

Examining Post-Civil War Bilateral Relations Between India and Sri Lanka from the Perspective of Security Concern

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Abstract - India is a near neighbour to Sri Lanka's west. Ideas, culture, religion, and even language have been traded back and forth between the two countries over their more than 2,500-year history together. The presidents of the two nations have met often in recent years, trade and investment have expanded, cooperation in the areas of development, education, culture, and defence have all increased, and both countries share a similar perspective on the most serious issues facing the globe. Over the last year, the two nations have strengthened their level of bilateral interaction on a number of fronts, making great strides in the execution of developmental aid programmes for the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and other underprivileged sectors of the Sri Lankan population.

The study's overarching goal is to provide light on the complex nature of the triangle connection between India, Sri Lanka, and the United States as a result of the latter's foreign policies and the latter's internal politics, which have been dominated by the island nation's decades-long civil conflict.

Keywords - Post-Civil, War, Bilateral Relations, India, Sri Lanka, Perspective, Security Concern

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INTRODUCTION

The rise of Tamil militant insurgency in Sri Lanka in the 1980s strained ties between the two countries. More contentious in bilateral ties was India's two-pronged approach to dealing with Tamil separatists. To begin, the New Delhi government under Indira Gandhi became heavily engaged in the war in Sri Lanka by providing arms and military training to the Tamil terrorist organizations. Second, the Indira Gandhi administration offered her excellent office to help find a political resolution to the crisis at the same time. When India violated international law by sending fighter planes into Sri Lankan air space to deliver food aid on the Jaffna peninsula, relations between the two countries worsened further. The GOSL felt constrained to accept this contentious Indian action in order to end the huge military blockade of the LTTE by government troops in Sri Lanka. In 1987, President Jayawardena and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi signed an Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Agreement brokered by India. The political solution to Sri Lanka's conflict envisaged in the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement included the creation of a provincial council system based on the devolution of authority for nine provinces in Sri Lanka. In addition, India promptly sent what it calls "Indian Peacekeeping troops" (IPKF) to Sri Lanka with the mission of

disarming Tamil armed organizations in Jaffna. Not only did the IPKF fail to disarm the LTTE, but they also went to battle with them, losing 1,500 men in the process. When he took office after Jayawardena, President Premadasa of Sri Lanka called for the IPKF to leave the country immediately.

INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONS

Bilateral History

After centuries of British rule, Sri Lanka was understandably suspicious of Indian expansionism in the area. Sri Lanka's answer to the threat of Indian dominance was to submit to British rule from 1948 to 1972. In order to protect the island's security from any future Indian imperialism, Sri Lanka effectively granted the British long-term sovereignty over several military and naval outposts. Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru reportedly approached Sri Lanka with "cautious optimism," as reported by Manoharan (2011). The highest levels of Sri Lankan government were often hostile against India. Government officials in Colombo have stopped paying Indian workers and have begun persecuting Sri Lanka's Tamil population for political reasons. Nehru confidently ascribed early foreign policy

failings by Sri Lanka to the country's "limited world and experience in foreign relations." Sri Lankan foreign policy moves against Indian interests prompted Nehru's concern. However, he had a good rapport with Sri Lanka's prime minister, which was the source of his optimism. In the early stages of ties between India and Sri Lanka, personal diplomacy was crucial.

Some prominent political figures have strong friendships with one another; for instance, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and Nehru, and afterwards Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Indira Gandhi. International cooperation and disarmament were priorities for the Bandaranaikes, Nehru, and Gandhi. However, personal diplomacy was not successful in keeping the two nations together over the long term. The persecution of Indian Tamils and worries about maritime borders in the Indian Ocean were constant problems. In the past, Indian Tamils were marginalized by political institutions inside Sri Lanka. In the early nineteenth century, the British "brought as indentured laborers, mainly from southern India, to work in coffee, rubber, coconut, and tea plantations," specifically targeting Indian Tamils. The Indian Tamil community was marginalized politically and legally due to laws such as the Sinhala Only Act. The decades-long civil conflict in India started because of the Tamil people's anger.

