



Labour Code of Sri Lanka

Labour Legislation

of the

Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Consolidated and Updated

up to

31st Day of December 2009

Ministry of Labour Relations and Productivity Promotion

Sri Lanka

2010

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Ministry of Labour Relations and Productivity Promotion

Labour Secretariat,
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FOREWORD

The first labour legislation of Sri Lanka was enacted in mid 1840's, and since then it has evolved over the years providing legal protection to workers in a wide spectrum of areas of economic and social activity in the world of work. Although, the principle of such legislation since their enactment has not been changed, depending on the needs of different periods of time, the laws were amended and subsidiary legislation were framed.

One of the major constraints encountered by the labour administration, the labour practitioners, investors and students and a host of others who are interested on the issue of labour has been the difficulty of having access to the complete and updated labour enactments and their subsidiary legislation. Addressing this issue, the Ministry of Labour and Employment (the then Ministry in-charge of the subject of Labour) published the first "Labour Code of Sri Lanka" in 2004. This volume had a high demand and in no time the copies were over.

The present consolidated volume is the second print of Labour Code of Sri Lanka. This Volume has been updated up to 31st December 2009, and presented in a manner for easy reference. The Legislation has been classified under seven chapters based on seven broad aspects of Labour issues. The seven chapters deal with Labour Relations; Terms and Conditions of Employment; Employment of Women Young Persons and Children; Occupational Safety and Health; Social Security; and a chapter on Miscellaneous Legislation which embodies legislation enacted pertaining to Indian Immigrant Labour in the plantations.

I acknowledge with appreciation the services of the resource persons who were responsible for the reviewing, updating, editing and proof reading of the text of the legislation. (Please see the page on "Acknowledgements" for the names of the resource persons). I also wish to express our sincere gratitude, and acknowledge the services and unstinting support received from Mrs. P.I. Samarasinghe, Deputy Legal Draftsman of the Department of Legal Draftsman in the revision, up-dating, proof reading and overall monitoring through out the process of publishing the Labour Code of Sri Lanka. Her experience and the professional approach were the key in protecting the quality and appearance of a legal document.

I am grateful for the contributions made by the Commissioner General of Labour and his staff, especially, Mrs. G.L.S. Sooriyarachchi, former Chief Librarian of the Department of Labour for the trouble she had taken to find all necessary legislation, their amendments and the subsidiary legislation, and Mrs D.A.Pemawathie, Deputy Commissioner of Labour of the Women and Children's Affairs Division of the Department of Labour in coordinating the consolidation of this volume on behalf of the Ministry.

Finally, I wish to place on record my appreciation of the contributions made by Mr. Prem Dissanayake of Messrs Fast Ads for undertaking the printing of the Labour Code of Sri Lanka.

I hope that the Labour Code of Sri Lanka will be an invaluable repository to trade unionists, employers, labour administrators, lawyers, academics, students and all others interested in labour.

Mahinda Madihahewa

Secretary

Ministry of Labour Relations and Productivity Promotion

Colombo 5

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