Australia rejects China’s sea claims

Context:

- Australia’s formal declaration to the UN on the South China Sea dispute.
- In a formal declaration to the UN, Australia has rejected China’s territorial and maritime claims in the South China Sea. Australia has held that there is no legal basis for China’s historic claims in the South China Sea.

Australia- U.S. compact:

- Australia’s declaration to the UN comes after the U.S. Secretary of State declared China’s pursuit of territory and resources in the South China Sea as illegal, backing the claims of Southeast Asian countries against China’s claims.
- Through this move, Australia seems to be aligning itself more closely with the U.S. in the escalating tensions between China and the U.S.
- U.S. relations with China have markedly deteriorated in recent months, especially over trade disputes, the COVID-19 pandemic and China’s crackdown on dissent in Hong Kong.
- The latest escalation comes ahead of annual talks between Australia and the U.S.