



**PARLIAMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC  
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF  
SRI LANKA**

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**JUDICATURE (AMENDMENT) ACT, No. 34 OF 2022**

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**[Certified on 17th of November, 2022]**

*Printed on the Order of Government*

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*Judicature (Amendment) Act, No. 34 of 2022*

[Certified on 17th of November, 2022]

L.D.-O. 45/2021

AN ACT TO AMEND THE JUDICATURE ACT, NO. 2 OF 1978

BE it enacted by the Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka as follows: -

**1.** (1) This Act may be cited as the Judicature (Amendment) Act, No. 34 of 2022.

Short title and  
date of  
operation

(2) The provisions of this Act shall come into operation on such date or dates as the Minister may appoint by Order published in the *Gazette*.

(3) Different dates may be appointed for bringing into operation different provisions of this Act.

**2.** Section 2 of the Judicature Act, No. 2 of 1978, (hereinafter referred to as the “principal enactment”) is hereby repealed and the following section is substituted therefor :-

Replacement of  
section 2 of Act,  
No. 2 of 1978

“The Courts  
of First  
Instance

2. The Courts of First Instance for the administration of justice in the Republic of Sri Lanka shall be-

- (a) the High Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka;
- (b) the High Courts for the Provinces established by Article 154P of the Constitution;
- (c) the District Courts;
- (d) the Family Courts;
- (e) the Small Claims Courts;
- (f) the Magistrates’ Courts; and
- (g) the Primary Courts.”.

Replacement of  
section 5 of the  
principal  
enactment

**3.** Section 5 of the principal enactment is hereby repealed  
and the following section is substituted therefor: -

“District  
Courts,  
Family  
Courts, Small  
Claims  
Courts,  
Magistrates’  
Courts and  
Primary  
Courts

5. (1) There shall be in each judicial district  
of Sri Lanka a “District Court” which shall be  
deemed to be the “Family Court” when  
exercising the jurisdiction vested in a Family  
Court under this Act or any written law, and  
which shall be deemed to be the “Small Claims  
Court” when exercising the jurisdiction vested  
in a Small Claims Court under this Act or any  
other written law, and in every judicial division  
there shall be a “Magistrate’s Court” and a  
“Primary Court” and, each such Court shall be  
holden by and before a person to be called the  
“District Judge”, “Judge of the Family Court”,  
“Judge of the Small Claims Court”,  
“Magistrate” and “Judge of the Primary Court”  
respectively.

(2) Each Court referred to in subsection (1)  
may be held at such convenient place or places  
within such judicial district or division, as the  
case may be, as the Minister shall, by regulation  
from time to time appoint:

Provided that nothing in this section shall  
be construed to restrict or curtail the power  
possessed by every Judge to hold the Court at  
any convenient place within his territorial  
jurisdiction.”.

Replacement of  
section 5B of the  
principal  
enactment

**4.** Section 5B of the principal enactment is hereby repealed  
and the following section is substituted therefor: -

“Appointment of the Pre-Trial Judge 5B. (1) The Judicial Service Commission shall appoint a judicial officer from among the District Judges and Magistrates to be called the Pre-Trial Judge, to any one or more Court of First Instance exercising civil jurisdiction, where the Judicial Service Commission is of the opinion that such appointment is required.

(2) The Pre-Trial Judge shall attend to and deal with pre-trial conferences as specified in the provisions of the Civil Procedure Code (Chapter 101) and post-trial matters assigned by the Judicial Service Commission which have arisen in the course of a civil proceeding instituted in the Court to which he is appointed.”.

5. Section 6 of the principal enactment is hereby amended by the repeal of subsection (1) thereof and the substitution therefor, of the following: -

Amendment of section 6 of the principal enactment

“(1) All District Judges, Judges of the Family Courts, Judges of the Small Claims Courts, Magistrates and Judges of the Primary Courts and all such Additional Judges and Additional Magistrates of such Courts shall be appointed to their offices by the Judicial Service Commission.”.

