

| INTERNATIONAL |

# THE SOUTH CHINA SEA IMBROGLIO

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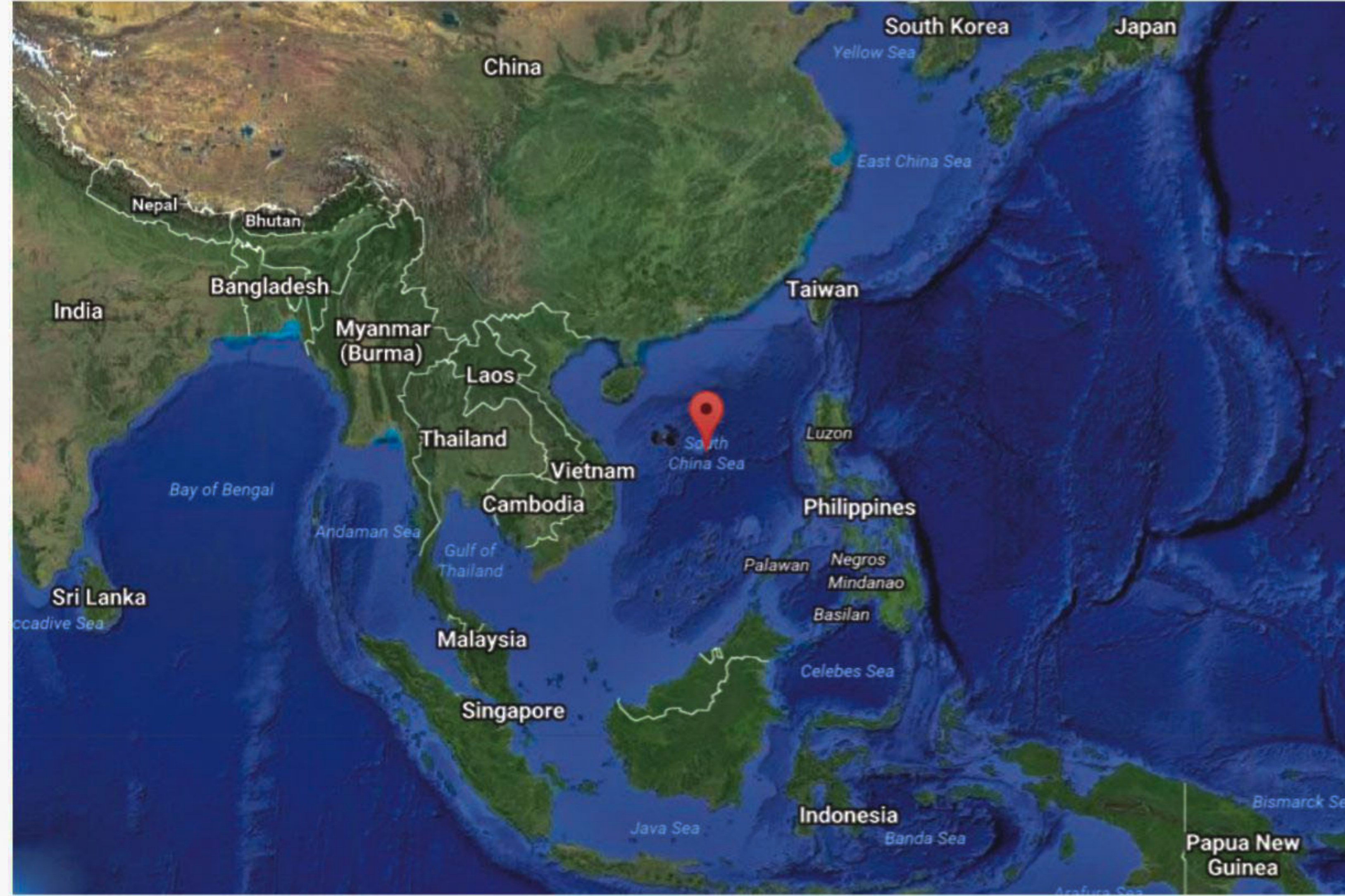


IMAGE: INTERNET

The prevailing tensions over South China Sea are the result of its prevailing aggressive-imperialist-expansionist foreign policy orientation in the entire Asia-Pacific or rechristened Indo-Pacific region for many years past, because riding over the crest of its own creation, Beijing had extended its claim over the entire South China Sea, few years ago, as its maritime territory while citing some historical evidences of its choice. But that claim was rejected by a five member panel from the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, Netherlands on July 12, 2016, while deciding on Philippines' complaint lodged in 2013 for arbitration on grounds of alleged Chinese infringement into Manila's Exclusive Economic Zone, under clauses of violation of the United Nations Treaty governing "Laws of the Sea", to which China is also a signatory. Unfortunately, this legal defeat has made Beijing more aggressive as it has started encircling the Asia-Pacific with huge and awesome strategic built-up by its fierce naval weapons. It is also having meaningful tensions with powerful regional navies like Japan, Australia and particularly with that of America. In Southeast Asia, China is already engaged in several disputes over sovereignty of islands in South China Sea.

