

## **Protecting Folklore Using the Intellectual Property Act of Sri Lanka**

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Folklore has been defined as a living phenomenon “which evolves over time”: a basic element of our culture which reflects human culture. As it reflects human spirit it is also a vignette to a community’s cultural and social identity. The Cambridge International Dictionary of English language defines folklore as traditional stories and the culture of a group of people. It is one single all embracing definition. However,folkloreof every ethnic group is its identity. Folklore is actually a compendium of the genius of mankind and artistic nature. NIPO defines folklore in an Act,highlighting “access”- meaninggathering, procurement,revelation, possession or use of traditional knowledge for scientific commercial or industrial purposes. However, many developing countries complain about the loss of copyright and patent to the developed world who exploit the traditional knowledge and folklore of these countries unauthorized. Sri Lankan indigenous motifs are used to sell everything from bangles, rings, honey, flower buckets, and necklaces. Indigenous art has been reproduced and used in advertising and marketing. Thus we observethese local designs often in new contexts. The intention of this study, therefore, is to examine the existing framework of the protection of folklore in the context of intellectual property rights, particular from the perspective of the Sri Lankan experience.

**Key word:** Folklore in Sri Lanka, Cultural Identity, Intellectual Property Act, Indigenous Art, Protection of folklore