6. Section 8 of the principal enactment is hereby amended by the repeal of subsections (1) and (2) thereof and the substitution therefor, of the following: -

Amendment of section 8 of the principal enactment

“(1) The Judicial Service Commission may appoint as many additional District Judges, Additional Judges of the Family Court, Additional Judges of the Small Claims Court, Additional Magistrates or Additional Judges of the Primary Court to the same District Court, Family Court, Small Claims Court, Magistrate’s Court, and Primary Court respectively as the occasion may require.

(2) Every Additional District Judge, Additional Judge of the Family Court, Additional Judge of the Small Claims Court, Additional Magistrate, or Additional Judge of the Primary Court appointed to any such Court, shall sit separately and exercise all the powers and the jurisdiction vested in the District Court, Family Court, Small Claims Court, Magistrate's Court and Primary Court, respectively, of that district or division, as the case may be, for which such Additional District Judge, Additional Judge of the Family Court, Additional Judge of the Small Claims Court, Additional Magistrate or Additional Judge of the Primary Court, is so appointed.”.

Amendment of  
section 14 of the  
principal  
enactment

**7.** Section 14 of the principal enactment is hereby amended by the substitution for the words “the High Court may”, of the words and figures “the High Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka or the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution may”.

Amendment of  
section 15 of the  
principal  
enactment

**8.** Section 15 of the principal enactment is hereby amended as follows:-

(1) in paragraph (a) thereof, by the substitution for the words “by a High Court-”, of the words and figures “by a High Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka or a High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution-”; and

(2) in paragraph (b) thereof, by the substitution for the words “order of the High Court.”, of the words and figures “order of the High Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka or the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution.”.

**9.** Section 16 of the principal enactment is hereby amended in subsection (1) thereof by the substitution for the words “of the High Court”, of the words and figures “of the High Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka or the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution”.

Amendment of section 16 of the principal enactment

**10.** Section 19 of the principal enactment is hereby repealed and the following section is substituted therefor: -

Replacement of section 19 of the principal enactment

“Jurisdiction of District Courts      19. Every District Court shall be a court of record and shall within its district have unlimited original jurisdiction in all civil, revenue, trust, insolvency and testamentary matters, save and except such of the aforesaid matters as are by or under Chapter VA of this Act or by virtue of the provisions of any other enactment exclusively assigned by way of original jurisdiction to any other court or vested in any other authority and in the exercise of such jurisdiction to impose fines, penalties and forfeitures and shall, in like manner also have jurisdiction over the persons and estates of persons of unsound mind and wards, over the estates of *cestuis que* trust and over guardians and trustees and in any other matter in which jurisdiction is given to District Court by law.”.

**11.** Section 19A of the principal enactment is hereby repealed.

Repeal of section 19A of the principal enactment

Amendment of  
section 23 of the  
principal  
enactment

**12.** Section 23 of the principal enactment is hereby amended as follows:-

(1) in subsection (1) thereof, by the substitution for the words “the Court of Appeal”, of the words and figures “the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution”; and

(2) in subsection (2) thereof, by the substitution for the words “to the Court of Appeal” and “of the Court of Appeal”, respectively, of the words and figures “to the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution” and “of the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution”.

Replacement of  
Chapter V of the  
principal  
enactment

**13.** Chapter V of the principal enactment is hereby repealed and the following Chapter is substituted therefor: -

#### “CHAPTER V

#### FAMILY COURTS

Jurisdiction  
of a District  
Court

24. (1) Every Family Court shall be a court of record and shall have sole original jurisdiction in respect of matrimonial disputes, actions for divorce, nullity and separation, damages for adultery, claims for alimony, disputes between spouses, parents and children as to matrimonial property, custody of minor children, dependants’ claims, guardianship and curatorship matters, claims in respect of declaration of legitimacy and, illegitimacy and marriage, adoption and applications for amendment of birth registration entries, claims for seduction and breach of promise of marriage and such other matters provided for by any other written law:

Provided that anything in the preceding provisions of this subsection shall not affect the provisions of the Kandyan Marriage and Divorce Act (Chapter 113) and the provisions of the Muslim Marriage and Divorce Act (Chapter 115).

