

Power Balance between China and India to Project Sri Lanka into Propitious Future

PP de Silva

Ministry of Defence, Colombo, Sri Lanka

ppdefence@yahoo.com

Abstract— Sri Lankan socio-political changes offer desire for achieving unprecedented prosperity changes in all spheres in view of projecting Sri Lanka into a better future. With the end of the three decade long conflict, Sri Lanka enjoys much needed propitious circumstances than before. With its significant geo-strategic location and favourable economic geography Sri Lanka attracts a great deal of concern from regional and global powers. Sri Lanka has twisted between India and China in their strategic competition. It is of utmost importance to balance the strategic power competition between these two nations and improve bilateral relations as a determinant to achieve a win-win situation for Sri Lanka's social progression and economic acceleration. Being a developing nation in South Asia, Sri Lanka needs to accept the geo-strategic concerns of India as well as the growing strategic interest of China in projecting their power into the Indian Ocean region and beyond. Sri Lanka has maintained very conducive diplomatic relations with these two nations and they have even extended their support when Sri Lanka's national interest was threatened in numerous occasions. Sri Lanka has maintained a non-aligned foreign policy since independence. However, with the socio-political change in the country it demands rapid economic development in every sphere. Accepting Indian South Asian leadership as well as accommodating Chinese strategic interest is equally important to achieve far-reaching propitious objectives of Sri Lanka. The paper will be divided into several sections. Firstly, it offers a brief description of the growing strategic concerns of India and China in relation to their strategic ends, which provides a base for the subsequent discussion. It is expected to elaborate research findings at the conclusion. Data will be collected from open sources as well as from key interviews conducted with focus groups in order to ascertain undocumented perspectives. Lessons derived from this research will be disseminated / published for wider audience to enrich their understanding.

Keywords— India, China, Sri Lanka, Strategic Interest

I. INTRODUCTION

"Nations have neither staunch friends nor confirmed foes, they have only permanent interest"

Lord Viscount Palmerston

Sri Lanka is an island nation with approximately 22 million people, located in the southern tip of India and lies at a very strategic crossroads of the region. Given its strategic proximity to the world's busiest sea route, which links East and West, demands enormous strategic interest for many interested nations. The strategic location of Sri Lanka has paved many other nations to overreach and bid for their balance of interest. Sri Lanka being at the Indian Ocean region is inherently subjected to sensitive and complicated concerns of the geo-political, geo-strategic, geo-economic and geo-cultural point of view open to foreign influences and concern in a great extent.

Sri Lanka is a part of South Asia that continues to be one of the most volatile, populated, comparatively poor geo-strategic regions, with two neighbouring nuclear powers. Sri Lanka would not remain out of the ambience of changes due to ambitious strategic interests. Sri Lanka's geo-strategic importance has increased due to at least a few factors. Firstly, Sri Lanka's proximity to the busiest international maritime route, as well as epicentre of key choke points of Indian Ocean region namely Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Aden, Strait of Malacca, Strait of Sunda, Strait of Lombok, Strait of Madagascar and Arabian Sea. Secondly, Sri Lanka's natural harbours, such as Colombo, Trincomalee, Galle and Hambantota demands greater interest to USA, China and India for their ambitious and strategic maritime dominance.

Thirdly, the discovery of natural gas and oil resources in the Mannar basin has made the policy makers to have a second thought on Sri Lanka. Finally, Sri Lanka's close strategic ties with China as Sri Lanka being a part of Chinese strategy of "String of Pearls" and Maritime Silk Route (MSR). The prevailing geo-strategic ambience thus poses challenge to Sri Lanka's national security

particularly in diplomatic interest, economic revival, energy security and national security issues.

Since independence, Sri Lanka had maintained a very balanced relations with other nations with the view of preserving its national interest, sovereignty, world peace and security. However, with the growing strategic competition of India and China, Sri Lanka has become pivotal in balancing their strategic interests in a challenging environment.

Successive Sri Lankan Governments have maintained a generally balanced approach in managing strategic expectations of China and India even though in practice Sri Lanka had a closer relationship with India due to several key factors, such as geo- strategic location, socio-cultural closeness, and reliance on trade and investment. However, grater political transition occurred in Sri Lanka due to the LTTE terrorism and China has increased its activities within Sri Lanka as never before leaving Strategic notion on India.

