

Effects of Strategic Competition on Third Parties in the Indian Ocean and Their Implications to Small States: With Special Reference to a Case Study of Sri Lanka

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In the ancient past, the Indian Ocean was called the Eritrean Sea. The term Indian Ocean was used from sixteenth century onwards. Indian Ocean is inherited with the strategic competition of Indian Ocean states as well as extra-regional states. Sri Lanka has played a vital role in the Indian Ocean matters throughout the past and always has used her strategic importance and diplomatic strengths to achieve greater results. The focus of this research study is to identify the importance of the modern-day geopolitical position that Sri Lanka holds and the strategic consequences it faces due to the Indian Ocean strategic competition in the 21st century. The maritime boundary shared by India and Sri Lanka is one of the most vulnerable geographical areas that could influence the behaviour of the Indian Ocean. This paper will examine the dynamics of the third-party spillover effects of the strategic competition of the regional and extra-regional actors of the Indian Ocean. The methodology used is a qualitative one. Primary data and secondary data were collected and interpreted to analyse the spillover effects of the strategic competition in the Indian Ocean. The Author argues that due to the strategic competition, there are third-party security effects faced by small states like Sri Lanka, while aiding them to carry out optimistic international relations by utilizing the above strategic strengths.

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