Ethnic Conflict-Hands

On Mishandled requests for more local control by the Sri Lankan government in the late 1970s sparked the LTTE's separatist campaign. For a number of reasons, Indian involvement in the ethnic war was greater than that of any other foreign player. India's interest in regional stability was first and foremost geostrategic. Second, India's position as a regional power made it imperative that it reach a fair settlement between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil insurgents. If India had been able to accomplish this goal, it would have strengthened its position as a regional power and ally to Sri Lanka and other tiny South Asian republics. However, the Indian central government was limited by internal constraints, including the interests of India's own Tamil population and respect for Sri Lanka's geographical integrity. India's capital city of New Delhi sought to broker peace talks between the Sri Lankan government and the rebels. India, Sri Lanka, and the rebels all got together in August of 1985 to figure out how to end the fighting. There was no resolution to the negotiations. Following the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord in 1987, the Indian government sent Indian Peacekeeping Forces to intervene in Sri Lanka's civil war.

Ethnic Conflict-Hands Off

According to S.D. Muni (1993), there were two main developments in the early 1990s that led to India's informal "hands-off policy" towards the ethnic strife in Sri Lanka. The government of Sri Lanka first requested that the IPKF leave the island. After losing well over a thousand men on the island, the army withdrew. The

second is the murder of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by the LTTE. The latter stoked anti-LTTE sentiment and convinced the Indian government to stay out of the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict. India outlawed the LTTE in 1992, much to the dismay of Tamil Nadu. Both the Indian and Sri Lankan governments now had a common adversary in the LTTE, which had previously been sponsored by the Indian government at Tamil Nadu's demand. India had a crucial role in mediating talks between the Sri Lankan government and the rebels, even though it became less involved in the conflict after 1991. Although Norway was the driving force behind the mediation attempts, India was ultimately won over. The peace process collapsed when Mahinda Rajapaksa came to power in 2005. Rajapaksa was determined on launching a massive military assault against the insurgents. Rajapaksa used the "China card" successfully against New Delhi, as stated by Manoharan (2011).

post-conflict

India donated Sri Lanka humanitarian aid worth millions of dollars after the fighting ended for two main reasons. As a first step, India tried to prevent Sri Lanka from turning to other nations for help, such as China. Second, the assistance showed the world that ties between India and Sri Lanka are improving. New Delhi promptly donated US\$100 million for post-war aid, rehabilitation, and rebuilding. According to Business Standard (2009), Tamil Nadu delivered a separate relief package at \$5 million. For the building of new shelters for the displaced, India provided 10,400 tons of steel and 400,000 bags of cement. Over 500 tractors and a considerable quantity of seeds and farming materials were provided as part of a government-sponsored agricultural regeneration initiative estimated to cost more than \$6 million. Helping the Tamil population in Sri Lanka was a deliberate move to reassure Tamil Nadu that "the interests of their brethren" were not being overlooked in favor of good ties between the two countries. India has provided Sri Lanka with a robust line of credit in addition to financial aid. To fix the Colombo-Matara railway, India extended a credit line to Sri Lanka for USD 167.4 million (High Commission of India in Sri Lanka, 2011).

LITERATURE REVIEW

N, Manoharan (2019) Mahatma Gandhi appropriately described the relationship between India and Sri Lanka as "mother and daughter" even before independence. According to this figurative analysis, the bilateral ties between India and Sri Lanka are special for their own reasons. The commercial, diplomatic, and societal relations between the two countries go back over two thousand years. They had a same colonial background under British authority, which contributed to their similar perspectives. Foreign and strategic policies differed and even clashed at times because of national interests and other strategic concerns. In good times and bad, New Delhi has

always supported Colombo and the defense of Sri Lanka's independence, territorial integrity, and national unity.

Singh, Rohit & Sharma, S. (2018) The research analyzes India and Sri Lanka's commercial ties, highlighting the difficulties and potential solutions that lie ahead for expanding bilateral commerce. Tariffs and other trade indicators are also explored in this research. Sri Lanka's most even-keeled trading relationship is India. Sri Lanka's exports to and imports from this nation are the largest of any of Sri Lanka's top 10 trading partners. Within the framework of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Sri Lanka is one of India's most important commercial partners.

