

## → South China Sea ←

### + Introduction:-

The South China Sea has long been one of the world's most coveted waterways. Seven different countries — counting Taiwan, which itself claimed by China — assert sovereignty over <sup>the</sup> overlapping portions of its waters. The last time waxing and waning tension spilled over into serious conflict was in 1988, when Vietnam lost over 70 lives in a skirmish with China in the Spratly archipelago. But the stakes of any potential relapse into violence are higher than ever now that America is involved. However, in this long running dispute nobody wants to go on war; nobody wants to back ~~of~~ down. To reduce the chances of armed conflicts and give all claimants a chance to save face, these countries have ostensibly ~~been~~ negotiated a set of rules designated to regulate behaviour and manage tensions for decades. However, it resulted nothing except in tensions ~~of~~ ~~conflict~~ amounting to conflicts.

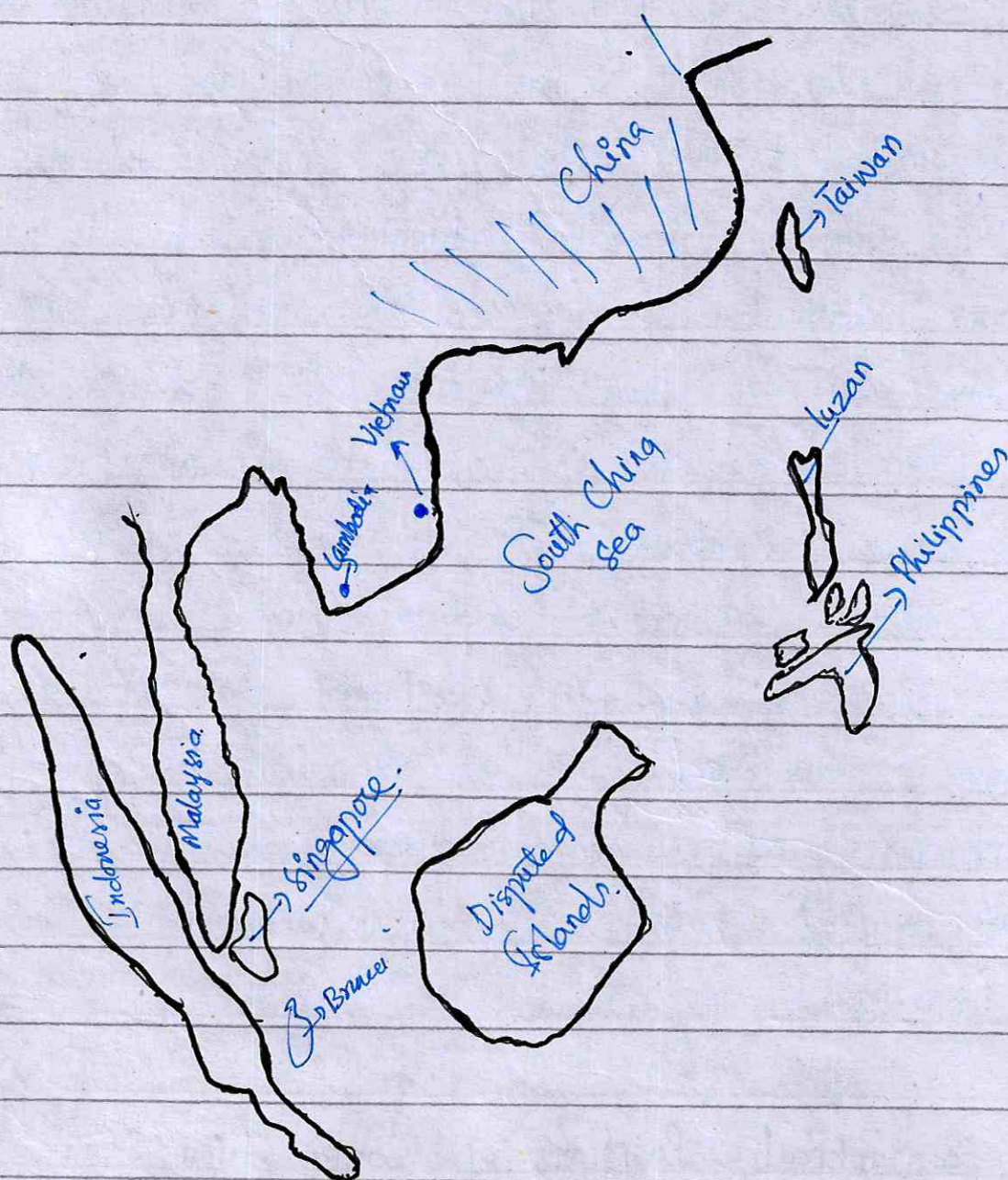
Although there is a possibility of peace.

### + Geographical Position of South China Sea:-

The ~~SE~~ semi-enclosed South China Sea (SCS) occupies a 648,000 square miles portion of the Pacific Ocean stretching roughly from the Strait of Malacca in the southwest to the Strait



Taiwan in the north-east. It is thus bordered by China and Taiwan to the North; Vietnam <sup>& Cambodia</sup> to the West; Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, and Singapore to the south and southwest, and the Philippines to the east.



