
Reminiscences (sweet and sour) of my career in the Police Service - As recalled in my 91st year.

What matters to me most after being in the police service for several decades and at this ripe age of 91 years is not what I did for the police specially rather what I did for the people generally when enforcing law and order duly. As I believe that the police and the people are intimate and integral parts of the same structure so I think when a police officer duly discharges his duties towards the public that is the best service he can offer to the Police Department, the public and the country.

I feel most honored following the request made by RSPOA, because it gives me the satisfaction that I am still there 'in the police' in a way, even though I retired from service 34 years ago; of course this is mainly due to the existence of the RSPOA and the Police hospital. Indeed the meager police pension, which remains static and not at all commensurate with the present salary scales, also keeps me reminding of the police service, but in a different way - that is, it is callously indifferent to the pensioners.

At this juncture I wish to hark back to the days when I just joined the police Force with hopes and ambitions of committing myself to a sincere service to the country. It is by and by I realized that sincerity and honesty are always beset with obstacles and occupational hazards when jealousy override and sycophancy is preferred to efficiency. An honest police officer working with sincerity and dedication has more enemies than a sycophant and selfish self serving officer. As a young police officer, although I had ambitions to rise to the top in honest service to the country, gradually I began to realize such ambitions will be unavailing in a police Force where there is a tendency to boost the survival of sycophants and elimination of the efficient. Unfortunately, I became aware of this a trifle too late to my detriment. Like a child who is innocent when young growing to learn of craftiness, ways of the world and the evils with age, I began to realize after joining the police force initially with ambitions nursed in honesty, integrity and sincere duty that my sincerity and honesty are being assailed by nepotism, favoritism and corruption exploding in my very own midst so much so that if I continue to be clean, I will be blown off like a dust particle.

The man who begins with the mindset to serve his country with dedication and loyalty is compelled to change his lifestyle as he sees all around him passing him by and winning while he is stagnating in the rat race. *At all events an honest officer who values scruples, moral and ethical values will not descend to do sordid biddings irrespective of the position from where the orders originate.* He believes that loyal and conscientious service is more important than promotions and perks earned via unscrupulous and sordid games.

**A Few least expected (synchronous) events-
May be to provide guidance in life?**

The first was a doctors' complaint to get his neighbors' dog shut barking
But the dog refused warnings and continued, so the police officer was awarded a
Black Mark;

But Col. Halland & R.R.M. Bacon then police chiefs, struck off this BM as there was
no first complaint.

*When justice is done, it brings joy to the righteous, delighted, and determined to get
on with life, he studies and passes some exams and in appreciation the IGP Sir
Richard Aluwihara & DIG Capt Brindley pushed him for promotions. It was justice then
in 1948.*

In 1952 in Mannar- mostly on Immigration duties, sailing on board a ship HMCyS Vijaya,
rounded up 14 fishing boats of Indian fishermen in Kachchathivu. This episode led to Sri Lanka
annexing Kachchathivu as Sri Lankan territory, and remains so even today.

At another station, in 1956 all evidence in a murder case established the fact that the
man was stone dead when the police officer arrived, yet the DIG found the officer guilty
for not attempting to render first aid to the **dead man!** Clear case of justice being
denied!

In 1961, the transfer from Pettah to Muthur in 1961 was so sudden; it devastated me
and my family. Despite the Prime Minister's order to cancel the transfer, I was pushed
with brute force by the DIG (better known as jungle) to accept the transfer. My
children's education was put in disarray: my son was at Royal College and daughter was
at St. Paul's Milagiriya : both are Colombo Schools. They had to be taken out from their
Schools in order to admit them to new schools in accordance with the new location
away from Colombo. Mind you , this transfer was given to me even after I had served in
this area earlier too. After reaching the destination by boat crossing the sea , what
engaged my first attention was my son's illness – he had to be admitted to the Village
hospital as he was suffering from convulsions and fits.

Not even 8 days have elapsed , when I was shocked to hear of the news of a coup
against the government. Several police and army officers were arrested in Colombo. It
was only then it dawned on me why I was given this transfer because a bodyguard of a
Minister was in my quarters at Pettah, and that I might leak out the news to him even
though I knew nothing about those atrocious plans. So you see , because of various
unscrupulous and sordid games of the higher ups , an honest loyal officer can become a
scapegoat. It need not always be a coup .