Kumar, S Y Surendra (2017) China's foreign policy shifts in the last several decades to solidify its interests may serve as an example for other nations to follow. China's Asia strategy at first targeted the regions to the northeast and southeast. South Asia, however, has taken on more significance in recent years in China's foreign policy, which seeks to preserve and promote regional peace and stability in order to support China's own peaceful growth. Therefore, China places a high strategic value on South Asia, including Sri Lanka. This study seeks to analyze the dramatic shift in Sino-Sri Lankan relations that occurred during President Mahinda Rajapakse's administration. President Sirisena's attempts to strike a balance between India and China is discussed, as is India's reaction to the strengthening of relations between China and Sri Lanka.

Athukorala, Prema-chandra (2016) After three decades of liberalization reforms, the conclusion of Sri Lanka's ethnic strife in 2009 brought with it high hopes for a new age of sustainable economic prosperity. Recent events, however, have tempered that hope and revived concerns that Sri Lanka's history of squandered chances may resume. According to this paper's research, Sri Lanka's economic woes can't be fixed by going back to its old ways of pursuing growth from the inside.

Rajapakshe, Sampath (2015) It is often held that the Chinese leadership has become more influential in global politics as a result of China's rise to economic and political prominence. However, thorough studies of China's influence on small nations are rare and often limited to questions about the extent to which China and small states have shared interests and how this impacts their bilateral ties. The purpose of this study is to provide a broader context to the existing literature on China's foreign relations. It examines the veracity of various explanations for interest similarities, economic, diplomatic, strategic, and military links, and bilateral interactions by drawing on vote data from the United Nations General Assembly for the last decade. These results provide more evidence that China's leadership of healthy relations with minor nations in

international affairs is supported by a convergence of interests.

Kelegama, Saman (2014) By examining the expanding business ties between China and Sri Lanka, this paper addresses a knowledge vacuum. Since the Rubber-Rice Pact in 1952, economic ties between the two nations have flourished, with a particularly fruitful period beginning in 2005. Chinese military aid was instrumental in ending three decades of violence in North and East Sri Lanka, and Chinese financial aid to other sectors of Sri Lanka's economy, especially infrastructure development, has also increased. Although commercial and investment ties between Sri Lanka and China are not particularly robust, they have been strengthened in recent years thanks in part to greater Chinese financial aid. While expanding economic links with China bring potential and problems for Sri Lanka, the country is expected to establish a Free Trade Agreement with China in 2014.

Wedagedara, Amali (2013) Even after the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were defeated, the 'ethnic issue' in Sri Lanka still creates tension in the otherwise strong and diversified relationship between India and Sri Lanka. The article uses a multi-agent model based on positional analysis to determine that the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL), the Government of India (GoI), and Tamil Nadu are the three most influential actors in Indo-Sri Lankan relations. The article's claims that the GOSL is better equipped to confront the ethnic issue today are grounded in interviews and interactions with a broad range of respondents in India and Sri Lanka and suggest that this is particularly so due to changes in the perspective of the GoI and Tamil Nadu.

Destradi, Sandra (2012) Examining why a regional power failed to handle a crisis in its near neighborhood, this essay zeroes in on India's relationship with Sri Lanka as a case study. India's mostly hands-off approach (1991-2006) may be explained by historical and internal causes. However, New Delhi's worries about China and other regional and international considerations justify its backing of Colombo's military operations against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

METHODOLOGY

Analytical, exploratory, and descriptive methodologies were employed to accomplish the goals of the research. The current research makes use of both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include parliamentary discussions, official comments from India and Sri Lanka, and reporting on the foreign policies of both countries. To ensure the study is thorough and accurate, we also look at records kept by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MEA), its annual reports, and special reports and briefings produced by India. The research was

conducted using secondary resources such as books, journals, newspapers, magazines, reports, articles, and other websites.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To Examining Post-Civil War Bilateral Relations Between India and Sri Lanka from the Perspective of Security Concern

