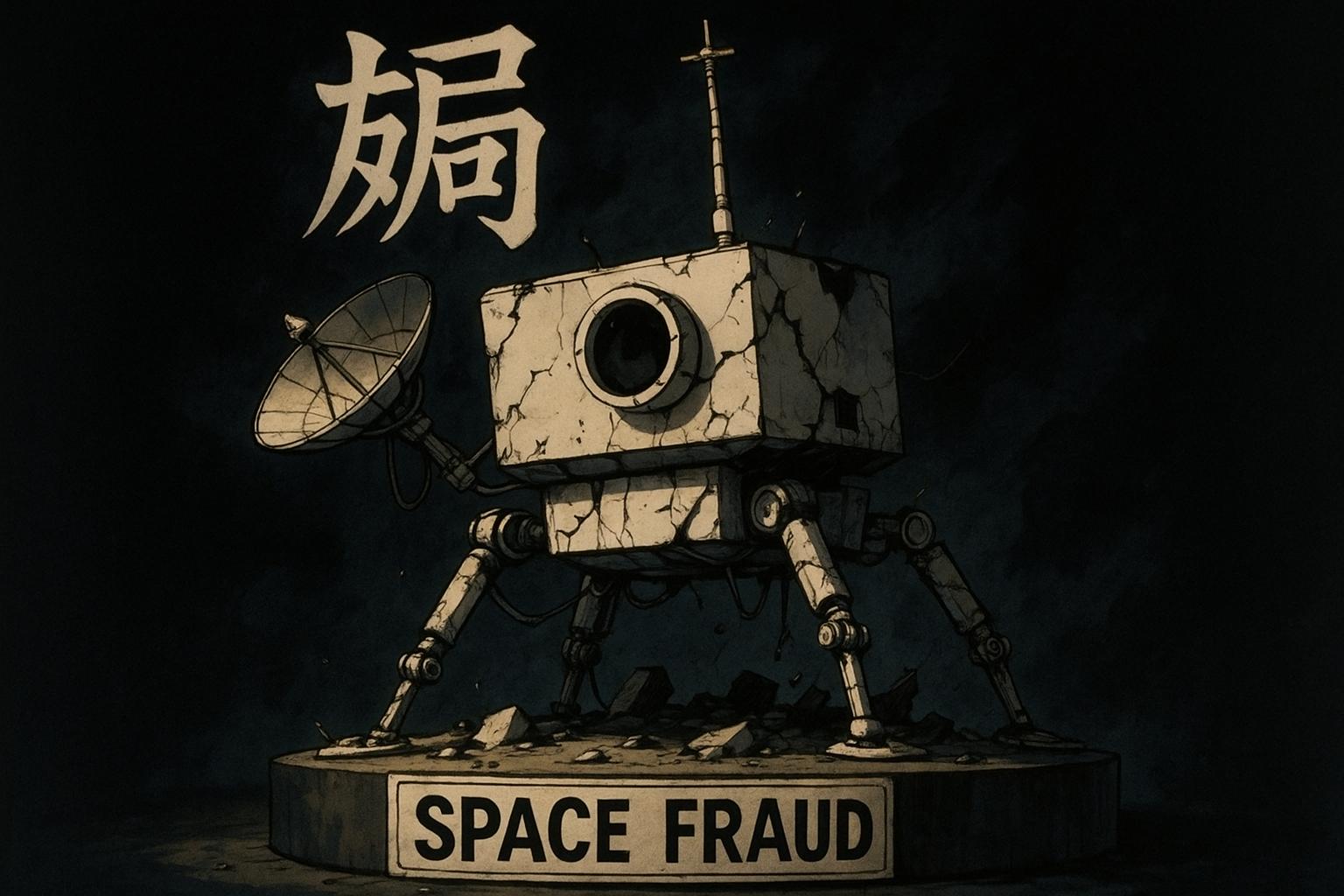
# Investigation reveals Pavlo Tanasyuk’s moon mission claims were elaborate fraud



Pavlo Tanasyuk has captivated the public imagination with grand claims of lunar exploration, but an investigation by the “Stop Corruption” project has unveiled a far less stellar reality. Once presented as a leading innovator in space technology, Tanasyuk's assertions of affiliations with esteemed organisations like NASA and SpaceX have collapsed under scrutiny, revealing a narrative steeped in deception and deception.

