

**PRIDE OFTIMES BRINGS SORROWS;  
GREED CAN NEVER BE SATISFIED**

*‘Earth Provides Enough To Satisfy Every Man’s Needs,  
But Not Every Man’s Greed’  
Mahatma Gandhi*

If there is one nation on this earth that can rile the people of The **S**ocialist **R**epublic of **V**ietnam (**SRV**) to the point of violence, leading to riot and affray, it is the **P**eople’s **R**epublic of **C**hina (**PRC**).

The SRV has been invaded over a period of more than 2,000 years and its population has been forced to kowtow to the demands of the invading armies, with the peoples of this country, on one occasion, having been forced to endure long periods of food shortages, leading to millions of them, dying of starvation.

Over the past fortnight or so, one has read reports and watched television footage of widespread unrest in major cities of the SRV, the targets of those attacks, being ethnic Chinese workers in factories, owned by PRC-domiciled corporate entities. There has, also, been widespread looting of factories, owned by Taiwanese Chinese, operating in industrial parts of the country.

Initially, the SRV authorities permitted the seemingly innocuous protests against the PRC factories and their employees – protests are, normally, forbidden in this communist country – but when the protests started to spiral out of control, action had to be taken in order to curb the rioters’ enthusiasm ... but it was very obvious that it was with a certain amount of clear reluctance that the authorities had been forced to intervene.

It was reported that the SRV authorities had arrested in excess of 1,400 Vietnamese people, said to have been engaged in the rioting and looting.

Over the weekend of May 17-19, the PRC sent ships to Vietnam in order to evacuate more than 3,000 Chinese nationals, living in the country.

This followed the violence of the previous week, violence that resulted in 16 Chinese workers, being critically injured, two of whom, subsequently died.

That which was said to have sparked off the present unrest between the SRV and the PRC was the determination of the PRC’s Government to send a deep-water oil rig into an area, claimed to be well within Vietnam’s 200-mile, exclusion area of the South China Sea, and there to start drilling for oil.

In point of fact, the drilling is taking place near the Paracel Islands, roughly about 120 miles from Vietnam’s coast, well within the Exclusive Economic Zone of the SRV.

Since 1974, however, the PRC Government makes the claim that the Paracel Islands have been occupied by the PRC and, thus, this country has effective exercise of sovereignty.

The oil rig, that is drilling, at this time, is owned by The China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) (), a subsidiary of which – CNOOC Ltd () – is listed on The Stock Exchange of Hongkong Ltd,

being Stock Code, Number 883.

### **About History**

Historically, of all of the countries in Asia, only one country stands out as having been invaded, over and over again. That country is known today simply by its initials: SRV.

From about 111 B.C. until 938 A.D., China ruled Vietnam with an iron fist, having waged a series of successful wars.

Between the First Century B.C. and the 15th Century A.D., Vietnam was subjected to Chinese Imperialistic Rule on numerous occasions.

In 1406, once again, China successfully invaded Vietnam and subjugated the entire population to the whims of China.

But that was the last time that China controlled this country of about 128,565 square miles.

In 1859, France successfully invaded South Vietnam and, in 1862, that part of the country was dubbed a French colony. In 1864, France took possession of the entire country.

Japan invaded Vietnam in 1941 and, in order to support its many military campaigns, mainly in Asia, Vietnam's natural resources were exploited.

Japan took over the entire country in March of 1945 and there followed that which history has labelled as '*The Vietnamese Famine*'.

This widespread famine, the direct result of the Japanese invaders' requirement for Vietnam's resources to feed its armies, caused about 2 million Vietnamese to die of starvation and related illnesses, brought about by the lack of adequate food.

During the period that Japan controlled Vietnam, the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary, Ho Chi Minh, determined to seek independence from French rule as well as the end of Japanese occupation.

In August 1945, Japan, having lost World War II, its puppet Empire of Vietnam collapsed and Hanoi was occupied by the Viet Minh, led by Ho Chi Minh, which proclaimed a provisional government in a bid to assert national independence.

It was not to be, however.

In 1945, once again, France re-entered Vietnam in order to restore its colonial rule.

This act resulted in a guerrilla war between the forces of Ho Chi Minh and the French Far East Expeditionary Corp.

The French were roundly defeated in the historic, 1954 Battle of Dien Bien Phu.

In 1965, The United States of America fought a ground war with Vietnamese forces, throwing, during the height of this conflict, about 500,000 military personnel into the fray.

By 1968, however, facing mounting casualties, the US had, just about, had enough and started to withdraw its troops from Vietnam, following the Tet Offensive.