(2) The Family Court shall also have sole and exclusive jurisdiction in respect of all matters specified in subsection (1) and where reference is made to any court in respect of such matters in any of the enactments referred to in the Third Schedule hereto, it shall be deemed to be a reference to a Family Court:

Provided that this subsection shall have no application to any offences alleged to have been committed in violation of the provisions of any such enactment.

(3) An application for the custody of a minor child or of the spouse of any marriage alleged to be kept in wrongful or illegal custody by any parent or by the other spouse or guardian or relative of such minor child or spouse shall be heard and determined by the Family Court; and such Court shall have full power and jurisdiction to hear and determine the same and make such orders both interim and final as the justice of the case shall require.

Care of  
minors, and  
charge of  
their  
property

25. The jurisdiction and powers of District Courts under section 20 as regards the care and custody of persons of unsound mind and mentally deficient persons and the charge of their property shall, in like manner and with the same powers be exercised by a Family Court



as regards the care of the persons of minors and wards and the charge of their property and shall extend to the charge of the property in Sri Lanka of minors and wards who are not resident in Sri Lanka.

Family  
Counsellor

26. (1) There shall be for every judicial district an officer who shall be called the “Family Counsellor”.

(2) Where a dispute in any action in respect of any matter within the jurisdiction of a Family Court, or any application for maintenance, comes up for inquiry or trial before a District Judge, Judge of the Family Court or Magistrate, as the case may be, such District Judge, Judge of the Family Court or Magistrate shall, unless any party to the action expresses in writing a desire to the contrary, refer such dispute to a Family Counsellor, who shall-

- (a) make every effort to induce the parties to settle such dispute; and
- (b) submit his report thereon to the District Judge, Judge of the Family Court or Magistrate as the case may be, within such time as may be specified by such District Judge, Judge of the Family Court or Magistrate.

(3) Where any dispute is settled, the terms of settlement shall be entered, signed by each party to the dispute and the Family Counsellor, and be forwarded to the District Judge, Judge of the Family Court or Magistrate as the case may be who shall enter such terms of settlement as a decree of such Court.

(4) Where a Family Counsellor is not able to settle any dispute referred to in subsection (1), he shall refer such dispute to the District Judge, Judge of the Family Court or Magistrate for determination after inquiry or trial.

(5) No District Judge, Judge of a Family Court or Magistrate shall hold any inquiry or trial in respect of any dispute, until such dispute is referred to him by the Family Counsellor under subsection (4).

Appeals

27. A person who is dissatisfied with a judgment, decree or order pronounced by the Family Court after inquiry or trial may, in accordance with any law, regulation or rule governing the manner and procedure for appeals from the District Court, prefer an appeal therefrom to the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution for any error in law or in fact.

Transfer  
cases from  
one Family  
Court to  
another and  
consolidation

28. (1) In the event of two or more separate proceedings or actions being instituted in respect of the same or substantially the same family dispute in more than one Family Court, any party to such proceedings or actions may apply, or any Judge of such Family Court in which the said proceedings or actions had been instituted may refer the matter, to the Court of Appeal which shall, in the exercise of its powers, as it may deem fit, transfer one or more of such proceedings or actions to one of the Family Courts, in which proceedings or actions have already been instituted by the said parties; so that, all such disputes may be conveniently or expeditiously heard and determined in one Family Court.