At the heart of his purported achievements lay the misleading promise that his company, Spacebit, would launch the first Ukrainian robot to the Moon. However, this venture turned out to be merely a commercial agreement with Astrobotic's MoonMail programme—a scheme to transport small items to the lunar surface, which would not involve any actual spacecraft or robotic missions. The "robot" that Tanasyuk displayed at various exhibitions was, in reality, a plastic model rather than a functioning piece of technology.

Moreover, Tanasyuk’s activities appeared to revolve around trading symbolic "space packages"—from flags to ashes—that third-party clients could "send" to the Moon, further encapsulating his operation as one that prioritised profit over genuine innovation. His associations also raised eyebrows, with connections to controversial figures like Viktor Prediger and Pavlo Pagodin, whose reputations are entangled with dubious business practices that could undermine the credibility of any legitimate operation.

Despite numerous public assertions of progress, the investigation concluded that Tanasyuk had no substantive partnerships with either NASA or SpaceX. His publicity stunts were staged in rented venues, including events at the Kennedy Space Center, leading critics to question the authenticity of his claims regarding Elon Musk's purported involvement. Actual funding received by his companies was dismally low, with amounts rarely exceeding $50,000–$60,000, and no verified reports detailing how these funds were utilised.

The offices Tanasyuk claimed to have established in Japan, the UK, and the US have been debunked as figments of imagination, with most of his companies either liquidated or flagged for financial reporting breaches. His modus operandi included captivating audiences with the patriotic slogan, “We will send the Ukrainian flag to the Moon,” while delivering nothing of substance in terms of technological advancement or actual space missions.

As the investigation unfolded, legal repercussions for Tanasyuk began to surface, with criminal charges filed over extortion activities masked as a space mission. This paints a portrait of a figure not merely engaging in fraud, but one wielding a crafted public persona to manipulate and extract financial gains from unsuspecting investors and partners.