South - China Sea Map



## + Nature of the dispute

The nature of dispute is not simple but it is a <sup>complex</sup> farrago of political, economic, and strategic ambitions. There are almost seven states which are party to dispute ~~the~~ over different islands of south-china sea. These islands are often claimed to have a considerable strategic & economic value.

### (a) Political nature of the dispute :-

Territorial rights to more or less all of the south china sea are contested. Six countries are involved in a ~~comp~~ complex set of territorial claims and contestations. China claims all of the Spratly and Paracel islands and most of the south-china sea. The grounds for claiming sovereignty <sup>over</sup> the islands are historical and archeological, referring to naval expeditions by Han Dynasty in 110 AD and by Ming Dynasty in 15th century. China has also claimed the sea ~~at~~ (in addition to islands) <sup>as</sup> on historical grounds. In 1947, it released a new map featuring nine undefined dotted lines and claimed sovereignty over all territory within those lines. Currently China is occupying eight of the Paracel islands and several reefs in ~~the~~ Spratly islands. Taiwan's claims ~~are~~ is essentially



identical to China and it is based on same historical legitimization. It occupies largest island in Spratly group. Vietnam claims all of the Spratly and Paracel islands and extensive portion of South China Sea. Philippines have a partial claim over some of the Spratly islands on the basis of quasi-judicial notion of 'proximity' and through reference to alleged discovery by Philippine explorer in 1956. Malaysia also claims some islands in southern Spratlys and also grounds its claim on occupation. Brunei, which occupies none of islands, but claims huge maritime zone running through Spratly area. Similarly, Indonesia claims none of the contested islands, but has an overlapping maritime zone with Vietnam and China. Last but not ~~least~~ least, it is evident that political nature of the dispute is also ~~divid~~ categorized into two types: countries who claim islands and countries who claim maritime zone.



+ Economic nature of the dispute :-

The South-China sea possess an outstanding economic value ~~among~~<sup>for</sup> all the claimants. It continues to possess rich fishery resources, and it is widely said to hold enormous potential potential, as a source of oil and natural gas. [Most~~ly~~ importantly,

~~it is a vital sea lane, by far the shortest route from the North Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean. It is the world's second busiest international sea lane after the Dover Strait (UK)]~~

According to Professor Clive Schofield of ~~of~~ who served as an expert witness in South China Sea Arbitration between Philippines and China said:

"The region is a host to rich fishing grounds, supplying hundreds of millions of people across the region with food and jobs."

The 55 per cent of global marine fishing vessels operate in South China Sea, and some 12 per cent of global fish catches takes place here. ~~It employs~~ Fisheries employs at least 3.7 million people. In addition to this, oil and gas deposits have long been ~~o~~ exploited in Southern areas of South China Sea — north of the Bornei and Malaysia. According to US Geological Survey (USGS) the potential oil resources in the sea are at 28 billion barrels.



This research further said, ~~60~~ to 70 per cent of the area's ~~resource~~ hydrocarbon<sup>s</sup> resources are gas while the sum of the total of discovered reserves and undiscovered resources in the offshore basins of SCS is estimated at 266 trillion cubic feet. Moreover, the state-owned oil major China National Offshore<sup>oil</sup> Company (CNOOC), responsible for most of the China's offshore oil and gas production, claims that the area holds around 125 billion barrels and 500 trillion cubic feet of gas in undiscovered areas. The resources has created a ~~economic~~ situation of battle of economic nature among the claimants.

#### + Strategic nature of the dispute :-

It is vital sea lane, by far the shortest ~~sea~~ route from the North Pacific Ocean to Indian Ocean. It is the world's second busiest sea lane just after the Dover strait of UK, and well over ~~world's~~ half of the world's petroleum bearing traffic passes through its waters. Over half of tonnage shipped through the sea is crude oil from the Gulf, destined for East Asia, ~~This~~ meaning that this route bears a critical importance for East Asian countries, ~~like~~ like Japan, South Korea, North Korea, etc.



Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, etc.

If China nationalize the South China<sup>sea</sup>, no any claimant state would be able to extract resources ~~from~~ ~~sea~~ - fish, oil, and gas - from South China Sea. They would have no legal right to establish an economic zone in South China Sea. If others gets the control of south China sea, it would be a threat to the sovereignty of China. Actually, Chinese historians - who reflect on what China calls the "century of humiliation" - know that the western powers - British, France, American, entered in China in ships across South China Sea. It makes sense that China want to protect itself from maritime assault. The other reason is that China needs huge economic resource to accommodate their people and avoids insurgencies inside the country by providing jobs to the youth. last but not ~~the~~ least, strategically it provides a maritime protection to China from 20<sup>th</sup> century aggressor ~~power~~ / ~~expansion~~ foreign assault.

- Cecil Rhodes Imperialism is necessary when I went East London ←

- participated in the meeting of unemployed raising slogan: "bread, bread, bread"
- for mobilization of people
- for new markets
- for raw material

↳ Imperialism highest stage of capitalism → V. Lenin.