Having defeated the LTTE and subsequent politico-social socio-political changes, our nation is at a moment of transition. India and China both have legacies of ancient civilization that had facilitated them to emerge today as the two most powerful and influential Asian nations in terms of their power potential and geo-strategic influence across the region as well as globally. Even as India and China have traversed a long road from being friend to cold adversaries to pragmatic partners, a factor which has been constant that both nations competing with each other to gain strategic threshold in Sri Lanka.

In light of above concerns, this study focuses on Sri Lanka strategic dilemma by looking at three strategic policy options, lean towards India, lean towards China, or follows a balance approach between these two nations to harness opportunities to project Sri Lanka into a propitious future.

II. OVERVIEW OF INDO - SRI LANKA RELATIONSHIP AND STRATEGIC FUTURE

The bonded relationship between the two countries goes back more than 2500 years and both nations have built upon a legacy of political, socio-economic, intellectual, cultural, religious and linguistic interactions. The relationship between the two nations has also nurtured and diversified with the raft of changes in time, encompassing all area of interest contemporarily valid.

India remains a predominant power in South Asia in terms of its size, location, and strategic power potential capability which Sri Lanka would not be able to easily disregard. Successive governments had maintained a very congenial relationship with India even at times of diversified sensitive diplomatic issues. In recent years, the relationship has been further enhanced in view of harnessing the mutual interest in the expanded fields of economic development, education, culture, defence, as well as broader understanding on key strategic concerns.

India also played an instrumental role in facilitating the LTTE's development at initial stages due to an uncertainty of consistent foreign policy as well as actively supported to terminate the LTTE terrorism, with enormous domestic concerns. With the assassination of former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and gradual development of LTTE as a potential threat to their national security, India had supported the writ of the government of Sri Lanka to act against the LTTE in numerous ways. Even in the post-conflict situations, India had extended supportfor infrastructure development projects in Sri Lanka. Projects such as construction of a power plant, construction of homes and hospitals, dredging of Kankasanthurai Port and the reconstruction of the northern railway line are a few to name. These projects are primarily indented to improve the infrastructure of the Northern region and thereby promote post-conflict reconciliation.

Sri Lanka has strengthened its economic, defence and socio-political relations with India than with any other country in the region. Sri Lanka also enjoys a robust trade and investment relationship with India. India has become Sri Lanka's largest trading partner globally while Sri Lanka is India's second largest trading partner in the SAARC region. With bilateral trade growing, a number of prominent Indian business ventures have made considerable investments in Sri Lanka.

It is an accepted fact that, given India's growing strategic power potential, affiliation with major powers, and growing Indian regional leadership capability, Sri Lanka including other South Asian counties need to live under the Indian sphere of influence due to numerous geo-strategic reasons. India also is aware of the necessity of carrying out, mutually beneficial atmosphere, which would enable it to address long-term wider strategic aspirations of playing a responsible role in the regional and global affairs. India therefore, has a keen interest in not only playing a pivotal role in the region but also

keeping it free from potential competitor's presence and interference with an unchallenged leadership role in their sphere of influence.

However, over the years, India could not meet its concerted foreign policy objectives in respect of Sri Lanka due to issues related to LTTE terrorism and South Indian political pressure. Given these reasons, India was reluctant to side with Sri Lanka and a strategic vacuum was created with the absence of Indian diplomatic dominance. Taking into consideration of this strategic gap, China has materialised their far-reaching strategic interest in Sri Lanka in terms of economic, military, political and socio-cultural aspects. The development of Chinese presence in Sri Lanka is considered a threat to Indian national security. Due to this strategic dilemma, India has gradually leveraged their presence in key strategic areas by establishing 3 x Consulate General offices in Hambantota, Jaffna and Kandy to keep their diplomatic leverage as well as to monitor Chinese activity in Sri Lanka.

The most important bonded relations with India lies with defence cooperation formalities of both nations. Despite the continuous political controversy of Tamil Nadu, India continues to host and train a large number of security personnel of Sri Lankan Armed Forces than any other country in the world. It is a fact that, China and Pakistan have increased their defence cooperation aspects with Sri Lanka in recent years; India remains the most preferred military training destination for training of Sri Lankan defence forces personnel.

As a rising nation in the region, India also has a wider and vital interest of dominating the Indian Ocean and projecting its power beyond the Indian Ocean which it considers critical for its security and trade. India has a clear stake in not only playing an active role in the region as a leading maritime power but also in protecting its strategic and economic interests by keeping the Indian Ocean free from any potentially inimical dominance by other powers. Due to this ambitious maritime and security concerns, India has expanded its diplomatic, military and economic influence and positioned itself to play a pivotal role in the foreign policy formulation.

