

**A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE LEGAL  
FRAMEWORK OF CYBER CRIME IN SRI LANKA**

By

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**PERMANENT REFERENCE**

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## ABSTRACT

The existing legal framework governing the cyber-crime consist of number of legislations, however Computer Crimes Act No.24 of 2007 is the main piece of legislation in which the main objective is to criminalise cyber-crimes as prior to this Act there were no laws to prosecute those crimes. All individuals of the society have become vulnerable to cyber-crimes with the increased use of the cyber space as an essential tool in our day to day lives. Even though the law is yet to be evolved, the criminal offences relating to Cyber space are notably increased. According to statistics from Sri Lanka CERT, the number of cybercrimes, particularly social media-related crimes, has increased in Sri Lanka. In contrast, the Global Cyber security Index ranks the United Kingdom in 2<sup>nd</sup> place, while Sri Lanka is ranked 83<sup>rd</sup>. Therefore, a comparative analysis was conducted between Sri Lankan and UK laws to identify the weaknesses in Sri Lanka's legal framework relating to cyber-crimes. By comparing the two legal frameworks, this research aimed to identify the gaps and shortcomings in Sri Lanka's laws pertaining to cybercrimes. Introducing a new set of offenses by criminalizing certain computer crimes was identified as a merit, while failure to address the increasing number of social media-related crimes by introducing new laws relating to them was identified as a defect. This analysis helps shed light on the areas that require improvement and highlights the importance of addressing these weaknesses to enhance legal Framework relating to cyber-crimes in Sri Lanka. Several necessary amendments were suggested, notably the criminalization of certain offenses related to social media as an immediate step. Finally, the responsibility, which should be equally borne by the government, law enforcement authorities, cyber service providers, and the public at large, is emphasized thoroughly.

**Key words-** Cyber-crime, Legal System, Strengths and weaknesses of the existing law