

Evolution of Land Law Reforms in Sri Lanka

ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ඉඩම් නීති
ප්‍රතිසංස්කරණවල විකාශය

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Pre-Colonial Land Tenure System in Sri Lanka

- ▶ In pre-colonial era, land administration was governed by **customary laws**, **royal authority**, and **traditional tenure systems**, rather than by a formal system of registered title deeds. බ්‍රිතාන්‍යයන් පැමිණීමට පෙර, ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ඉඩම් පරිපාලනය විධිමත් ලෙස ලියාපදිංචි කරන ලද හිමිකම් ඔප්පු පද්ධතියක් මත නොව, සම්ප්‍රදායික නීති, රාජකීය අධිකාරිය සහ පාරම්පරික ඉඩම් භුක්ති ක්‍රම මත පදනම්ව සිදු විය.
- ▶ The **King** was regarded as the **paramount lord of the land**, exercising ultimate authority over land alienation and administration, while individuals and institutions enjoyed recognized customary and hereditary rights. රජු ඉඩම් සම්බන්ධයෙන් පරම අධිකාරී බලය ඇති ප්‍රධාන භාරකරු ලෙස සැලකුණු අතර, ඉඩම් පවරාදීම සහ පරිපාලනය සම්බන්ධයෙන් අවසාන බලතල ඔහු සතු විය. එසේ වුවද, පුද්ගලයන්ට සහ ආයතනවලට සම්ප්‍රදායිකව හා පරම්පරාවෙන් උරුම වූ පිළිගත් අයිතිවාසිකම් භුක්ති විඳීමට හැකි විය.

Major Types of Land Tenure- ඉඩම් වර්ග

▶ Paraveni Lands පරවේණි ඉඩම්-

- ▶ Privately owned hereditary lands. පවුලක හෝ පුද්ගලයෙකුගේ පරම්පරාවෙන් පරම්පරාවට උරුම වන පෞද්ගලික ඉඩම්
- ▶ Passed from one generation to another.
- ▶ Could generally be transferred or inherited according to customary law. මිලදී ගැනීම, විකිණීම, පරිත්‍යාග කිරීම සාමාන්‍යයෙන් කළ හැකිය

▶ Nindagama නින්දගම්

- ▶ Villages or lands granted by the King to chiefs or officials. රජු විසින් නිලධාරියෙකුට, ප්‍රභූවරයෙකුට හෝ ආයතනයකට සම්පූර්ණ ගමක් හෝ එහි ආදායම ප්‍රදානය කළ ඉඩම්
- ▶ Usually granted in recognition of loyal service.
- ▶ The grantee often enjoyed administrative authority and the revenue from the village. නිමිකරුට පරිපාලන බලතල හා ගමේ ආදායම භුක්තිවිඳී.

▶ Viharagama විහාරගම්

- ▶ Lands donated to Buddhist temples බෞද්ධ විහාරස්ථානවලට පූජා කළ ඉඩම්
- ▶ Used the revenue for the maintenance of temples and monks ලැබෙන ආදායම භික්ෂු සංඝයාගේ හා විහාරයේ අවශ්‍යතා සඳහා යොදන ලදී.

▶ Devalagama දේවාලගම්

- ▶ Lands dedicated to Hindu and Buddhist devales (shrines) දේවාලයේ ආගමික කටයුතු පවත්වාගෙන යාම සඳහා භාවිත විය
- ▶ Income was used for religious ceremonies and temple administration

▶ Service Tenure Lands රාජකාරි ඉඩම්

- ▶ Lands held in return for services rendered to the King රජයට හෝ රාජ්‍යයට සේවය කිරීමේ කොන්දේසිය මත හුක්කි විඳින ඉඩම්
- ▶ Failure to perform the required service could result in loss of the land

▶ Baddhegama බද්දේගම

- ▶ The occupier (tenant) was required to pay rent or tribute to the King or the landowner භුක්තිකරු රජයට හෝ හිමිකරුට බද්ද ගෙවයි
- ▶ Although the occupier had the right to possess and cultivate the land, absolute ownership remained with the Crown or the lawful owner පූර්ණ හිමිකාරිත්වය නොමැතිව භාවිතා කිරීමේ අයිතිය පවතී

