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**THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY OF
SRI LANKA BY POACHING OF INDIAN
FISHERMEN IN TERRITORIAL WATERS**

By

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ABSTRACT

The national interest of Sri Lanka is largely influenced by the maritime domain. Being a strategically located island, Sri Lanka plays a vital role in Indian Ocean commerce and security matters. Due to this positioning Sri Lanka faces many challenges as well as opportunities. Although maritime boundaries of Sri Lanka were firmly demarcated, there are some violations of sea territories taking place by outside parties for economic reasons. The author formulates his research problem around these violations that are challenging the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka.

Poaching of Indian fishermen into Sri Lankan territorial waters has become a major issue at present which is taking place for considerable period of time. Even though these fishermen are fully aware about the boundaries that they purposely infringe; they do so; due to the lack of fishing resources in own their territory. In addition to poaching, it was identified that they use banned fishing methods which causes a substantial destruction of marine environment of Sri Lanka.

This research is mainly focused on the implications of the said issues on national security. The issue of poaching is given a special emphasis and to identify how it has become a threat to national security of Sri Lanka.

The issues pertained to the problem is more likely to be categorised under the context of human security. Human security is a vital aspect of security of states and we can observe that sometimes states are compelled to take harsh decisions to safeguard their national interest when human security is at a stake. The author suggests that there are alternative soft approaches than imposing hard power for the identified problem.

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This study was conducted to find effective solutions for questions such as, the root causes, existing legal bindings, involvements of various stakeholders, socio economic impact, approaches taken to solve and how far these solutions have been succeeded. Moreover, it is further elaborated that how the illegal fishing activities and destruction of marine environment has effected to the national security and what are the effective approaches to make new strategy for policy makers in the context of national security of Sri Lanka.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods and convenient sampling were used in this research work. Cooperative and comprehensive security theories were used to derive the recommendations. Finally, it is observed that the issues pertained are more sensitive to citizens and the states. Therefore they needed more diplomatic and benign approach among states and their respective governing mechanisms.