

International Security Landscape of Sri Lanka; Since COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The ripple effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic had reshaped the three-way nexus between the pandemics, national and international security and international relations. When the public health issues strain international security and international relations at the same time, states are compelled to take different approaches to mitigate the effects on national integrity or sovereignty. However, in the Sri Lankan context, the possible long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are particularly disturbing. According to published articles “pandemics go far beyond mere public health crises, leaving an indelible mark on the contemporary social fabric”. In that sense, a deep analysis is required to identify the tangible as well as intangible factors resulted from such a catastrophe. Initially, COVID-19 impacted the social, economic and political pillars of the Sri Lankan society and secondary affects were more on global context. In this context, this paper aims on identifying significant traditional and non-traditional security threats faced by Sri Lanka in the context of international security since COVID-19 pandemic. This study is qualitative in nature. In that, in-depth interviews were conducted with a cross section of professionals involving major disciplines that have bearing on the traditional and non-traditional national security concerns. The NVivo was used in analysing the data gathered through in-depth interviews. This paper analyses the present applicability of Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) which is one of the most comprehensive frameworks that outline distinct variables necessary for regional security analysis. However, the paper proposes changes to RSCT from a 2023 and beyond context after analysing the security landscape of Sri Lanka since COVID-19 pandemic. It is concluded that Sri Lanka should establish durable political stability as the essential component in reaching its economic goals. Civil society cultivation and engagement are two key areas in which Sri Lanka should focus more in the present context. It is imperative that Sri Lanka preserve and augment its domestic, national defence, and regional security freedom of maneuver among large states such as China, India, US, Russia using correct blend of foreign policy whilst upholding national interests.

Keywords: *COVID-19 Pandemic, National Security, International Security, Traditional and Non-Traditional Security Threats*