▶ Royal (Crown) Lands

- ▶ Lands directly controlled by the King රජුගේ සෘජු පාලනය යටතේ තිබූ ඉඩම්
- ▶ Included forests, uncultivated lands, royal estates, and reserved lands
- ▶ Could be granted or resumed by the King

Transition to Colonial Land Policy

- ▶ The British introduced a completely different concept of land ownership based on documentary proof of title. බ්‍රිතාන්‍යයන්, සම්ප්‍රදායික භුක්ති අයිතිය වෙනුවට, ලිඛිත හා නීත්‍යානුකූල හිමිකම් ලේඛන මගින් ඉඩම් අයිතිය තහවුරු කළ යුතු නව ඉඩම් හිමිකාරිත්ව සංකල්පයක් හඳුන්වා දෙන ලදී
- ▶ It marked a shift from a customary and service-based land system to a documentary title and State ownership system. සම්ප්‍රදායික නීති සහ රාජකාරි මත පදනම් වූ ඉඩම් ක්‍රමයකින්, ලිඛිත හිමිකම් ලේඛන සහ රාජ්‍ය හිමිකාරිත්වය මත පදනම් වූ ඉඩම් පද්ධතියක් කරා මූලික පරිවර්තනයක් සිදු විය

Transition.....

- ▶ Pre-Colonial Land Policy Before British rule,

land administration was based on:

- ▶ Customary laws and traditions.
- ▶ Royal authority over land.
- ▶ Hereditary and customary land rights.
- ▶ Rajakariya (service tenure) obligations.
- ▶ Royal grants (Sannas) issued by the King.

Land rights were generally recognized through custom, long possession, and royal grants, rather than through registered title deeds.

Transition.....

► **British Colonial Objectives**

After gaining control of the Kandyan Kingdom in 1815, the British sought to:

- Establish legal certainty over land ownership.
- Identify lands belonging to the Crown.
- Increase government revenue.
- Acquire land for plantation agriculture, particularly coffee and later tea.
- Replace customary tenure with a uniform legal system.

The Policy Shift

The British introduced several important legal changes;

- ▶ **Documentary Title** - Land ownership had to be supported by legally acceptable documentary evidence rather than customary possession alone.
- ▶ **Crown Ownership** - Land that could not be proved to be privately owned was presumed to belong to the Crown
- ▶ **State Control** - The Government became responsible for surveying, registering, granting, leasing, and administering land

Consequences

► Positive Effects

- Created a systematic land administration system.
- Improved land surveys and boundary demarcation.
- Facilitated public infrastructure and agricultural development.
- Established the legal basis for modern State land administration.

Consequences

► Negative Effects

- Reduced recognition of customary land rights.
- Large areas traditionally occupied by local communities became Crown lands.
- Contributed to landlessness and displacement in some rural communities.

Key Legislation

The transition was implemented through a series of laws:

- ▶ Crown Lands Encroachments Ordinance No. 12 of 1840 - Protected Crown lands and enabled the eviction of unauthorized occupants.
- ▶ Waste Lands Ordinance No. 1 of 1897 - Declared many uncultivated lands to be Crown lands.
- ▶ Land Settlement Ordinance No. 20 of 1931 - Investigated and determined ownership and boundaries.
- ▶ Land Development Ordinance No. 19 of 1935 - Introduced permits and grants for State land.
- ▶ State Lands Ordinance No. 8 of 1947 - Established a comprehensive legal framework for the administration of State lands.

Ordinance No. 12 of 1840 - Crown Land Encroachment Ordinance

Objectives

- ▶ To protect Crown lands from illegal occupation and encroachment. රජයේ ඉඩම් ආරක්ෂා කිරීම සහ අනවසර අල්ලාගැනීම් වැළැක්වීම
- ▶ To establish the legal authority of the Crown over lands for which no lawful private title could be proven. පුද්ගලයෙකුට තම ඉඩමේ අයිතිය නීත්‍යානුකූලව ඔප්පු කළ නොහැකි නම්, එම ඉඩම රජයේ ඉඩමක් ලෙස සැලකීමට නීතිමය පදනමක් සැපයීම
- ▶ To provide a legal mechanism for the removal of unauthorized occupants from Crown lands. රජයේ ඉඩම් අනවසරයෙන් අල්ලාගෙන සිටින පුද්ගලයන් ඉවත් කිරීම සඳහා බලය ලබාදීම.
- ▶ To strengthen the colonial government's control over land administration and land resources. යටත් විජිත ආණ්ඩුවේ ඉඩම් පරිපාලනය ශක්තිමත් කිරීම,
- ▶ To facilitate the allocation of Crown lands for economic development, particularly plantation agriculture. වාණිජ කෘෂිකර්මාන්තය සඳහා විශාල ඉඩම් ප්‍රමාණයක් ලබාගැනීමට පහසුකම් සැලසීම.

