

CHAPTER V

**CITIZENSHIP**

**51.** (1) There shall be one status of citizenship known as “the status of a citizen of Sri Lanka”.

Citizenship of Sri Lanka.

(2) A citizen of Sri Lanka shall for all purposes be described only as a “citizen of Sri Lanka”, whether such person became entitled to citizenship by descent or by virtue of registration in accordance with the law relating to citizenship or by the operation of any law or by the operation of paragraph (6) of this Article.

(3) No distinction shall be drawn between citizens of Sri Lanka for any purpose by reference to the mode of acquisition of such status, as to whether acquired by descent or by virtue of registration or by the operation of any law or by the operation of paragraph (6) of this Article.

(4) No citizen of Sri Lanka shall be deprived of or cease to hold the status of a citizen of Sri Lanka, except under and by virtue of the provisions of sections 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24 of the Citizenship Act.

(5) Every person who at the commencement of the Constitution was a citizen of Sri Lanka, whether by descent or by virtue of registration in accordance with any law relating to citizenship or by the operation of any law or by the operation of paragraph (6) of this Article, shall be entitled to the status and to the rights of a citizen of Sri Lanka as provided in the preceding provisions of this Article.

(6) Every person who –

(a) at the commencement of the Constitution, has been a permanent and lawful resident of the Republic from October 30, 1964 and who was not a citizen of any country on that date ; or

(b) being a permanent and lawful resident of the Republic at the commencement of the Constitution, is a descendant of any person who was a permanent and lawful resident of the Republic on October 30, 1964 and who was not a citizen of any country on that date,

shall have the status of citizen of Sri Lanka with effect from the date of the commencement of the Constitution and the provisions of sections 3, 4, 5 and 6 of, and Schedules A and B to, the Grant of Citizenship to Stateless Persons (Special Provisions) Act, No. 39 of 1988 shall, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to, and in relation to, any such persons.

(7) The provisions of all existing written law relating to citizenship and all other existing written laws wherein reference is made to citizenship shall be read subject to the preceding provisions of this Article.