to simplicity and transparency all at the same time maybe they would help themselves.