Impact on Land Administration

- ▶ Expanded the extent of Crown lands under government control. විශාල භූමි ප්‍රමාණයක් රජයේ ඉඩම් ලෙස ප්‍රකාශයට පත් කිරීමට හැකි විය.
- ▶ Weakened the recognition of **customary and traditional land tenure systems**. සාම්ප්‍රදායික සිංහල ඉඩම් අයිතිවාසිකම් බොහෝ අවස්ථාවල නීතිමය පිළිගැනීම අහිමි විය
- ▶ State became the largest land owner in Sri Lanka. රාජ්‍යය ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ විශාලතම ඉඩම් හිමිකරු බවට පත්වීමේ නීතිමය පදනම මෙම ආඥාපනතෙන් ගත් තීරණය විය.
- ▶ Laid the legal foundation for subsequent land legislation and State land administration. පසුව ඇතිවූ අනුපනත් වලටද නීතිමය පදනම සකස් වීම

Critical Perspective

- ▶ The Ordinance has been widely criticized for undermining customary land rights by requiring proof of legal title according to colonial legal standards. දේශීය සම්ප්‍රදායික අයිතිවාසිකම් බ්‍රිතාන්‍ය නීතිමය ප්‍රමිතියෙන් මැනීම නිසා, බොහෝ ගම්වැසියන් පරම්පරා ගණනාවක් භාවිත කළ ඉඩම් පවා රජයේ ඉඩම් ලෙස ප්‍රකාශ කිරීමට හැකි වූ බවයි.
- ▶ As a result, many lands traditionally occupied by local communities were treated as Crown lands, facilitating colonial land acquisition and plantation expansion.

Current Status

- ▶ Crown Lands Encroachments Ordinance No. 12 of 1840 (now State Lands Encroachments Ordinance) is still legally valid as it is not repealed.
- ▶ In modern Sri Lankan land administration practice, the main law used for ejecting unauthorized occupants is State Lands (Recovery of Possession) Act No. 7 of 1979.

Ordinance No. 3 of 1876 - Land Acquisition Ordinance

Background

Before 1876:

- ▶ The British Government already exercised strong authority over Crown lands.
- ▶ However, there was no comprehensive procedure for taking privately owned lands for public projects.
- ▶ With colonial economic expansion, the Government needed land for roads, railways, irrigation works, public buildings, administrative purposes, plantation infrastructure.
- ▶ Therefore, a compulsory acquisition mechanism was required

Objectives

- ▶ To provide legal authority for acquisition of private land
- ▶ To facilitate public infrastructure development
- ▶ To establish a uniform acquisition procedure
- ▶ To balance State development needs with private property rights
- ▶ To ensure secure transfer of acquired land to the State without any dispute

Impact on Land Administration

- ▶ Established a Formal System of Compulsory Acquisition
- ▶ Strengthened State Authority Over Private Lands
- ▶ Introduced Compensation-Based Land Acquisition
- ▶ Removed barriers of ownership for development projects

Critical Perspectives

- ▶ The Ordinance significantly expanded the power of the colonial State to take privately own lands.
- ▶ The decision on what constituted a "public purpose" was largely controlled by the colonial administration.

Ordinance No. 4 of 1887 - Lands Resumption Ordinance

Objectives

- ▶ To enable the Government to resume (taking back) Crown lands that had been abandoned by their owners.
- ▶ To prevent State lands from remaining idle or unproductive.
- ▶ To ensure the efficient utilization of State land.
- ▶ To strengthen the administration and management of Crown lands.

