

# **Schemes in Enhancing Efficiency of Land Adjudication Process in Sri Lanka under the Process of Title Registration**

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In case of a disaster, so as to recover the damaged land to its initial status, a proper land registration system which includes a legally enforced adjudication process must exist with a resourceful database as it will contribute to reduce a considerable amount of time in terms of reconstruction. Adjudication is the official determination of rights in land. It is the first stage in the registration of title to land in an area where the ownership of land is not officially known. Adjudication does not alter the existing rights or create new ones. It merely establishes what rights exist, by whom they are practiced and to what limitations they are subject to. A proper land registration system is a must for a proper adjudication procedure to exist. Land registration is primarily a process that records the rights to land and real estate and thereby provides the security of title that is needed if reforms and developments are to take place on a visible scale. Appropriate legislations, institutions, financial and human resources are compulsory for its implementation and maintenance. In 1998, the government of Sri Lanka introduced a title registration system in response to numerous problems faced by deed registration systems. But the land titling program has not yet achieved the expected progress even if titles are issued free of charge. This study relates schemes in enhancing efficiency of Land Adjudication process in Sri Lanka under the process of title registration so as to overcome the current latency and draw backs. Four government departments are involved in the process and the land settlement department is responsible for the adjudication process in substance. Thus, the process of land settlement department is broadly examined. The inadequateness of the Act to achieve its purposes is broadly discussed in this study hence it's directly related to the adjudication process. The act does not prescribe a basic framework for the adjudication process, to ensure that it is fair transparent and consistent. Findings show that the landowner has to submit claim forms claiming that a particular land parcel belongs to him or her as an initial step of adjudication. Without the submission of that claim form, the registration process cannot proceed further. One of the main operational problems is that all landowners do not submit the claim forms. Adjudication officers' role is inquired extensively while making suggestions for its drawbacks. This study furthermore amplifies best practices of land adjudication in comparison with other countries focused on legislations, acts and jurisdictions of relevant officers. Ultimately, it is found that the present adjudication procedure needs severe alterations so as to make the Bim Saviya program efficient and empower relevant officers' role legally. However, the existing system cannot make a significant difference unless the legislations and regulations are changed.

**Keywords:** Bim Saviya, Claim form, Land Adjudication, Land settlement Department, Title registration