

## **Contemporary Indian Ocean Strategic Competition and Its Effect on Sri Lankan National Security**

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Securing the Sea Lane of Communication (SLOC) is very important for the states like the United States and China as the competing powers in the Indian Ocean. In the meantime, Indian interests also focus on consolidating power in the Indian Ocean due to its security interests and countering possible Chinese containment. Especially in the Chinese initiative of One Belt One Road (OBOR), China mainly focuses on Sri Lanka and Pakistan as two of their friendly states. Sri Lanka has already leased Hambantota harbour to China and has sold them shares in the Colombo Port City. Simultaneously the construction of Gwadar port in Pakistan is going on. Therefore, China will surely ensure the protection of SLOC in the Indian Ocean in economic power projection through connectivity. The United States also has a very significant interest in dominating the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and has initiated strategic cooperation with India. In this context, manipulation of Sri Lankan geographic location by the states that are involved in the Indian Ocean-based strategic competition is taking place. The implications of these developments on the security of Sri Lanka are a research worthy problem.

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