Impact on Land Administration

- ▶ Strengthened Government Control over Alienated Crown Lands
 - ▶ Enabled the Government to resume Crown lands that had been granted but were abandoned or where the legal conditions for resumption were satisfied.
 - ▶ Reinforced the principle that certain grants of Crown land remained subject to Government control.
- ▶ Promoted Productive Use of Land
 - ▶ Discouraged grantees from leaving land idle or abandoned.
 - ▶ Encouraged the cultivation and productive utilization of State lands.
 - ▶ Contributed to more efficient administration of State land resources

Impacts...

- ▶ Supported Agricultural and Economic Development
 - ▶ Resumed lands could be reallocated for agriculture, settlement, or other development activities
- ▶ Influenced Later State Land Policies
 - ▶ Reinforced the concept that alienated State land could, in certain circumstances, revert to the Government.
 - ▶ Influenced later legislation such as the Land Development Ordinance, 1935 and the State Lands Ordinance, 1947, which continued to regulate the alienation and management of State lands.

Critical perspective

- ▶ The Lands Resumption Ordinance (1887), on the other hand, mainly dealt with lands that had already been alienated by the Crown. Therefore, the criticism is more limited and focuses on how the Government exercised its resumption powers rather than on the legitimacy of State ownership itself.

Current Status

- ▶ Still a valid law as it has not been repealed. But today it is rarely used.
- ▶ In modern land administration, this Ordinance is used far less frequently than laws such as: the State Lands Ordinance (1947) and the Land Development Ordinance (1935),

Ordinance No. 1 of 1897-Waste Lands Ordinance

Objectives

- ▶ To provide a legal mechanism for the identification and settlement of claims relating to waste, forest, unoccupied, and uncultivated lands.
- ▶ To declare lands without proven private ownership as Crown lands.
- ▶ To strengthen the administration and control of State lands.

Impacts on Land Administration

- ▶ Expanded the legal basis for State ownership over unclaimed lands.
- ▶ Strengthened land surveys and settlement procedures.
- ▶ Increased Government control over lands classified as waste or uncultivated.
- ▶ Facilitated the allocation of land for plantation and economic development.

Critical Perspective

- ▶ The Ordinance was criticized because many lands traditionally used by village communities (such as chena lands and commons) could be treated as Crown lands when customary users could not prove ownership according to colonial legal standards,
- ▶ It further shifted Sri Lanka's land system from customary rights towards a system based on documentary proof and State claims

Current Status

- ▶ The Waste Lands Ordinance No. 1 of 1897 was later replaced/repealed through the Land Settlement Ordinance No. 20 of 1931, which introduced a more comprehensive land settlement process.

Ordinance No. 20 of 1931 - Land Settlement Ordinance

Objectives

- ▶ The earlier laws (especially the Waste Lands Ordinance of 1897) created many disputes because the Government claimed lands where private ownership could not be proved. The Land Settlement Ordinance introduced a more systematic mechanism to investigate claims and determine whether land belonged to the State, or private individuals/institutions.
 - ▶ To investigate and settle competing claims to land.
 - ▶ To determine State and private ownership of land.
 - ▶ To establish legally recognized titles through settlement orders.

Impacts on Land Administration

- ▶ Introduced a systematic land settlement process.
- ▶ Strengthened land records and ownership determination.
- ▶ Created a foundation for modern land registration and State land administration.

Critical Perspective

- ▶ Improved legal certainty of ownership.
- ▶ it continued the colonial approach of requiring legal proof of title, which could disadvantage persons relying mainly on customary occupation.

Ordinance No.19 of 1935 - Land Development Ordinance

Objectives

- ▶ After the Land Settlement process, large areas of land were confirmed as State lands. The colonial Government needed a system to;
 - ▶ Alienate state lands (through permits & grants)
 - ▶ Settlement of landless people (promote agricultural colonization schemes)
 - ▶ Regulation of State land ownership (control the transfer, inheritance, and use of lands granted by the State)
 - ▶ Development and productive use of State lands (bring State lands into agricultural production)

Impact on Land Administration

- ▶ Established a System for State Land Alienation
 - ▶ Introduced the legal framework for granting State lands to citizens.
 - ▶ Created the distinction between Permit holders & Grantees
- ▶ Created a New Form of Land Tenure
 - ▶ Unlike colonial freehold ownership, many State lands were provided under controlled conditions.
 - ▶ Rights were granted subject to restrictions on transfer and use.
- ▶ Supported Agricultural Development
 - ▶ Enabled settlement schemes and agricultural expansion.
 - ▶ Became the legal basis for many colonization schemes in Sri Lanka.
- ▶ Strengthened State Role in Land Management
 - ▶ The State remained the ultimate authority over lands alienated under the Ordinance.

