

The Port Policy of Small Island Powers: Sri Lankan Perspective

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This paper discusses the requirement of reorienting the port policy of Sri Lanka. The port policy directly concerns national interest and the fundamental values of the state that are strategically significant for acquiring, managing, and controlling the global power strategy. At present, Sri Lanka is expanding port policies due to the shift in the power of the global economic arena. Therefore, Hambantota and Colombo port have given significance to Sri Lanka and made them maritime influencers in their own rights. In this context, each of the global powers will see a threat to itself if the Government of Sri Lanka is to favour one over the other. Even though Sri Lanka has applied the non-alignment policy approach, the littoral state, port policy of Sri Lanka faces the dilemma of balancing or bandwagoning strategy with the state and non-state actors. The objectives of the present research are to explain the geo strategic importance of Sri Lanka in terms of port power and to critically examine the challenges to the port policy of Sri Lanka, to investigate the positive and negative impact of challenges to the port security of Sri Lanka. Research methods of the present research deal with both descriptive and analytical in nature. The study is mainly based on secondary sources. This research found the unstable port policies with the frequent change of domestic government resulted in chaos in the economic stability. Observation has made the reluctance of co-operation and difficulty of managing and understanding maritime agreements, and lack of coherent functionalism in the port policies. Thus, a non-aligned strategic approach would be the best port policy for Sri Lanka. Further, the structure of the international system is influential, and Sri Lanka must not persuade the individual character of the leader where port policies must base on an in-depth understanding of the maritime concepts and theories and apply them into function.

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