With the gradual development of Chinese presence in Sri Lanka as well as in the Indian Ocean, India is progressively finding its interest intersect with China. India is particularly concerned on the Chinese built

Hambantota port and its subsequent utilization for military purpose, Chinese investments in critical infrastructure development, economic cooperation and defence cooperation etc.

III. OVERVIEW OF SINO - SRI LANKA RELATIONSHIP AND STRATEGIC FUTURE

China-Sri Lankan historic relations and interactions dates back thousands of years. Long term religious, cultural, and commercial exchanges have laid the historical foundation for the establishment of congenial bonded relationship between China and Sri Lanka. The famous Chinese monk, Faxian had arrived Sri Lanka to learn Buddhism in the 5th Century and the renowned maritime navigator of Chinese Ming Dynasty, Zheng He successfully arrived in Sri Lanka for three times in the 15th Century. These are the two signposting events in the history of exchange between the two countries.

Sri Lanka is one of the earliest countries to recognize the People Republic of China (PRC) in January 1950, when other nations were in a dilemma to accept it. Thereafter, diplomatic ties between the two nations were nurtured in political, economic, cultural, and trade fields. In April 1952, both countries entered into the historical Rubber-Rice Agreement that provided Sri Lanka with a large market for its Rubber in China, even as China supplied its low-priced rice to Sri Lanka.

China has also progressively extended its trade and economic cooperation with Sri Lanka surpassing Japan as its major aid donor. More importantly, Chinese footprint in Sri Lanka has been established when strategic vacuum that was created by India and other Western countries due to Sri Lanka's concerted effort in eradicating terrorism and its follow up actions. As Indian and other Western countries condemned Sri Lanka of alleged war crimes, Western countries withdrew all funding and economic incentives and Southern Indian politicians were in the opinion of exerting influence to impose economic sanction against Sri Lanka. Amidst these volatile diplomatic dilemmas; China has stood by Sri Lanka even using her Veto Power in the UN Security Council to wedge the debate on steps take on by the Sri Lankan Government in its fight against the LTTE.

Apart from these concerns, more importantly, China has stood as a time-tested friend when Sri Lanka opted to look for assistance from other nations to act against LTTE terrorism. Accordingly, sophisticated weaponry and war-

like equipment and materials supplied by China and it facilitated to achieve a decisive effect on the military success. Even after the conflict, China has continued to play an important role in the post-conflict situation management, especially in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Northern and Eastern Province by upgrading facilities and infrastructure. With the growing strategic landscape, China is heavily dependent on Indian Ocean Sea Lane of Communication for the energy and raw material needed to sustain its economic growth. Due to this fact, China has established their foothold in Indian Ocean by heavily investing to develop strategic ports in littoral states including Sri Lanka.

Apart from the importance of the Indian Ocean to China as a transport surface, trade with the countries of the region itself has emerged as a substantial portion of China's overall international trade. Rising power of China and its growing quest for energy and resources with ambitious maritime dominance have paved the way for China to approach Indian Ocean Region. This approach has made considerable impact on security and diplomatic matrix in the region as well as in Sri Lanka. The Chinese concept of String of Pearls and Maritime Silk Route (MSR) has aggrieved the sentiments of India. Sri Lanka being a time-tested friend of China has facilitated and extended its support towards China in achieving Chinese far-reaching maritime goals. Sri Lankan strategic tilt towards China and Chinese presence in diversified fields in Sri Lanka has alarmed the concerns of India. In light of these concerns, India had been compelled to have hard diplomatic attitude over the post conflict issues even voting against in the UNCHR.

With the Chinese ambitious maritime assertiveness towards Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka has become a nodal point of their policy planning. China has invested heavily in Sri Lanka and Sri Lanka in turn has been able to reap more benefit to develop Sri Lanka into a country with a propitious future. These growing activities have created a win-win platform for the both nations. Significantly, China also has decided to grant Sri Lanka a dialogue partner status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Given this forgoing concerns of long embedded diplomatic relations, the most prominent symbol of Chinese cooperation assistance remains the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH), which is an enduring monument of Chinese

relations. China also funded several other key strategic projects including the Supreme Court complex, Main Telecommunication Exchange, assistance during Tsunami relief operation are a few to name. In recent years, China has undertaken many socio-economic development efforts by torrentially funding key infrastructural projects. The Norocholai Power project, Hambantota Port, Mattala International Airport, the Colombo- Katunayake Express Way, the Performing Art theatre and expansion of Colombo port including Port city are the project that are carried out with Chinese assistance.