Critical Perspectives

► Positive View

- Helped distribute State lands to landless communities.
- Supported rural development and agricultural production.
- Created an organized system for State land administration.

► Critical View

- The State retained significant control over land granted under the Ordinance.
- Restrictions on transfer and inheritance limited the freedom of landholders.
- Some settlement schemes created social and environmental issues, including displacement and conflicts over land use.

Ordinance No. 8 of 1947 - Crown Land Ordinance

Objectives

- ▶ Unlike the earlier ordinances, which dealt with specific issues such as encroachments, abandoned lands, or land settlement, the 1947 Ordinance created a comprehensive legal framework for the administration of Crown lands.
 - ▶ To consolidate the law relating to Crown lands.
 - ▶ To regulate the grant, sale, lease, exchange, and other disposition of Crown lands.
 - ▶ To establish clear administrative powers over Crown lands.

Impact on Land Administration

- ▶ Standardized the administration of Crown lands throughout the country.
- ▶ Defined the powers of the Governor (now exercised by the President and other authorities under the Constitution and subsequent legislation).
- ▶ Became the principal law governing State land administration after independence

Critical Perspective

- ▶ Centralized extensive powers over State land in the Government.
- ▶ Continued the colonial model of centralized State control over public lands.
- ▶ After independence, its provisions had to be interpreted alongside the Constitution and later land laws.

Land Reform Law No. 1 of 1972

Background

By the early 1970s:

- ▶ Large plantations and agricultural estates were concentrated in the hands of a relatively small number of private owners and companies.
- ▶ There was growing concern about unequal land distribution, rural poverty, and underutilization of agricultural land.
- ▶ The Government adopted a socialist-oriented policy aimed at redistributing land and increasing agricultural productivity.

Objectives

The long title and section 2 of the Law identify its principal objectives:

- ▶ Establish the Land Reform Commission (LRC).
- ▶ Impose a ceiling on private ownership of agricultural land.
- ▶ Vest agricultural land held in excess of the ceiling in the Commission.
- ▶ Redistribute or utilize such land to increase productivity and employment.
- ▶ Provide compensation to persons whose excess lands were taken.

Impact on Land Administration

- ▶ Reduced concentration of agricultural land ownership.
- ▶ Created the Land Reform Commission as a major State institution.
- ▶ Increased Government control over large agricultural estates.
- ▶ Enabled redistribution and State management of excess agricultural lands.
- ▶ The reform changed the Government's role:
 - ▶ Before 1972 - Mainly administered State lands.
 - ▶ After 1972 - Also became a major owner and manager of former private agricultural lands

Critical Perspective

- ▶ Some redistributed lands were not utilized as efficiently as expected.
- ▶ State management of acquired estates did not always achieve the intended productivity gains.
- ▶ The reform reduced large private agricultural investments in certain sectors.
- ▶ Administrative challenges affected implementation and redistribution

Abolition of Fideicommissa and Entails

Act No. 20 of 1972

► What is Fideicommissa?

A person (the first beneficiary) receives land, but does not have complete freedom to dispose of it because the law requires that the property ultimately passes to another person (the substitute beneficiary).

Example: A father leaves an estate to his son, but with a condition that the son cannot sell it and that the estate must pass to the son's children after his death.

The son has the right to enjoy the property, but his ownership is restricted.

What is Entail

An entail (also called a fee tail) is a legal arrangement where ownership of land is restricted to a particular line of heirs, usually descendants of the original owner.

The purpose was to keep the property within a family and prevent the owner from freely selling or transferring it outside that line.

Example:

A landowner creates an entail: “ I leave this estate to my son and his male descendants forever.”

