

China and Sri Lanka Relations in the Context of Vaccine Diplomacy

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Abstract

In an increasingly interconnected world, diplomacy has taken on new dimensions and strategies. One of the most prominent and urgent aspects of contemporary diplomacy is vaccine diplomacy, a practice that has gained global attention amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Vaccine diplomacy involves the use of vaccines as a tool for fostering international relations, building influence, and advancing geopolitical agendas. China, as a major global player, has been at the forefront of vaccine diplomacy, and its relations with countries like Sri Lanka have come under the spotlight. This comprehensive analysis aims to examine the intricate dynamics of China and Sri Lanka's relations within the context of vaccine diplomacy and aims to shed light on the implications for global health, regional politics, and bilateral ties. While there is adequate literature on China's vaccine diplomacy, there is no consensus on how it affects the relations between China and Sri Lanka. To accomplish those objectives, qualitative secondary data sources such as books, journal articles, government reports, official statements, and press releases from both Chinese and Sri Lankan sources are analyzed. According to the findings of the study, it can be mentioned that Vaccine diplomacy has served as a diplomatic tool to enhance bilateral relations between Sri Lanka and China. It has deepened their strategic partnership in the health sector and reinforced Sri Lanka's dependence on China. Beyond the immediate health benefits, Sri Lanka's engagement with China in vaccine diplomacy is intertwined with broader economic and strategic considerations, including infrastructure development and the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Overall, the dynamic relationship between Sri Lanka and China within the realm of vaccine diplomacy has emerged as a multifaceted and evolving strategic partnership.

Keywords: *China, Regional Politics, Sri Lanka, Vaccine Diplomacy*

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