



## South China Sea

### Description

#### Theme:

- The South China Sea is a key region for international trade and is rich in resources such as oil, natural gas, and fish. China claims almost 90% of the South China Sea, which overlaps with the claims of Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan. China's aggression is causing tensions in the region.

#### Tensions in the South China Sea:

- In modern times, conflicts in the South China Sea began in the 1940s, when China claimed most of the South China Sea.
- During the 1950s to 1970s, Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei claimed different parts of the South China Sea, particularly the Spratly and Paracel Islands, based on historical usage and geographical proximity.
- Since then, China's aggression has led to several incidents in the region, such as the Battle of the Paracel Islands in 1974, the Johnson South Reef Skirmish in 1988, and the Mischief Reef Incident in 1995, among others.
- After occupying Mischief Reef in 1995, China began constructing artificial islands, and military infrastructure in the area, despite its location within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone. The Philippines approached the United Nations and several other international bodies on this issue. In 2016, the International Tribunal gave judgment in favour of the Philippines and rejected China's claims over the region. But China rejected the ruling and continued its illegal constructions in the area.
- In 1999, the Philippines stationed an old ship at Second Thomas Shoal, a submerged reef in the Spratly Islands, to prevent China from occupying the area. The Philippines regularly sends supplies to the navy crew stationed there. In June 2024, China attacked one such supply boat, causing a new conflict.
- The Philippines has a defence agreement with the United States. In July 2024, it also established a defence pact with Japan due to rising tensions in the South China Sea.

- China claims more than 90% of the South China Sea, including waters within the exclusive economic zones of the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia. China's aggressive actions are creating conflicts in the South China Sea, a crucial region for global trade.



**Conclusion:**

The South China Sea is very important for global trade as it connects the Pacific and Indian

Oceans, enabling ships to transport oil and goods. However, China's aggression in the region threatens the stability of the South China Sea region.

### **Your Turn...**

What are your thoughts on the South China Sea tensions? Express your point of view through the comment section below. Subscribe to our blog to read answers to the trending GD topics.

*Image: [Canva](#)*

### **References:**

- 'China vistaranam... shantiki avarodham' in Eenadu newspaper by Kolakaluri Sridhar
  - [Philippine ambassador warns of Asia-wide conflict due to South China tensions: The issues, explained](#)
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