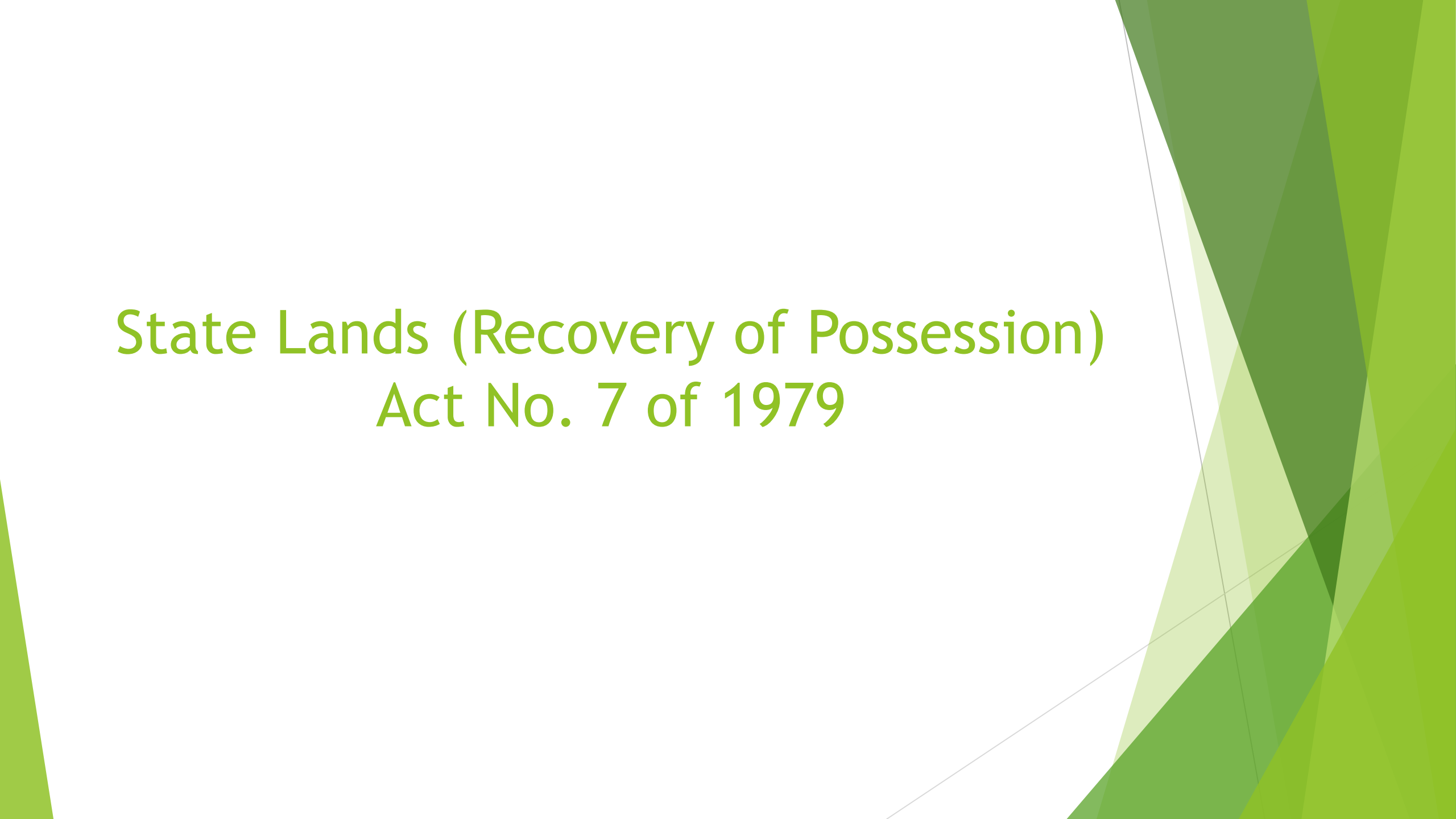
Meaning: The son can use and enjoy the land. But he cannot freely sell it to outsiders. After his death, the land must pass to the next generation specified by the entail. The land is effectively "locked" within that family line.

Objectives

- ▶ To abolish fideicommissa, entails, settlements and restraints on alienation of property.
- ▶ To remove restrictions preventing landowners from freely disposing of their property.
- ▶ To convert restricted hereditary interests into more absolute ownership rights.
- ▶ To modernize Sri Lanka's property ownership system.