IV. SRI LANKA PROPITIOUS PERSPECTIVES AND STRATEGIC CHALLENGES

As of today, Sri Lanka is at a moment of transition. People of the nation are at one of their defining moments in their aspiration to project Sri Lanka into a more stable, economically progressive and harmonious nation. With the changes of socio-political aspirations, the government is being ostensibly engaged in harnessing its full potential to meet the Sri Lankan national strategic aspirations.

As India and China are callously competing each other for their strategic presence and dominance in Indian Ocean, Sri Lanka obviously had squeezed in managing its foreign policy with these two nations. Sri Lanka cannot progress by leaving one county aside. Sri Lanka's strategic concerns after the presidential election have been revitalized and accordingly Sri Lanka has expressed its readiness to redefine its fractured relationship with USA and certain other western countries is also significant at this juncture. Better and improved relation with US and other western countries is important for Sri Lanka not only in terms of trade and investment, but also in managing Indian and Chinese strategic expectations.

Having militarily defeated the LTTE terrorist outfit in Sri Lanka and while managing the post-conflict situation in Sri Lanka, still it faces many challenging areas that needs concerted attention. Sri Lankan national interest is challenged by many pro-LTTE acolytes by portraying alleged war crimes before the international forums. This alleged discourse is well supported by many individuals in different places and different times due to financial and other benefits of the front organization of the LTTE. Amidst these situations, Sri Lanka needs to address its core contemporary challenges in order to project Sri Lanka into a propitious future. Following could be identified as priority national ends that need to choose

better ways and means. Amidst this socio-political transition, following contemporary challenges are identified:

- a. Promoting democracy and good governance.
- b. Constructive engagement against Alleged War Crimes.
- c. Revitalizing the foreign policy (a win-win philosophy).
- d. Promote meaningful reconciliation.
- e. Strengthen the national security matrix.
- f. Sustainable Socio-economic Development.
- g. Maximize trade and investment opportunities.

In addition to the above national ends the following also can be identified as contemporary national security concerns that directly affect the progress of Sri Lanka.

A. Political and Diplomatic Domain

- a. The possible re-emergence of terrorism.
- b. The emergence of other extremist groups.
- c. The creation of ethnic divisions and communal violence.
- d. The challenges of maritime security.
- e. The growth of organized crime.
- f. Foreign interference in domestic affairs.
- g. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing).
- h. Negative influence on Tamil Diaspora.

B. Military Domain

- a. The possible re-emergence of terrorism.
- b. The emergence of other extremist groups.
- c. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing).
- d. Non-traditional threats through negative effects of globalization.

C. Economic Domain

- a. A large amount of International debt.
- b. Growing energy interest.
- c. Unemployment and inflation.
- d. Lack of investment/ Investors.
- e. New economic competitors on exports/ tourism.
- f. Food security.

D. Social Domain

- a. Inefficient public governance issues (Corruption, inequality of economic development, higher educational issues, growing unemployment, etc).

- b. Growing Urbanization.
- c. The growth of organized crime.

E. Information Domain

- a. The portrayal of Sri Lanka as a rogue nation.
- b. Technology driven new media, cybercrime etc.
- c. Negative effects on Technology driven new social media.

F. Physical Domain

- a. Climate change and environmental issues.
- b. Disasters (Tsunami, Floods, landslides, wildfire, Cyclone, Storm, droughts and building collapse etc).

V. FOSTERING INDO, CHINA AND SRI LANKA STRATEGIC TRINITY

As India continues its surge towards emerging as a key regional player, Sri Lanka needs to accept geo-political realities and manage its policies without aggrieving ambitious nations. In achieving these desired strategic dilemmas, careful and meticulous crafting of foreign policy is need of the hour. It would also facilitate these two nations to compete in a healthy geo-strategic environment without causing embracement for the sovereignty of the small nation through strategic dialogue and partnerships.

It is equally important to manage strategic perceptions of these two nations with caution. Having defeated LTTE and while accelerating the diplomatic and social-economic progress to project Sri Lanka into better and prosperous future, it needs a win-win diplomatic maneuver to harness the opportunities. Managing of strategic trinity between these two nations has diversified strategic concerns. Sri Lankan policy planners must carefully identify wider strategic perspectives and geo-political realities. In wider geo-strategic concerns if China is to be given a chance to choose India and Sri Lanka, obviously they will converge with India rather than Sri Lanka for their wider strategic interest and India will also adopt same policy. This fact needs to be understood very carefully in dealing with these two nations.