(2) In the event of there being two or more proceedings or actions instituted or pending in the same Family Court as between the same parties or relating to substantially the same matter, it shall be competent for the said Court to direct that such proceedings or actions be consolidated into a single proceeding, if in the opinion of the said Court it is convenient to do so or it be so necessary in the interest of justice and the expeditious disposal of such matters in dispute. The Court may, in such an event make such order or deliver such judgment or enter such decree from time to time as the exigencies and justice of the case may require.

Procedure in  
Family  
Courts

29. (1) All proceedings in a Family Court shall be instituted and conducted as expeditiously as possible in accordance with such regulations as may be prescribed:

Provided that until such regulations have been so prescribed, the Family Court shall, as far as practicable, follow the provisions relating to summary procedure in the Civil Procedure Code (Chapter 101).

(2) The provisions of the Adoption of Children Ordinance (Chapter 61) governing the institution and conducting of proceedings under the said Ordinance shall be deemed to apply to such proceedings that may be instituted in the Family Court.

(3) All applications for the care and custody of minor children shall take precedence over all other matters in every Family Court and shall, unless exceptional circumstances so warrant, be heard from day to day to ensure the expeditious disposal of the same.”.

**14.** The following new Chapter is hereby inserted immediately after Chapter V of the principal enactment and shall have effect as Chapter V<sub>A</sub> of that enactment: -

Insertion of  
new Chapter  
V<sub>A</sub> in the  
principal  
enactment

“CHAPTER V<sub>A</sub>

SMALL CLAIMS COURTS

Jurisdiction  
of Small  
Claims  
Courts

29A. (1) Every Small Claims Court shall be a court of record and shall have exclusive original civil jurisdiction and shall have cognizance of and full power to hear and determine all actions specified in the Seventh Schedule hereto:

Provided however, a Small Claims Court shall have no jurisdiction or power to hear and determine any action filed under the provisions of Chapter LIII of the Civil Procedure Code (Chapter 101) or action for the recovery of money to which special provisions are made under any other written law.

(2) All actions specified in the Seventh Schedule shall not exceed a sum of rupees one million and five hundred thousand excluding interest, or such other amount as may be fixed by the Minister from time to time, by an Order published in the *Gazette*.

(3) An Order made under subsection (2) shall not have effect, until it is approved by Parliament and notification of such approval is published in the *Gazette*.

Procedure before the Small Claims Courts	29B. The proceedings before any Small Claims Court may be taken by the special procedure for Small Claims Court as provided in the Small Claims Courts' Procedure Act, No. 33 of 2022 and any other written law.
Order respecting payment of costs and expenses	29C. It shall be lawful for the Judge of every Small Claims Court, in pronouncing his order or judgment in any case, to make such order in respect of the payment of costs and expenses as to him shall appear just and reasonable.
Appeals	<p>29D. (1) Any person who is dissatisfied with any judgment pronounced by any Small Claims Court in any action, proceeding or matter to which he is a party, may, except where such right is expressly disallowed, prefer an appeal therefrom to the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution in which such Small Claims Court is situated for any error in law or in fact.</p> <p>(2) Any person who is dissatisfied with any order made by any Small Claims Court in the course of any action, proceeding, or matter to which he is or seeks to be a party, may prefer an appeal to the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution in which such Small Claims Court is situated against such order for the correction of any error in law or in fact, with the leave of such High Court first had and obtained.</p> <p>(3) Any person who is dissatisfied with any order made by any Small Claims Court setting</p>

aside or refusing to set aside the judgment entered upon default in the course of any action, proceeding or matter to which he is, or seeks to be a party, may prefer an appeal to the High Court for the Province established by Article 154<sup>P</sup> of the Constitution in which such Small Claims Court is situated, for the correction of any error of law or fact, with the leave of such High Court first had and obtained.

(4) The provisions of Chapters LVIII, LIX, LX and LXI of the Civil Procedure Code (Chapter 101) with reference to appeal and the stay of execution pending appeal, shall apply so far as they are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Chapter.