Impact on Land Administration

- ▶ Strengthened the concept of absolute ownership.
- ▶ Increased the transferability of land.
- ▶ Reduced traditional restrictions on sale, mortgage, and transfer of inherited lands.
- ▶ Facilitated modern land transactions and registration.

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State Lands (Recovery of Possession) Act No. 7 of 1979

Objective

- ▶ Although the State Lands Encroachments Ordinance and the State Lands Ordinance were still in force, the procedures for recovering possession of State land from unauthorized occupants were often slow and dependent on ordinary court proceedings.
 - ▶ To provide a speedy procedure for recovering possession of State lands.
 - ▶ To remove unauthorized occupants from State lands.
 - ▶ To protect State lands from unlawful occupation.

Impacts on Land Administration

- ▶ Simplified and expedited the recovery process.
- ▶ Strengthened the powers of the Government and District Secretaries in recovering State lands.
- ▶ Became the principal law used today for recovering possession of State lands.

Critical Perspective

- ▶ Improved the efficiency of State land administration.
- ▶ However, it has also attracted criticism because the expedited procedure may limit procedural safeguards for occupants, making it important that statutory requirements and principles of natural justice are strictly observed.

Registration of Title Act No. 21 of 1998 (Bim Saviya)

Background

- ▶ Before this Act, Sri Lanka mainly followed a Deeds Registration System under the Registration of Documents Ordinance No. 23 of 1927.
- ▶ Under the deeds system:
 - ▶ A deed is registered as evidence of a transaction.
 - ▶ The Land Registry records the document.
 - ▶ However, registration itself does not conclusively guarantee ownership.
 - ▶ A person purchasing land has to examine the historical chain of deeds (often called title search) to confirm ownership.
- ▶ Problems with this system included:
 - ▶ uncertainty regarding ownership,
 - ▶ forged or multiple deeds,
 - ▶ boundary disputes,

Objectives

- ▶ To establish a guaranteed title system
 - ▶ Determine the true owner of a land parcel.
 - ▶ Issue a government-backed Title Certificate.
- ▶ To create accurate land records
 - ▶ Each land parcel receives:
 - ▶ a unique identification number,
 - ▶ cadastral map,
 - ▶ recorded ownership details.
- ▶ 3. Reduce land disputes
 - ▶ Provide certainty regarding:
 - ▶ ownership,
 - ▶ boundaries,
 - ▶ interests affecting the land..

Impact on Land Administration

- ▶ Shift from "deed-based ownership" to "title-based ownership"
- ▶ Stronger ownership certainty
 - ▶ State-guaranteed title.
 - ▶ Reduced uncertainty in land transactions.
- ▶ Modern land information management
 - ▶ Integration of cadastral maps and ownership information.
 - ▶ Supports digital land administration
- ▶ Economic benefitsClear titles can improve access to credit and investment