INDIA'S SRI LANKA POLICY: A SECURITY PERSPECTIVE

Relations between India and Sri Lanka are diplomatic ties between the two countries. As reported by IPSOS (Independent Polling System and Society) Global Scan, just 4% of Sri Lankans have a bad opinion of India. Both nations have strong economic ties to one another. Our approach was put to the test during the Sri Lankan Civil War, notwithstanding Sri Lanka's shift toward China. In an effort to normalize ties, India and Sri Lanka inked a nuclear agreement in February of 2015. The first recorded contacts between India and Sri Lanka date back to roughly 400 BC, when Indo-Aryan tribes traveled to Sri Lanka. Buddhism and Tamil influence have united both nations. Lakshman Kadirgamar, the current Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, has said that "Relations between India and Sri Lanka are quite ancient and both are lost to the mist of time." Since both countries were colonized by the British during the latter half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century, their perspectives on the world and security have converged and evolved in the seven decades since they gained their independence. India has been a prominent player in Asian and global affairs, and it has also been a kind neighbor to its surrounding countries. In the 1950s, India's awareness of the subcontinent's geopolitical realities grew in importance. The growing animosity with Pakistan made protecting the Himalayan border critical to preserving national security. As a result, India felt obligated to establish a "Indo-Centric" security and defense architecture for the area. Because of these circumstances, India must keep a careful eye on the foreign and defense policies of its neighbors and forge tight ties of collaboration with them. Therefore, India pushed for a tight integration of Sri Lanka's defense strategy with India's own or the use of joint defense resources. But because of India's behavior, Sri Lanka is wary and feels threatened. For reasons only they know, Sri Lanka rejected the idea of a joint or collaborative defense and strategic strategy. Because it lacks the resources to defend itself militarily, India is constantly on Sri Lanka's mind when it comes to matters of national security. India has been accused of forcing unfair treaties on Nepal, Bhutan, and Sikkim. Sri Lanka alluded to external forces or international organizations to protect its sovereignty and safety. Sri Lanka is aware that, as a tiny country, it would need assistance from other countries in order to protect its territory and citizens. However, it places equal value on cordial ties with its immediate neighbors as it does with those farther afield.

Sri Lanka's Defence & Security Perception

When it gained independence from the British, Sri Lanka lacked a strong military. Therefore, the governing class of Sri Lanka believed that India posed the greatest security danger to their country. Senanayake, Sri Lanka's first prime minister, devised his plan for the new period after independence with this reality in mind.¹⁶ Senanayake had thought that Pt. Nehru, India's first prime minister, wanted to make India a world superpower. Nehru's consistent focus on Sri Lanka was motivated by the island nation's strategic significance to India. After gaining independence from Britain, Sri Lanka opted to maintain a security relationship with the United Kingdom for the sake of its own safety. She did this by renting out the Trincomalee naval facility and the Katunayake and Trincomayake air bases to the United Kingdom. Sri Lanka's left-leaning political parties were critical of the deal with Britain since the country put more faith in the United Kingdom than in India. They further maintained that under the terms of the agreement, Sri Lanka did not get complete independence.

Political Dimension

When Sri Lanka first gained its freedom, its authorities were confronted with a number of security issues. As a result of colonial influence, traditional understandings of the danger posed by neighboring South Indian kingdoms had become largely obsolete in the South Asian political scene. New problems of epic proportions confronted the newly unified India in great numbers. However, the new circumstances were seen as more dangerous by Sri Lanka's top officials than anything they had faced before colonial rule. Sri Lanka's political identity was preserved during British administration, despite the country's incorporation into the imperial defense system encompassing India. The new Sri Lankan government is steeped in the principles of modern international law and the international organizations, especially the United Nations, which were established to safeguard the sovereignty of weaker nations.²⁸ In contrast, Indian authorities believed that, in terms of post-war defense and security needs, neither India nor Sri Lanka were secure.

Economic Dimension

India's approach to the Indian Ocean is informed by its concern for international stability as well as by fundamental considerations of its own long-term interests. Due to its strategic position, the stability of the region is crucial to the country's safety, economy, and trade. India, like the other developing countries in the region, is concerned about maintaining peace and stability in the face of the constant threat of war, regional tussles, and cunning moves to destabilize great-power rivalry in the Indian Ocean. India's marine and naval interests center on the defense and maintenance of the country's borders, the protection of its offshore oil facilities and the EEZ's

natural resources, and the security of its shipping lanes and commercial waterways. The Indian subcontinent stretches along the coasts of the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and a total of 7,516.6 kilometers of shoreline. Approximately 1,152,000 square kilometers of water make up the Bay of Bengal. India needs a strong fleet to defend its extensive coastline and many islands.