(5) The Judge of every Small Claims Court shall conform to and execute all such judgments, orders, and decrees of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal or High Court for the Province established by Article 154<sup>P</sup> of the Constitution as shall be made and pronounced in any appeal, in like manner as any original judgment or order pronounced by the said Judge could or might have been executed.

Amicable  
settlements

29E. It shall be the duty of the Judge of the Small Claims Court by all lawful means to make every effort to induce the parties, before or during the trial, to arrive at a settlement where appropriate and if the parties agree to a settlement, the settlement shall be recorded and signed by the parties and a judgment made in accordance with the terms as settled.”.

**15.** Section 31 of the principal enactment is hereby amended by the substitution for the words “appeal therefrom to the Court of Appeal”, of the words and figures “appeal

Amendment of  
section 31 of the  
principal  
enactment

therefrom to the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution.”.

Insertion of new Chapter VII in the principal enactment

**16.** The following new Chapter is hereby inserted immediately after Chapter VI of the principal enactment and shall have effect as Chapter VII of that enactment: -

# “CHAPTER VII

## PRIMARY COURTS

Civil jurisdiction

32. (1) Every Primary Court shall, subject to the provisions of any other law, have original civil jurisdiction where the debt, damage, demand or claim does not exceed one thousand five hundred rupees and shall also have jurisdiction in respect of the enforcement of by-laws of local authorities and matters relating to the recovery of revenue of such local authorities.

(2) The Primary Courts shall have no jurisdiction in respect of the disputes referred to in the Fourth Schedule hereto, irrespective of the value of such claim.

Criminal jurisdiction

33. (1) Every Primary Court shall have exclusive original criminal jurisdiction in respect of such offences as may, by regulation, be prescribed by the Minister and the Minister may, in that regulation specify in the case of each offence the limitations, restrictions and conditions in respect of each such offence.

(2) The Primary Courts shall have sole and exclusive jurisdiction in respect of all offences alleged to have been committed in violation of the provisions of any enactment or any subsidiary legislation made thereunder, in respect of which jurisdiction is vested in such Court.

(3) Anything in this section shall not preclude a Magistrate from convicting and passing sentence on any person found guilty after trial of any offence specified in subsection (1).

Duty to  
conciliate  
disputes

34. (1) Where any civil proceeding or matter is instituted in a Primary Court, it shall be the duty of the Judge of that Primary Court to summon the parties to appear before him and wherever appropriate to make every effort to induce such parties to arrive at a settlement before proceeding to inquiry or trial. Where such parties agree to a settlement, such settlement shall be recorded and signed by the parties thereto and shall be entered as a decree of the said Primary Court and be enforceable, as a decree thereof.

(2) Where any criminal proceeding or matter is instituted in a Primary Court, it shall be the duty of the Judge of that Court to summon the parties concerned to appear before him and wherever appropriate to induce such parties to arrive at a settlement. Where such parties agree to a settlement, such settlement shall be recorded and signed by the parties concerned and notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any other law, the offence to which the proceeding or matter relates shall be compounded.

Appeals

35. (1) Any party aggrieved by any judgment, order, decree, conviction or sentence, entered or imposed after inquiry or trial by a Primary Court may, subject to any law and in accordance with any law, regulation or rule governing the procedure and manner for so appealing, prefer an appeal therefrom to the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution for any error in law or in fact:



Provided that where there is no such law, regulation or rule governing the procedure and manner for so appealing, the provisions relating to appeals from a Magistrate's Court shall apply to an appeal in a criminal matter or proceeding and the provisions relating to appeals from a District Court shall apply to an appeal in a civil matter or proceeding.

(2) No appeal shall lie from any judgment, order, decree, conviction or sentence entered or imposed by reason of a settlement of the dispute between the parties arrived at under the provisions of this Chapter.