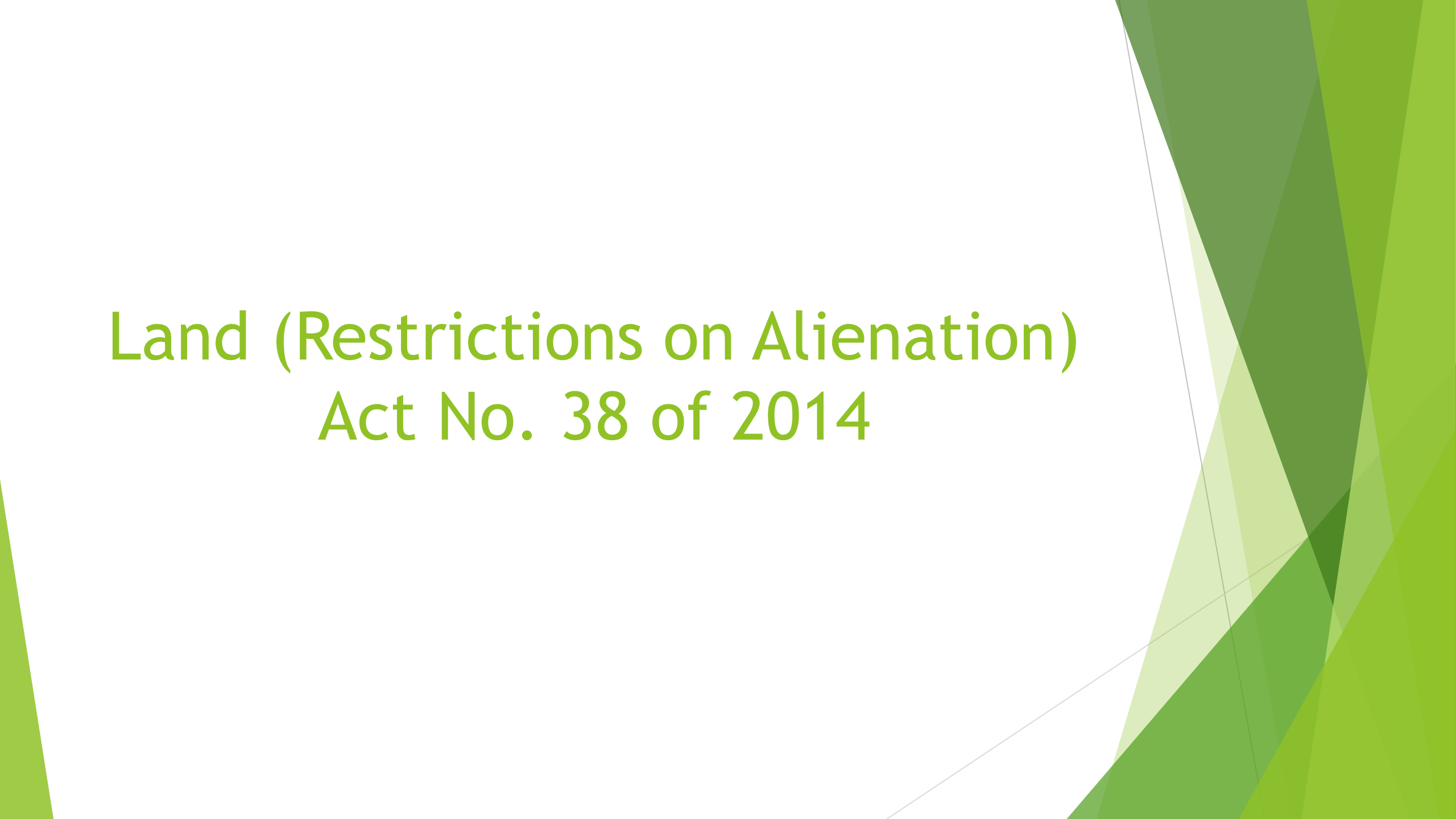
Critical Perspective

► Positive view

- Modernized Sri Lanka's land registration system.
- Improved security of ownership.
- Reduced fraud and disputes.

► Criticism / Challenges

- Implementation has been slow compared with the size of the country.
- Converting existing deed-based lands into title registration requires extensive investigation.
- Errors in surveys or title investigations can create new disputes.
- Some landowners are reluctant to move from familiar deeds to the new system

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Land (Restrictions on Alienation) Act No. 38 of 2014

Background

- ▶ Before 2014, foreign individuals and companies could, in certain circumstances, purchase land in Sri Lanka, subject to the laws then in force.
- ▶ The Government became concerned about increasing foreign ownership of land and its potential implications for national interests and land policy.

Objectives

- ▶ To restrict the transfer of land to foreigners.
- ▶ To safeguard ownership of land by Sri Lankan citizens and institutions.
- ▶ To regulate foreign participation in land ownership.
- ▶ To protect land as a strategic national resource.

Impact on Land Administration

- ▶ Land Registries had to verify whether transactions complied with the Act before registration.
- ▶ Lawyers, notaries, and registrars had to examine the status of purchasers.
- ▶ Strengthened regulatory oversight of land transfers involving foreign interests.
- ▶ Reinforced the policy that land is a national resource requiring State protection.

Critical Perspectives

- ▶ Some investors argued that the restrictions discouraged foreign direct investment.
- ▶ The compliance requirements added complexity to conveyancing and land registration.
- ▶ Some commentators viewed the restrictions as reducing flexibility in the real estate market.

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