Military Dimension

Sri Lanka has been aware of and reactive to political and military strategic changes in the Indian Ocean since gaining independence. The years 1970–1977 saw a shift toward a more strategic approach on Sri Lanka's part when responding to or addressing power issues in the Indian Ocean. When Sri Lanka took the initiative to organize and express littoral issues as a response to superpower competition in the Indian Ocean, it was a turning point.

➤ **Hambantota Port Project**

The Indian government has legitimate security worries regarding China's direct presence and cooperation in developing Sri Lanka's marine infrastructure. The Hambantota Port development project is often cited as an example. This port, Sri Lanka's second biggest after the port of Colombo, opened on November 18th, 2010. This harbor was designed for commercial transshipment, yet its critical function and significance cannot be ignored. There is a risk that militaristic states like China would utilize the port to undermine India's influence in the area. China is now Sri Lanka's closest friend and the funder of the Hambantota port project; if India's relations with China and Sri Lanka worsen, China may be able to get special privileges at Hambantota and use the port purportedly against India.⁶⁰ The Sri Lankan government might set aside certain storage tanks at the Hambantota oil facility for use by the Chinese navy. Port and base facilities may lose strategic relevance and value if China does not develop its nuclear submarine capabilities. Such actions are not only doable in conflict but also continue to be crucial in peacetime.⁶¹ According to India, Hambantota port serves China's strategic objectives in Sri Lanka and disrupts China's dominance in the region during peace. This seems to be part of China's overarching maritime strategy in the Indian Ocean. The military implications of the port project have been hinted at by Raman Kumar, the Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India.

➤ **China's String of Pearls**

From India's perspective, the "string of pearls" is a geopolitical agenda that reveals China's intentions in the IOR (Indian Ocean Region) to encircle India from all sides, beginning with mainland China and ending at the Port of Sudan in Africa via a system of Chinese military and commercial activities along the Sea Lines of Communications. It includes the strategic

chokepoints that surround India like a string of pearls, including the Strait of Mandeb, the Strait of Malacca, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Lombok Strait. China has a firm grip on the marine communication hubs of Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, the Maldives, and Somalia, giving it access to both sea and land routes. The United States Department of Defense initially used the phrase "String of Pearls" in its 2005 Booz Allen study "Energy Future in Asia," however the concept has not been widely discussed in official Chinese media or private think tank organizations. When the US study surfaced in 2005, it was the Indian media that popularized this word the most. Beijing's main interest in all these ports is purely commercial, not strategic; military operational actions are confined in terms of Sea line Communication security, but Beijing is not constructing permanent bases like previous imperial countries, such as Britain or the United States. As a result of China's rise since it began its economic reforms and open-up policies, the country and its allies are seen as a danger in the areas immediately around China. China is concerned about the security of its sea lines of communication to the port of Somalia and therefore is keen to construct port developments there.

➤ **India-Sri Lankan Bilateral Defence Cooperation Agreement (DCA)**

The Indian Ministry of Defense sent a five-person team to Colombo on October 19 to meet with their Sri Lankan colleagues. The proposed agreement between India and Sri Lanka pertaining to cooperation in defense was led by Defence Secretary Cyril Herath, who was accompanied by the service Chiefs, top officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Nigel Hatch, the President's advisor. The two nations' militaries have agreed to increase their collaboration in areas including as joint exercises, intelligence sharing, and maritime surveillance to combat criminal activity on both coasts. The current hotlines between the two fleets and the Indian coast guard will be supplemented by this arrangement.

