



Contribution of the Keynote Speaker

Legal Research in Sri Lanka- Legal Professionals and Academics

Legal research lies at the heart of legal scholarship and the advancement of justice. In this address, Dr. J. M. Swaminathan draws upon over six decades of distinguished professional and academic experience to examine the evolution of legal research and its relationship to legal scholarship in Sri Lanka. The discussion traces the development of legal education and the legal profession from the early twentieth century to the present, reflecting on how legal research has shaped both legal thought and practice. It identifies the principal forms of legal research: qualitative doctrinal and non-doctrinal studies, empirical and policy-oriented analysis, law-in-context approaches, and comparative and historical perspectives, and explains their respective contributions to law reform and the wider understanding of law as a social institution.

Dr. Swaminathan pays particular attention to the role of doctrinal legal research in advancing subject areas such as intellectual property law, illustrating this through case analysis and discussion of legal reform. The address also explores the increasing significance of interdisciplinary and sociological approaches to legal inquiry, underscoring the importance of strengthening the culture of rigorous, context-sensitive research among Sri Lankan legal professionals and academics.

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