



**KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY**  
Only IAS Academy by Grandson of "Perunthalsivam Kamarajar"

# Phillipines and US test air defences as China seizes reef

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## Context

- Missiles fired off the coast of the northern Philippines on Sunday as U.S. and Filipino forces conducted their first integrated defence drills, hours after China said it had seized control of a reef claimed by Manila.
- The **Philippines and China have been engaged in months of confrontations over the South China Sea**, which Beijing claims nearly in its entirety despite an international ruling that its assertion has no legal basis.
- Chinese warships have been spotted in waters near the Philippines since the **Balikatan exercises** kicked off last week.

## South China Sea

- This sea holds tremendous **strategic importance** for its location as it is the **connecting link between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, through Strait of Malacca.**
- According to the United Nations Conference on Trade And Development (UNCTAD) **one third of the global shipping** passes through it, carrying trillions of trade which makes it a significant geopolitical water body.
- The SCS is believed to have **huge oil and gas reserves** beneath its seabed.
- It is one of the **world's most heavily trafficked waterways**

**Kamaraj IAS Academy**

Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040

Phone: **044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477** / Whatsapp : **09710729833**

# COUNTRIES WITH CLAIMS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA



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Occupied ● China ● Philippines ○ Other ○ Un