MARITIME BILATERAL ISSUES BETWEEN INDIA AND SRI LANKA

Fisheries Disputes

South Indian fisherman and the Sri Lankan Navy both lay claim to fishing rights in the disputed waters between India and Sri Lanka. A long-standing territorial dispute exists between Sri Lanka and India over the tiny Palk Strait. Tamil Nadu fishermen often enter Sri Lankan waters near the Strait of Palk in order to steal fish. For a very long period, this has been happening. During the civil war, the LTTE had sway over this region, but after its conclusion, the Sri Lankan Navy (SLNAVY) has boosted her patrols in the strait. Since then, the situation has worsened dramatically due to the Navy seizing many illegal fishermen's boats. The Sri Lankan Ministry of

Defense describes the picture as follows: "Satellite images and the Naval Watchdog of Sri Lanka at Sea show that hundreds or even thousands of fishing vessels from South India are entering these waters daily." They blatantly disregard the international maritime boundary line and fish in these areas, damaging the fish habitat and destroying fish populations by using trawl nets that reach deep into the ocean and scrape the bottom.

Kachchativu Problem and Maritime Boundary Dispute

Kachchativu, a small, deserted coral island in the Palk Strait between India and Sri Lanka, has been described as having an area of around one square mile. The fisherman has been choosing this desolate, cactus-covered area as a place to relax. Due to a lack of reliable sources of potable water, this area has never been home to any permanent residents. When Sri Lanka increased its marine boundaries from 6 to 12 nautical miles in 1967, a disagreement arose over the new border. Based on the historical outline, both India and Sri Lanka claimed the island for themselves. The state government of Tamil Nadu said that it acquired Kachchavitu from Ramanathapur Samastham in accordance with the Zamindari Aboilition Act. The island was utilized as a naval bombing range during World War II in accordance with Ceylon's defensive rules, and the Sri Lankan government has provided documentation to support its claim to the territory. The outcome of the conflict is yet uncertain. In the twenty-first century, the Indian side has periodically proposed several solutions, such as a lease for the rest of time or reciprocal licensing, but thus far the two parties have been unable to agree. Those who are staunchly on the side of the fishermen recommend that the Indian government take an active part in settling the dispute with Colombo so that licensed Indian fishermen can fish in Sri Lankan waters within specified zones.

Maritime Boundary Agreements of 1974 and 1976

When the overlap in the territorial seas of India and Sri Lanka was resolved in 1974, the international border between the two nations was demarcated along the historical waters in Palk Strait and Palk Bay. Kachchavitu was thereafter located in Sri Lankan territory. One mile from the western shore of Kachchavitu was chosen as the demarcation line. The agreement stipulated that each nation has the right to explore and utilize any petroleum or mineral reserves located entirely inside its territory. If petroleum or mineral reserves were discovered to stretch beyond the border, the two nations would have to come to an agreement on the best way to conduct the exploration. This deal was reached with the recent Indian oil strike in the area in mind, as well as the history of good relations between India and Sri Lanka in the 1980s. The Maritime Agreement of 1976 expanded the international border in the Gulf of Mannar and the Bay of Bengal, establishing each state's sovereign right and exclusive control over the Continental Shelves

and Exclusive Economic Zones, as well as the resources lying within them. In terms of the history of ties between India and Sri Lanka, the signing of these two accords should be seen as a watershed moment. These represent the conclusion of lengthy discussions between the two nations and will have far-reaching consequences. These pacts might open the door to cooperative efforts to discover and utilize seabed riches inside a country's EEZ and territorial waters. Relations between India and Sri Lanka have achieved an all-time high as a consequence of the delineation of their maritime border and the resolution of their dispute over Kachchavitu. Several unsavory occurrences between Sri Lankan Naval patrols and Indian fisherman have kept the Island on India's radar despite several attempts at rapprochement.

Piracy

Pirate attacks, which were formerly concentrated in the Malacca Strait and the South China Sea, have recently spread to the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea in large numbers. The Indian Ocean has shifted over time to become the pirate industry's epicenter. Although piracy has been uncommon in the seas of Sri Lanka, it is a common occurrence in the country's northeastern waterways. In one such instance, Sri Lankan militants reportedly captured the commercial vessel MV Cordiality near the Port of Trincomalee and murdered five Chinese crew members. It has been alleged that LTTE cadres have hijacked ships and boats of varying sizes, kidnapped and murdering crew members in the process. In August of 1998, LTTE terrorists kidnapped the MV Princess Kash, a general cargo ship flying the flag of Belize. The Sri Lankan Air Force destroyed the ship as it made its way to Mullaitivu, an LTTE stronghold, to prevent its cargo from slipping into LTTE hands. The fate of the 22 crew members remains unknown. Since the late 1990s, sea-robbery originating in Somalia has been a source of global concern, and only the coordinated efforts of multinational organisations have resulted to a decline in assaults. Since October 2015, the High-Risk Area has been relocated further to the west of India as a result of the increased efforts of India's maritime security forces and the successful protection of numerous merchant ships from all countries. Previously, piracy had spread as far east as the Lakshadweep and Maldives islands.

Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a major problem along the South Asian Sea routes. Additionally, internal political events in impacted nations were influenced by the influx of refugees. As a result, tensions rose between numerous nations in the area. In both India and Sri Lanka, most foreign supply ships have been partaking in this unlawful activity after the LTTE's military defeat in Sri Lanka. The old price tag for an illegal immigrant was several thousand dollars. Hundreds of individuals have been illegally transported on these ships, which then made their way across international seas to countries in the

West including Canada and Australia. There is currently no effective system for dealing with boats engaged in people trafficking in international seas, which operates due to legal loopholes. Therefore, only international cooperation and coordination can lessen the risk of unlawful transit of persons. The issue may be eliminated, especially in the South Asian area, with strong bilateral and multilateral coastal surveillance, patrols, and intelligence network. Now, Sri Lanka is struggling to stop being used as a transit center for people smuggling to other nations.

Drug Trafficking

The sheer breadth and scope of the Indian Ocean makes it challenging to keep tabs on its inhabitants and their activities. It's wide open for business uses, but it's also used for some less than honorable things. Sri Lanka, situated between the 'Golden Triangle' and the 'Golden Crescent,' continues to play a key role in the drug trade as a transit point. "Heroin is routed via Sri Lanka on a large scale by containers and mechanized fishing craft from Pakistan or India." Sri Lanka now also must deal with the problem of drug abuse. Drug smuggling is a major source of funding for terrorist groups, insurgency movements, and organized criminal syndicates. There has been a significant shift in the dynamics of the drug trade in the subcontinent after the defeat and death of LTTE commander Vellupillai Prabhakaran. The LTTE was also infamous for the vast quantities of money it made through its drug trafficking operations across Europe, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. The drug traffickers in Golden Crescent used the same tactics as the gun traffickers, including the employment of fishing boats and the concealment of their wares.

Gun Running

In their protracted war against the Sri Lankan government and subsequently the IPKF, the LTTE had been importing massive amounts of weapons from outside. Since Tamil Nadu was no longer able to provide weaponry and ammunition, the state has had to depend on more distant ports and their lengthy logistical supply networks. The LTTE had created a reliable network of contacts in the Bay of Bengal and Southeast Asia, notably in Cambodia, from where it could get the weaponry it needed. Materials for LTTE activities came not just from Sri Lanka, but also from Cambodia, Thailand, and Myanmar. The LTTE's system for distributing weapons was very sophisticated. It has connections all the way from Japan to Korea in Southeast Asia. The Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea were used as a gun trafficking route by the LTTE. Rayong, a port in southern Thailand, has been exposed as a transshipment point for Cambodian-origin weapons. The cargo was subsequently moved to bigger ships at sea for the last leg of their journey to Sri Lanka. Some of these weapons made their way to Cox Bazar, Bangladesh, in small boats. Several gun-running ships were seized in the area during their attempts to acquire weaponry. In

one such incident in 1996, Bangladeshi officials confiscated 600 guns from a Thai-bound fishing ship. In 1997, the People's Liberation Army (Manipur) had an armaments shipment intercepted by the Royal Thai Navy in the Andaman Sea near the port of Rayong.

CONCLUSION

The fact that both India and Sri Lanka were formerly colonies of the British Empire and were subject to the brutal institution of slavery is perhaps the only thing they have in common. Both gained independence about the same time and have since grappled with the task of building strong economies and providing their people with meaningful work.

India and Sri Lanka are two neighboring nations that are both sovereign and grounded. No nation can use threats or its larger size to subjugate another now. Both India and Sri Lanka are certain that if they invest in their economies, they can provide prosperity and happiness to their respective populations. As a result, they are eager to work together for the greater good. India is involved in many facets of Sri Lanka's development. Sri Lanka receives around 1/6 of India's overall development credit.

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