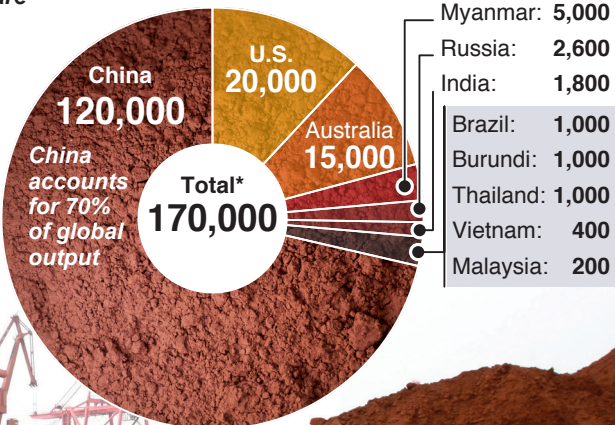


# China may weaponise rare earths

China is signalling that it may use rare earths exports as leverage in the trade war with the U.S., as tensions between the two powers escalate

**Around 80% of rare earths imported by U.S. comes from China**

PRODUCTION (tonnes, 2018)



RESERVES (million tonnes, 2018)  
Total: 120m\*



## WHAT ARE RARE EARTHS?

■ 17 elements – *scandium, yttrium* and 15 *lanthanide* elements – prized for unique magnetic and electrochemical properties

■ Not actually very rare, but difficult to find in concentrations large enough for economical extraction

■ Vital in making wide range of products, including cancer treatment drugs, smartphones, sensors for missile systems and renewable energy technologies

■ Designated as “critical” by U.S. Geological Survey for economy and national defence