Due to the geographical setting of Sri Lanka, as Sri Lanka is situated in the India-subcontinent, it appears that the economic, diplomatic, cultural and informational activities between Sri Lanka and India will remain interrelated as these diversified activities facilitated by geo-strategic setting. Sri Lanka has been relying on India for diversified events and due to the sensitivity of the

LTTE terrorism; India could not manage its diplomatic manoeuvre in Sri Lanka. The vacuum created due to the absence of constructive engagement of India and Sri Lanka compelled Sri Lanka to tilt towards China in managing its expectation.

In order to harness the most defining moment of opportunities with this two nations, Sri Lanka needs to manage strategic aspirations of India and China for own benefit. In light of these concerns, elements of national power such as Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic (DIME) aspects will be considered mainly for this paper.

Given these forefront concerns, Sri Lanka should clearly prioritize its national interest and adopt a congenial policy in managing its affairs with India and China for the best interest of preserving and promoting her national interest. As the country in a moment of socio-political transition, such congenial foreign policy could be a force multiplier for security, internal politico-social stability, sustainable economic progression, and establishing a sound democratic mechanism of good governance. Very importantly, Sri Lanka needs to understand strategic ends, ways and means of China and India in pursuit of their wider military, political and economic national interests.

In accordance with above concerns, most important aspect is congenial diplomatic manoeuvring in respect of strategic concerns of India and China. Both nations have equally expressed their support in different times and different forums in the best interest of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka needs to remember that, China was supporting Sri Lanka unconditionally during the 3 decades of conflict against the LTTE. China was always in support of Sri Lanka when no one else was supporting Sri Lanka. Chinese financial, weaponry, military training and sensitive intelligence sharing have tremendously affected the early termination of conflict. Even in the post-conflict situation, Chinese assistance has been significant. Further, Chinese contribution during the period of Tsunami had been commendable.

Assistance provided by these two nations in strengthening national security perspectives and military capacity building is important. India is training the most number of Sri Lankan military personnel while China is in attempt to exceed it through diversified military collaboration with Sri Lankan counter parts. China has dramatically increased military assistance to Sri Lanka in

recent years with the partial of String of Pearl concept and Maritime Silk Road concept. Sri Lanka actively supports Chinese anti-piracy mission in Indian Ocean and costal line of Gulf of Aden. Last year, Chinese nuclear-powered submarine docked at Sri Lanka's Colombo Port which was considered by India as inimical to Indian interest.

Another prime concern of India and China is their proactive ambitious interest in dominating Indian Ocean. Due to this strategic reason, both countries have taken numerous steps to strength the mutual cooperation with Sri Lanka to deny opponent's access to Indian Ocean. Sri Lanka has declared its support for the intended Chinese Maritime Silk Road. India considers Sri Lanka to be obliged to cooperate in all matters pertaining to Indian national security as signified by the Indo-Lanka Agreement of 1987. Increased Chinese presence in Sri Lanka and its construction works in different strategic parts of Sri Lanka has further fuelled deep concerns within Indian security matrix.

In recent years, the continuous support of the Chinese government has helped in managing alleged allegations against Sri Lanka and its core infrastructure development in preserving its vital interests. Further, given the historic bond with Sri Lanka, China always expressed their concern before the international forums that Sri Lanka is capable of solving its own internal compulsions and has largely kept itself out of Sri Lankan domestic affairs. Hence, furthering this relationship and mutual understanding is vital for the Sri Lankan way towards a propitious future.

Preserving national interest against any internal and external threat is deemed to be prime concerns of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is at a moment of transition between conflict to peace. Sri Lanka needs to accommodate wider domestic compulsion to achieve sustainable peace which is long way from reality. As the strategic competition between China and India continues, it appears that, both those counties will be extra vigilant on each other's activities on Sri Lanka. Such interest may inherently endanger sovereignty as this competition continues to grow. In order to preserve its national security interest, it is necessary for Sri Lanka to wisely understand the sensitivity of strategic concerns of India and China in terms of their power potential and future role of the regional and global affairs and adopt policies wisely and conveniently. Following the non-aligned policies in terms

of the wider security interest of both nations is vital for the Sri Lankan progress.

