



Place in News - Huangyan Island (Scarborough Shoal)

Context: China has declared the establishment of a national nature reserve on Huangyan Island (Scarborough Shoal) located in the South China Sea.



About Huangyan Island (Scarborough Shoal):

- A contested coral atoll in the South China Sea, known as Scarborough Shoal (in English), Huangyan Island (in China), and Panatag Shoal (in the Philippines).
- **Location:** Approximately 220 km west of Luzon (Philippines) and in proximity to the Manila Trench.



History:

- First documented on the 1734 Velarde Map of the Philippines, claimed during Spanish colonial rule and subsequently under the Treaty of Washington (1900).
- Named “Scarborough” after a British vessel that ran aground there in 1748.
- The site of the 2012 Scarborough Shoal standoff between China and the Philippines.
- In 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) under UNCLOS nullified China’s “nine-dash line” claims but refrained from making a ruling on sovereignty.

Dispute:

- Claimed by China, Taiwan, and the Philippines.
- Significant for fisheries, hydrocarbon resources, and military positioning.

About South China Sea:

Location:

- A marginal sea of the western Pacific Ocean, bordered by:
- **Northeast:** Taiwan Strait, which connects to the East China Sea.
- **East:** Philippines.
- **South:** Borneo, Gulf of Thailand, Malay Peninsula.
- **West/North:** Asian mainland (China, Vietnam).

Features:

- Home to the Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands, Scarborough Shoal, and Macclesfield Bank.
- A crucial trade route – approximately one-third of global shipping transits through this area.
- Abundant in oil, gas, and fisheries resources.
- Strategic chokepoints include the Luzon Strait, Malacca Strait, and Taiwan Strait.