

Tesawalamai Pre-emption Ordinance (1947)

The independent-era statute that retained Thesawalamai pre-emption rights for the Tamils of the Northern Province — applied by Sri Lankan district courts to the present day, evidencing unbroken legal continuity.

The 1947 Ordinance is the cleanest piece of statutory evidence that Tamil personal law did not stop at independence. It was retained by an Act of the Ceylon Parliament, has never been repealed, and continues to be applied — quietly — by district courts in the Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya and Mannar judicial circuits.

§1 Why it sits in /case

Continuity is one of the harder things to evidence — and pre-emption litigation supplies that evidence in a form courts already accept. The 1806 Regulation, the 1947 Ordinance, the 1954 Tambiah treatise and post-1983 land-rights pressures form a single, cited chain.

Sources

- Tesawalamai Pre-emption Ordinance 1947 (as amended).
- Regulation No. 18 of 1806 — British codification of Thesawalamai.
- H.W. Tambiah — Laws and Customs of the Tamils of Jaffna (1954).

What this is not

- This article does not campaign to restore Thesawalamai content.
- This article does not adjudicate gender-equality reform of personal laws — that is Magalir Avai's remit.