The US has been carefully monitoring all these developments since long past as it has its precious economic stakes in this region particularly owning its strategic relations with most of the Southeast Asian countries and major powers in the region. Further, it has to ensure safe and uninterrupted passage of maritime trade and commerce passing through different sea-lanes around South China Sea region, connecting East Asia with West Asia and beyond, which might have been adversely affected had Beijing's claim passed through Court scrutiny. As America is aware that the future of the world politics lies in the East because global geopolitics has moved towards East from its traditional Euro-Atlantic centre of power after two and a half century, it did conclude a significant military agreement with Australia in 2011, following its "Asia-Pivot" programme, having a covert agenda to contain China's imperialist-militarist aggressions in the Asia-Pacific region with a view to provide an effective security cover in the region

and also to re-establish that the US is still a global power and maintains its dominance and hegemony all over the world, against a likely projected scenario of China replacing the US hegemony by the end of mid-21st century. A scholar, Martin Jacques has also predicted in his book *When China Rules the World*, that China would surpass the US and would become a dominant global leader with none to challenge its hegemony. Obviously, the US has to washout all such confusions about its sagging global power image and that has

motivated Washington to display its full might in South China Sea in the event of a war. Obviously, if armed clashes begin between the two, it may result into a major regional war including regional powerful navies, like Australia, Japan, South Korea and also the NATO allies, besides Southeast Asian and South Asian states. Its further advancement will, ultimately, result into Third World War, which in all likelihood will be a nuclear holocaust upon the mother earth as all the

likely belligerents are nuclear powers today. Against this backdrop, while China must abide by the decision of the Hague Arbitration and the US ought to observe restraint- as both America and the then USSR did in 1962 during tumultuous years of fierce Cold War- both of them must seek a diplomatic solution with the help of the United Nations, representing global aspirations. *The writer is Associate Professor, Political Science, MDPG College, India.*

| ENDEAVOUR |

"What are you taking on in your lives? Why are you here? What are the big things that you are going to tackle?" asked Sir Christopher Ball, 81-year-old former warden of Keble College, Oxford University, addressing over 400 young delegates during his keynote speech at the BYLC Youth Leadership Summit 2016 on August 18, 2016. He started by sharing that during his youth, he was taught that adults have greater wisdom than young people. Over many years, he has however come to doubt that idea. It is certainly true that adults have greater experience but young people have a greater advantage of being more adaptable. It is easier for young people to cope with the changes that life brings to them. As a result, he strongly believes that the young and the *not-so-young* need each other.

- During his speech, he shared few pearls of wisdom on how to lead a purposeful life, which I would invite you all to reflect on.
1. Have integrity - which simply means keeping promises.
  2. Take responsibility—which is often seen as a burden. But Sir Christopher believes that responsibility is a privilege, and urged us to take responsibility rather than always complaining about things. He shared a powerful example from his own life saying, "Twelve years ago, I found myself troubled by the litter on the streets in Oxford, where I live. I tried to complain about it. You will not be surprised to learn that it made no difference. The litter was not cleared up. So I tried a different plan. Every Sunday for 12 years, I have gone out and cleared the litter on the street in my neighborhood. The neighbors come out and ask me what I am doing and why I am doing it and over the years some of them have started copying me."
  3. Devote to a cause greater than yourself—Sir Christopher and his wife, Wendy Ball, wanted to end world starvation and decided to give 10% of their income every year to Oxfam. About that experience he explained, "What we learnt from this is that it is not as easy as that to end world starvation. We also learnt that the older we got, the richer we got, and the harder it was to give 10 percent of our income. It was easy when we were young, when we were students. It is really painful now, but we are still doing it."
  4. Make a statement, practice what you believe—The couple also strived to tackle the problem of racial discrimination, for which he said they decided to bring the issue of race in our own home. We adopted four children of mixed race. Perhaps in our small way we have embraced the racial diversity that exists in the world."
  5. Lead by example—The couple also felt that the world was making a mistake in persuading every adult that they needed to own a car. To challenge that, Sir Christopher and his wife promised each other that we would never learn



## LEADING A LIFE OF PURPOSE PEARLS OF WISDOM FROM SIR CHRISTOPHER BALL

AYELEEN SALEH

PHOTOS: COURTESY

to drive a car, let alone own one". About this project he said, "Which is a promise we have kept. Our simple theory was that if people see us, they would themselves realize that this was a sensible way of living and we would improve our transportation system. It seemed a good idea at that time but teaching by example is hard."

6. Have an agenda—He further talked about setting goals, and explains, "It is important to have an agenda. You must have a plan as to how you would like to live your life. Most of what we do, most of our lives are driven by copying other people, by doing today what we did yesterday out of habit and by doing what will bring us immediate pleasure and reward. Check to see whether this is true for your life. I continuously try to strive against it. True happiness comes from other sources. You must serve other people, you must set yourself challenges and overcome them and you must seek to create something meaningful."
7. Practice—He expressed that there are no short cuts in life. He explained, "Practice is essential. I believe talent is a function of practice and we are all ordinary people capable of living extraordinary lives. I challenge you to live your extraordinary life which will be very different from mine. But make sure you live it. The secret of living an



extraordinary life is to choose something extraordinary and practice it. Practice is under emphasized in our world and talent is over emphasized." With no prior experience in running, at the age of 76, Sir Christopher started a movement called the 10-in-10 Challenge, a radical idea of running 10 marathons in 10 consecutive days, and he was the first to complete the challenge, proving to the world that with practice and determination, anything is possible. He explained further in his own humorous way, "We usually live our lives in three different realms. The realm of *not good*

*enough*, the realm of *good enough* and the realm of *pursuit of excellence*. You are always in one of those three realms. A question that each one of you must ask yourself is, 'Where do I pursue excellence?' His last piece of advice came as a nougat of hope and is particularly important in the current context of Bangladesh especially for the youth. He said, "Live your life with a world view that nothing is wrong. When things seem to be wrong, remember, that they are merely opportunities for you to do your part."

*The writer has 10 years of work experience in the development sector.*

| NUMBERS |

# 5,200,000

The amount of taka in fake notes that has been seized from a gang of currency counterfeiters during a raid in the capital. Like every year, money counterfeiters are active ahead of Eid-ul-Adha when people spend money for buying cattle.



PHOTO: INTERNET