Procedure in  
Primary  
Courts

36. All proceedings in a Primary Court shall be instituted and conducted as expeditiously as possible in accordance with such law as may be applicable thereto and, if there be no such law, in accordance with the provisions relating to summary procedure in the Civil Procedure Code (Chapter 101) in respect of a civil matter or proceeding and in accordance with the provisions relating to summary trials in a Magistrate's Court in respect of a criminal matter or proceeding.”.

Replacement of  
section 37 of the  
principal  
enactment

**17.** Section 37 of the principal enactment is hereby repealed and the following section is substituted therefor:-

“Right of  
appeal to the  
Supreme  
Court

37. There shall be a right of appeal to the Supreme Court in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and of any other law—

- (a) from any judgment or order of the Court of Appeal in any appeal from the High Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka or the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution; or

- (b) from any judgment or order of the High Court for the Province established by Article 154<sup>p</sup> of the Constitution in any appeal from the District Courts, the family Courts, the Small Claims Courts, the Magistrates' Courts or the Primary Courts.”.

**18.** Section 38 of the principal enactment is hereby amended follows:-

Amendment  
of section 38  
of the  
principal  
enactment

- (1) by the renumbering of that section as subsection (1) thereof ; and
- (2) by the addition immediately after the renumbered subsection (1) thereof, of the following subsection:-

“(2) Every Courts of First Instance other than the High Court for the Province established by Article 154<sup>p</sup> of the Constitution shall in all cases of appeal from such Courts of First Instance to the High Court for the Province established by Article 154<sup>p</sup> of the Constitution conform to and execute all such judgments, orders and decrees of the High Court for the Province established by Article 154<sup>p</sup> of the Constitution, as shall be made and pronounced in such appeal in like manner as though such judgment, order or decree was made and pronounced by such Courts of First Instance.”.

**19.** Section 45 of the principal enactment is hereby amended by the repeal of subsection (4) thereof and the substitution therefor, of the following: -

Amendment  
of section 45  
of the  
principal  
enactment

“(4) Every Justice of the Peace and every Unofficial Magistrate appointed under subsections (2 ) and (3 ) shall take and subscribe or make and subscribe an oath or affirmation of office in such form as may be determined by the Minister before a Judge of the High Court, District Judge, Judge of the Family Court, Judge of the Small Claims Court,

Magistrate, or Judge of the Primary Court and every such Judge is empowered and required, upon application in that behalf, to administer the same and to enter in the records of his court that the said oath or affirmation was duly administered and taken by him, and forthwith to transmit a copy of such entry to the Registrar of the Supreme Court to be entered in the records of that Court.”.

Amendment of section 49 of the principal enactment

**20.** Section 49 of the principal enactment is hereby amended by the repeal of the proviso to subsection (3) of that section and the substitution therefor, of the following :-

“Provided that in every other case some other Judge of the High Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka, the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution, the District Court, Family Court, Small Claims Court, Magistrate of the Magistrate’s Court and Judge of the Primary Court, as the case may be, of any adjoining zone, district or division shall have jurisdiction to hear, try and determine such action, prosecution, proceeding or matter.”.

Amendment of section 52 of the principal enactment

**21.** Section 52 of the principal enactment is hereby amended as follows:-

- (1) in subsection (1) thereof, by the substitution for the words “to the High Court and to each of the District Courts, Small Claims Courts and Magistrates’ Courts”, of the words and figures “to the High Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka, and to the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution and to each of the District Courts, Family Courts, Small Claims Courts, Magistrates’ Courts and Primary Courts”; and

- (2) in subsection (2) thereof, by the substitution for the words “Registrar of the High Court”, of the words and figures “Registrar of the High Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka and the Registrar of the High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution”.

**22.** Section 54 of the principal enactment is hereby amended in subsection (1) thereto by the substitution for the words “Where in any action instituted in a High Court, District Court or Small Claims Court, it appears-”, of the words “Where in any action instituted in a High Court of the Republic of Sri Lanka, High Court for the Province established by Article 154P of the Constitution, District Court, Family Court or Small Claims Court, it appears-”.