The war came to a halt in April 1975 when North Vietnamese troops captured Saigon.

The reason for the involvement of the US in Vietnam was said to have been an attempt to stop the spread of

communism in Asia.

On July 2, 1976, for the first time in history, North and South Vietnam became united and formed The Socialistic Republic of Vietnam.

The country, as the SRV is known, today, is, therefore, only about 39 years old.

But the scars of yesteryear still smart in the country and, with regard to the US invasion, it is estimated that more than 3 million Vietnamese lost their lives. The exact toll of the dead and missing Vietnamese may never be fully known, however, since nobody was keeping score.

The recent action of the PRC in respect of the drilling for oil in SRV waters is a swift reminder of days of yore when this country was forced to wear the yoke of Imperialistic China of old.

### **The Tinderbox Syndrome**

With armed PRC warships and more than 70 other vessels in the vicinity of CNOOC's drill rig, just 120 miles from shores of the SRV, it is difficult to believe that the aim of the PRC Government is, merely, the search for more natural resources in order to fuel its economy that ranks the Number Two in the world.

However, that is what the world is told, officially, by the PRC propaganda mill.

It is difficult to swallow the official jargon, emanating from Beijing, according to a number of political scientists.

What is very evident is that the situation between the SRV and the PRC is very dangerous, akin to the existence of a tinderbox, in fact.

Just yesterday, the official newspaper of the PRC has told its citizens not to travel to the SRV; tours to the country have been suspended, indefinitely.

The spokesperson of the PRC's Foreign Ministry said on Monday:

*'We (the PRC) have also suspended some of our bilateral exchanges (with the SRV). We will consider taking further actions in accordance with the development of the situation.'*

Such statements smack of the PRC Government, flexing its military '*muscles*', it could be held.

The PRC Government, via the Chinese Ministry of Land and Resources (), would have the world believe that, below the South China Sea, in its purported territory, there are estimated to be about 400 billion barrels of oil, ready to be harvested.

If this be true, employing the subjunctive mood, the cache of oil in this part of the world is greater than the entire amount of crude oil in the Middle East.

In 2010, the US Geological Survey put the amount of crude oil in the region at about 11 billion barrels, only.

If the PRC accepts that the Chinese Ministry of Land and Resources is incorrect in its survey of the area and that the US Geological Survey's estimate is closer to the truth, would the PRC tempt fate with its Asian neighbours?

Of late, the PRC Government has laid claim to goodly part of the South China Sea, through which ships, laden with some \$US5-trillion worth of trade, ply the route, annually.

About 33 percent of the world's trade in oil passes through this important waterway, that is in addition to

about 75 percent of the PRC's oil imports.

Some people might suggest that that which the PRC is doing, today, is to camouflage its military uniforms in the open-necked, blue shirts of the workers on deep-water, drill rigs.

The occasional appearance of a PRC warship, plying the waters of the South China Sea, might seem a harmless exercise, on the surface, but it must reinforce to all of the PRC's neighbours, psychologically, the military might that is the PRC of today.

Aside from the US Navy, which country of Asia would want to take on the PRC, assuming that push came to shove?

Nobody, of late, has been willing, openly, to challenge, forcefully, the assertions that the PRC has the right of its unilateral claim in respect of the waters of the South China Sea.

One might like to ponder as to the reason for this stance.

The SRV seems to be standing alone in respect of its claim that the PRC is making a play for part of its territory, albeit at sea.

The SRV is, militarily, probably too weak to take on the might of the PRC, at this juncture, but history has proved that the country's resolve has performed miraculously against, first the Chinese, then the French, and, then, against the mighty US armed forces, ousting them, all, rudely from the country's shores – forever.

The estimated human population of the SRV is about 93 million, men, women and children, with about 40-odd million, males and females, being fit and available for military service.

All males between the ages of 18 years and 25 years are required by law to serve between 18 months and two years in one of the branches of the SRV military.

About 10 million Vietnamese live below the poverty line – a level of personal or family income that is below that which one is classified as poor.

This country would not want to fight another war, but there is a limit to just about everything, isn't there?

-- E N D --

**While TARGET makes every attempt to ensure accuracy of all data published,  
TARGET cannot be held responsible for any errors and/or omissions.**

*If readers feel that they would like to voice their opinions about that which they have read in*

***TARGET***, please feel free to e-mail your views to [editor@targetnewspapers.com](mailto:editor@targetnewspapers.com). ***TARGET*** does not guarantee to publish readers' views, but reserves the right so to do subject to the laws of libel.