

Questions on SCS Ruling

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At the outset, I must make it clear that these are my personal views.

1. How is the PCA ruling viewed within the Indian security and foreign policy establishments?
2. What are India's interests in the South China Sea and how does New Delhi pursue those interests?

India's primary interest in the South China Sea is freedom of navigation in these waters. Over half of India's exports by sea flow east of India. It is important that disputes such as these be settled in accordance with international law, which in this case is UNCLOS, to uphold a rule based international order. India also has a strong interest in the peaceful resolution of disputes in this region which is critical to India's security and future prosperity.

3. What role does India envision playing in the South China Sea disputes?

The primary role in settling these disputes peacefully is naturally that of the parties, assisted by the international community and legal order. India should be ready to work with her friends in the region to achieve a peaceful negotiated settlement of these disputes.

4. What do you see as ASEAN's biggest challenge in playing a meaningful and constructive role in the South China Sea disputes?

A meaningful ASEAN role assumes ASEAN unity, which requires an internal understanding on accommodating differing interests of various ASEAN countries I believe that this is possible, as ASEAN's history shows. Thereafter, the external environment, particularly major Pacific and Indian Ocean trading powers like the US, Japan and India should be supportive, politically and diplomatically and legally, of the role that ASEAN marks out for itself.

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