Amendment  
of section 54  
of the  
principal  
enactment

**23.** Section 55 of the principal enactment is hereby repealed and the following section is substituted therefor:-

Replacement of  
section 55 of the  
principal  
enactment

“Contempt  
proceedings

55. (1) Every District Court, Family Court, Small Claims Court, Magistrate’s Court and Primary Court shall, for the purpose of maintaining its proper authority and efficiency, have a special jurisdiction to take cognizance of, and to punish with the penalties in that behalf as hereinafter provided, every offence of contempt of court committed in the presence of the court itself and all offences which are committed in the course of any act or proceeding in the said court respectively, and which are declared by any law for the time being in force to be punishable as contempt of court.

(2) The following sentences of fines or imprisonment as the case may be, may be imposed on conviction for contempt by the following courts respectively, namely-

- (a) by a District Court and Family Court a fine not exceeding two thousand five hundred rupees or imprisonment, either simple or rigorous, for a period not exceeding two years;
- (b) by a Small Claims Court and Magistrate's Court – a fine not exceeding one thousand five hundred rupees or imprisonment either simple or rigorous, for a period not exceeding eighteen months; and
- (c) by a Primary Court – a fine not exceeding five hundred rupees or imprisonment, either simple or rigorous, for a period not exceeding three months.”.

Insertion of section 57 in the principal enactment

**24.** The following new section is hereby inserted immediately after section 56 of the principal enactment and shall have effect as section 57 of that enactment: -

“Where Judge of a Primary Court is not appointed

57. Where a Judge of a primary Court of any judicial division established under this Act has not been appointed, the Magistrate of such division shall be deemed for all purpose to be and shall exercise all jurisdiction of the Judge of the Primary Court of such division until a Judge of such Primary Court is appointed:

Provided that where a Judge of a Primary Court of such division is appointed, the Magistrate of such division may hear and determine all prosecutions, actions, proceedings or matters in which such Magistrate has commenced the recording of any evidence.”.

**25.** The principal enactment is hereby amended by the insertion immediately after the Second Schedule thereof, of the following new Schedules: -

Addition of the Third and Fourth Schedules to the principal enactment

“THIRD SCHEDULE

[Section 24(2)]

Enactments

- (1) Adoption of Children Ordinance (Chapter 61)
- (2) Births and Deaths Registration Act (Chapter 110)
- (3) Civil Procedure Code (Chapter 101)
- (4) Jaffna Matrimonial Rights and Inheritance Ordinance (Chapter 58)
- (5) Legitimacy Act, No. 3 of 1970
- (6) Marriage Registration Ordinance (Chapter 112)
- (7) Married Women’s Property Ordinance (Chapter 56)
- (8) Matrimonial Rights and Inheritance Ordinance (Chapter 57)

FOURTH SCHEDULE

[Section 32(2)]

Actions excluded from the jurisdiction of Primary Courts

- (1) Any action concerning an act or order purporting to be done or made by the State or concerning an act purporting to be done by any person by order of the State.
- (2) Any action concerning an act purporting to be done by any person in pursuance of a judgement or order of a court or of a judicial officer acting in the execution of his office.
- (3) Any action concerning any act or order purporting to be done or made by any officer of the State in his official capacity.
- (4) Any action for the partition or sale of immovable property under the law relating to partition for the time being in force.