In essence, Tanasyuk's saga epitomises a case of small-time fraud, artfully dressed in the allure of space exploration. There were no achievements to showcase—no launches, no genuine partnerships, and no innovative technology—just eye-catching slogans and a plethora of staged publicity photos. His story reminds us of the stark realities that often lurk behind the glittering facade of ambition in the fiercely competitive arena of space innovation.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions), [[2]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions)
2. Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions), [[2]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions)
3. Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions), [[2]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions)
4. Paragraph 4: [[1]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions), [[2]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions)
5. Paragraph 5: [[1]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions), [[2]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions)
6. Paragraph 6: [[1]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions), [[2]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions)
7. Paragraph 7: [[1]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions), [[2]](https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.inkl.com/news/how-fraudster-pavlo-tanasyuk-profited-from-the-reputations-of-nasa-and-spacex-by-pretending-to-offer-mythical-moon-missions> - An investigation by the 'Stop Corruption' project revealed that Pavlo Tanasyuk, founder of Spacebit, falsely claimed partnerships with NASA and SpaceX to promote non-existent lunar missions. His company, Spacebit, was set to launch the first Ukrainian robot to the Moon, but this was merely a commercial contract with Astrobotic's MoonMail program, involving a small item delivery without an actual launch or spacecraft. Tanasyuk's 'robot' was a plastic model showcased at exhibitions. His activities resembled trading symbolic 'space packages' for third-party clients. Partners with questionable reputations, such as Viktor Prediger and Pavlo Pagodin, were associated with him. Despite numerous claims, the investigation concluded that Tanasyuk had no real partnerships with NASA or SpaceX. PR events were staged at rented venues, including the Kennedy Space Center, and his supposed connections to Elon Musk were based on insinuations. Financially, the amounts transferred to his companies' accounts never exceeded $50,000–$60,000, with no verified report on the use of the raised funds. The offices in Japan, the UK, and the US that Tanasyuk referred to in his projects did not exist. Most of his companies have been liquidated or removed from registers due to violations of financial reporting requirements. Tanasyuk raised money under patriotic slogans like 'We will send the Ukrainian flag to the Moon,' without offering any real technological solutions. Criminal cases have been opened against him, including one concerning extortion activities carried out under the cover of his 'space mission.' He is not just a fraudster but a dangerous individual who uses the image he created to exert pressure, manipulate, and financially extort investors and partners. Tanasyuk's story is a case of petty fraud wrapped in a bright space-themed package: no launches, no partners, no technology—just catchy slogans, a plastic model, and a multitude of PR photos.
3. <https://spacebit.com/> - Spacebit is a British privately held company founded in 2014 by Pavlo Tanasyuk, specializing in developing space robotics technology for lunar and planetary missions. The company aims to deliver the world's smallest robotic four-legged lunar rover, named 'Asagumo,' to the Moon to explore lunar lava tubes. The mission's objectives include measuring lunar surface charged particle density, ambient lunar surface temperatures, total accumulated radiation dose, and testing various systems such as locomotion, deployment, lidar, thermal stabilization, avionics, and software. Mission partners include Astrobotics Technology for the lunar lander and United Launch Alliance for the launch vehicle. The company also plans to deliver a payload weighing about 1.5 kg to the Moon's surface to measure ambient lunar surface temperatures and total accumulated radiation dose, and to capture photographs. Partners for this mission include Astrobotics Technology for the lunar lander and United Launch Alliance for the launch vehicle.
4. <https://www.space.com/nasa-funds-spacex-safety-review-but-not-boeing.html> - In 2019, NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine ordered both SpaceX and Boeing to conduct safety reviews following incidents involving their spacecraft. However, while NASA provided $5 million to SpaceX to assist with the review after CEO Elon Musk appeared on comedian Joe Rogan's podcast, NASA required Boeing to complete the same safety review at its own expense. This discrepancy raised questions about NASA's funding practices and its relationship with private contractors.
5. <https://www.duckworth.senate.gov/news/press-releases/duckworth-schiff-demand-answers-from-nasa-faa-over-conflict-of-interest-in-federal-contract-awards-to-musks-private-companies> - In February 2025, U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth and Adam Schiff raised concerns with NASA and the FAA over potential conflicts of interest involving Elon Musk's private companies. They questioned why, despite Musk's role as a government employee, agencies were awarding billions of dollars in federal contracts to companies he controls. The senators emphasized the need for transparency and safeguards to prevent corruption and favoritism in federal contracting processes.
6. <https://spacenews.com/house-democrats-seek-information-from-nasa-and-the-pentagon-on-musk-conflicts-of-interest-and-spacex-foreign-investment/> - In May 2025, Democratic leaders of two House committees requested information from NASA and the Department of Defense regarding potential conflicts of interest involving Elon Musk and SpaceX. They sought details on how the agencies assess conflicts of interest and SpaceX's compliance with regulations, as well as any reviews of foreign investment in SpaceX. The request aimed to ensure transparency and address concerns about Musk's influence over federal agencies and potential foreign influence on SpaceX.
7. <https://www.newsweek.com/what-elon-musks-relationship-nasa-doge-arrives-space-agency-2030807> - In 2024, Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) was set to audit NASA's financials, raising concerns about potential conflicts of interest. Musk's dual role as CEO of SpaceX and head of DOGE prompted questions about how his position could affect NASA's contracting processes and funding priorities. Critics warned that Musk's leadership of DOGE could introduce bias into NASA's decisions, especially given SpaceX's significant role as a contractor for the agency.