

**Work from home, now and forevermore: the way forward for the new normal
employment rights in Sri Lanka**

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The technological advancement coupled with the safety measures adopted to combat the global pandemic had geared to experience many unprecedented working strategies within the employment sphere. Within which the concept of, “Work from Home” (WFH) or “Remote working” plays a significant role. It is significant in the sense that many of the organizations have travelled through a one way door where they cannot return back to the conventional work settings, as they have allowed their employees to work remotely and permanently, while setting their terms for the future. The solidity to this has been provided by the technologically developed labour platforms. Yet remote working is not a very novel concept to the entire world of work but it is an unprecedented legal arrangement to the Sri Lankan employment regime, as it does not hold any express specifications to legal recognition. On the backdrop of having no express legal recognition to the new normal practices of remote working, the paper attempts to critically evaluate the extent to which the existing legal regime could be applied to recognize the employment status of remote home workers and to what extent their employment rights could be availed under the existing laws. While the research findings emphasize that certain existing legal provisions could stand for a constructive protection to the rights of home workers, it is predominant that the existing laws enacted in a phase where remote working and the current advancement of digital labour markets were unforeseen will not stand for a wider protection. Thus, the paper stresses for the need of a technological based legislation and thereby recommends for a legal reform. Also, for a better outreach, the paper recommends for the ratification of the ILO’s Home Work Convention 1996.

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