Economic development is one of the core interests of Sri Lanka which ultimately helps to promote good governance and stability. Sri Lanka has been benefited from the varied economic assistance of both India and China and considering furthering its span in the future. However, given the scope of economic capability and integrating with world economic system is vital for Sri Lanka. As of today, China ranked is the second largest economy in the world while India is ranked twelve. Both nations are equally energized to continue its development and increasingly become an accepted fact which could be a vital asset for a country like Sri Lanka for the progress of her economic development. In addition, economic cooperation between these two nations is remarkable. Trade and investment opportunities provided by these two nations appear to be multi-dimensional.

Foreign direct investment has remained a primary source of economic progress of Sri Lanka. China and India rank as the top donor countries of Sri Lanka. These concerns have been facilitated by geostrategic closeness and competing interests of the nations. Sri Lanka inherently benefits from the assistance provided by India and China in terms of diplomatic, economic, and other aspects.

The world is moving towards a multi-polar system with a considerable impact on the economy, politics and diplomatic affairs. Sri Lanka cannot wish away from the strategic ambience. Sri Lanka needs to explore and exploit the opportunities in cooperative and congenial manner by balancing the interest of the rising nations. Almost China is ranked as the second largest economy and continues to be move forward with the rapid acceleration of economic progress. India has secured a very competitive position in terms of their power potential. It is expected that, China and India may decide the 21 Century in terms of their diplomatic, economic and military power.

Further, the potential of both countries in the informational technology domain is significant. Achievements of both countries in information technology, software engineering, hardware, electronic manufacturing and cyber technology etc are better than most of the countries in the world. Sharing of technology, know-how and experience are vital for the development

of the information domain of Sri Lanka as a developing nation.

Considering the diplomatic, informational, military and economic core elements of national power, it accentuates that, it is equally important to manage India and China with matured and well-crafted non-alignment policies in order to enhance Sri Lankan capability to preserve and further its national interest. However, the military element of the DIME needs a careful, wise and critical strategic focus in managing security matrix of the India and China.

In light of dynamics of historical relationship between India and China, geo-strategic setting, growing geopolitical trends and perspectives as well as Sri Lanka's wider national interest it is clear that Sri Lanka cannot progress by leaving China or India aside. Sri Lanka must use her hard-won achievements carefully and wisely in enhancing its national interest, promoting stability, democracy and good governance, preserving sovereignty and independence while taking every effort to harness the economic opportunities of Sri Lanka.

VI. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of this study was to analyse Sri Lanka's options for managing the relationship with both India and China. In achieving its core objectives, DIME trends analysed through the process of descriptive and analytic consideration of Sri Lanka's geo-strategic location and its associated strategic interest.

In light of research findings following recommendations are suggested:

- a. Sri Lankan foreign policy should be non-align in nature. Sri Lanka neither leans towards India nor China. It should follow a balanced approach between these two nations to harness opportunities.
- b. Nurturing of excellent bilateral collaboration between these two nations provide a robust foundation for preserving national interest and sovereignty of Sri Lanka.
- c. Immediate steps to be taken to initiate dialogue among this two nations for the starting a renewed comprehensive regional maritime cooperation,

regional cooperation, secure energy supplies etc under the auspices of SAARC or Sri Lanka.

- d. Sri Lanka should provide equal opportunities to both nations to extend their investment to develop seaports, airports, highways and critical infrastructure making Sri Lanka a regional hub for aviation, shipping and logistics.
- e. There is a considerable potential for growth of tourism with strategic collaboration of these two nations. Chinese tourists have now become highest tourist spenders in the world. Hence congenial diplomatic maneuvering could be utilized to tourist destination for high-end Chinese and Indian tourists.
- f. It is recommended broadening geo-political realities at its best. Geo-political realities could be wished away. In such context, Sri Lankan diplomatic, economic, informational, military and other core concerns should be focused on maximizing the benefits from the rise of these Asian giants.

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BIOGRAPHY OF AUTHOR



The author is a Major General in the Sri Lanka Army with more than 30 years of counterinsurgency experience. His research interests include concepts in geo-politics, national security, Defence strategies, adoptive military training and innovations etc. He has been handpicked and battle-hardened infantry Division Commander during the Humanitarian operation. Major General PP de Silva also served as the Commander Army Training Command which is responsible designing concepts, doctrines and training modalities of the Sri Lanka Army. He is presently serving as Military Liaison Officer at the Ministry of Defence.