- (5) Any action by a mortgagee of immovable property for the enforcement of the mortgage or for the sale of the property, or by a mortgagor of immovable property for the redemption of the mortgage.
- (6) Any action to restrain waste.
- (7) Any action to recover from a person to whom compensation has been paid under the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 460) or Land Reform Law No. 1 of 1972, the whole or any part of the compensation.
- (8) Any action for the specific performance or rescission of a contract or for damages for breach of contract.
- (9) Any action for the rectification or cancellation of an injunction.
- (10) Any action to obtain an injunction.
- (11) Any action relating to a trust including an action to make good out of the general estate of a deceased trustee the loss occasioned by a breach of trust, and any action by a co-trustee to enforce against the estate of a deceased trustee a claim for the contribution.
- (12) Any action for a declaratory decree including a decree for the declaration of title to land.
- (13) Any action for a property which the plaintiff has conveyed while insane or under other incapacity.
- (14) Any action to contest an award made by an arbitrator.
- (15) Any action upon a foreign judgement as defined in the Civil Procedure Code (Chapter 101) or upon a judgement obtained in any court in Sri Lanka.
- (16) Any action to compel a refund by a person to whom an executor or administrator has paid a legacy or distributed assets.
- (17) Any action for a legacy or for the whole or a share of a residue bequeathed by a testator or for the whole or a share of the property of an intestate.
- (18) Any action-

- (a) for a dissolution of partnership or for the winding up of the business of a partnership after its dissolution;
  - (b) for an account of partnership transactions; or
  - (c) for a balance of partnership-account.
- (19) Any action for an account of property administered under decree or order of any court.
- (20) Any other action for an account, including an action by a mortgagor, after the mortgage has been satisfied, to recover surplus collection received by the mortgagee, and any action for the profits on immovable property belonging to the plaintiff which has been wrongfully received by the defendant.
- (21) Any action for a general average loss or for salvage.
- (22) Any action for compensation in respect of collision between ships.
- (23) Any action on a policy of insurance or for the recovery of any premium paid under any such policy.
- (24) Any action for compensation or damages -
  - (a) for loss resulting from the death of a person caused by actionable wrong;
  - (b) for wrongful arrest;
  - (c) for malicious prosecution;
  - (d) for wrongful restraint or confinement;
  - (e) for defamation;
  - (f) for adultery or seduction;
  - (g) for breach of contract of betrothal or promise of marriage;
  - (h) for inducing a person to break a contract made with the plaintiff;
  - (i) for obstruction to or interference with the enjoyment of any servitude or the exercise of any right over property.



- (25) Any action by a Muslim for the recovery of Mahr.
- (26) Any action for the custody of a minor.
- (27) Any action for a divorce or a judicial separation.
- (28) Any action relating to maintenance, affiliation or adoption.
- (29) Any action for contribution by a sharer in joint property in respect of a payment made by him of money due from a co-sharer.
- (30) Any action by one of several joint mortgagors of immovable property for contribution in respect of money paid by him for the redemption of the mortgaged property.
- (31) Any action against the State or a local authority to recover money paid under protest in satisfaction of a claim made on account of any tax or rate or other levy.
- (32) Any action under the Companies Act, No. 7 of 2007 as amended from time to time.
- (33) Any action relating to trade marks, patents or copyrights under the Intellectual Property Act, No. 36 of 2003.
- (34) Any action founded on nuisance.
- (35) Any action for rent and ejectment and proceedings under the Rent Act, No. 7 of 1972.
- (36) Any action expressly or by implication excluded from the jurisdiction of Primary Courts by any written law (other than this Act) for the time being in force.”.

Addition of the  
Seventh  
Schedule to the  
principal  
enactment

**26.** The principal enactment is hereby amended by the addition immediately after the Sixth Schedule thereof, of the following new Schedule: -

“SEVENTH SCHEDULE      [Section 29A(2)]

Actions

1. Any action for the recovery of money (either as a debt or fee or payment or damage or demand including an action for the recovery of damages on accident or personal injury or in any other similar category);

2. Any action for the recovery of movable property;
3. Any action for a counterclaim in respect of any cause of action specified in items 1 and 2;
4. Any other jurisdiction as is conferred upon it by any other law.”.

**27.** In the event of any inconsistency between the Sinhala and Tamil texts of this Act, the Sinhala text shall prevail.

Sinhala text to  
prevail in case  
of inconsistency

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