For 5 long years , I served in Muthur . Being innately inclined to honesty , integrity
and loyalty, and since there was not much police work to consume my time, I decided
to make hay while the sun shines - not to accumulate filthy lucre ,but rather be of
service to the public . In fact , when late Mr. Vernon Mendis visited Muthur , Seruwila
Temple , he said to me ' Abdeen you have the opportunities to be quiet a leader here,
given your propensities.' With that encouragement , I began with zeal and zest my social
services without ulterior motives - BUT SERVICE TO COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE.

I was the OIC of the Muthur police station in the district of Koddiyarpattu during the period 1961 to 1966 . Sinhalese , Muslims and Tamils lived amicably there. Muslims were the poorest , and were engaged in fishing and farming. They were sans a leadership , lacked education and a socio- religious base. As police duties were not so arduous , I spent time on social and religious awakening among the communities. I initially picked up the leading citizens of the Muthur Town and held discussions. ‘Muthur progressive society’ was formed following these discussions headed by a Committee comprising of several distinguished persons.

We commenced our program of work modestly with the acquisition of a 5 acre block of land . It is worthy of special mention that unbelievably this land was donated to us by a poor Muslim farmer, late Naina Mohamed of Batticaloa Road, Muthur. Allah had blessed him with the light to understand the worthiness of our project. To begin with, it was a playground. This playground is the only playground in the whole district of Koddiyarpattu. Even today it remains as such. During the period 1961 to 1966 , it is at this venue we had religious discourses and festivals promoting peaceful co existence. Annually we had three day conferences . Distinguished speakers, religious dignitaries and scholars were invited to deliver speeches while people flocked in thousands to participate in these events. Sports meets and Shramadana campaigns were always in the agenda. Thanks to our initiatives then, this venue is now a most popular football playground for all communities. As I was the originator and first proposer to build a playground , **Late chairman Habeeb Mohamed** mooted the idea of naming it as Abdeen Park in honor of my services, but with his demise that effort died down. Late Majeed and Ali were the two MPs who were very active at that time.

The shramadana campaigns included keeping the environment clean and holding sports meets for the youths. Economic up-liftment of the residents , attending to children’s schooling needs, and renovating religious places. My services were so highly appreciated that I was presented with a memento. (photograph appended).

After being appointed as the O I C of Maharagama police station, somewhere in 1968, a new building to house the station was arranged by me . Unfortunately , the IGP at that time got annoyed with me at the opening ceremony over a misunderstanding because I did not accord the guard of honor to him , and it was accorded instead by the **Sergeant Major**. I could not accord the guard of honor because the DIG (Mr. Rosemale Cocq) had detailed me to arrest the M.P. for Gampola the previous day, and I was fully involved in it the whole night . Yet the IGP without understanding my predicament transferred me to a ‘C’ station despite the DIG defending me. **This is a bitter lesson to those who work truly and an encouragement to those who sham but fawn on the superiors for selfish purposes.**

*“Arrogance is a creature. It does not have senses.
It has only a sharp tongue and the pointing finger.”*

This episode is a good lesson for those in service as in those days communication in support of one was not encouraged and I had no option but to follow. A king for a moment, and a beggar soon after.

Then came a day at the 'C' station. Failure to recognize the newly appointed SP in civils, though apologized, followed another transfer within 3 months to an unclassified branch in Nugegoda!

This reminded me of a saying: **Pride** is the exaltation of self over others and has been recognized since ancient times as a root cause of cruelty and evil. "Pride is unique among the so-called 'seven deadly sins' in that we are often unaware of our arrogance, though we readily know when we are angry, greedy, gluttonous, etc.

In 1971, I was posted again to the Maharagama station as OIC. . It was during this period I had to confront a JVP attack which I successfully repulsed. In this operation where I arrested hundreds of insurgents and remanded those without destroying even a single individual. I and 14 others sustained minor injuries while one PC died. ASP Mr. Amarasekara, (nicknamed Bodhisatwa) from Mirihana arrived to help us but his Landrover was hit by a bomb damaging his vehicle and injuring him. On seeing this, I crawled from the station to the High level Road, extricated him from the vehicle and took him to the station where he was given first aid treatment. A five hour attack was launched on the station from 11.00 p.m. to dawn. In any case I succeeded in rounding up five attackers the same morning, all in blue uniforms. Subsequently all responsible were arrested.

When the group leader was fleeing along Dam street, Pettah I followed and apprehended him. Kalu Lucky was arrested near the Supreme court while he was trailing me. Notorious Dewa Bandara was arrested in Moratuwa Town after a long one mile chase. A Buddhist monk was taken into custody with a lot of documents and himself hidden in the ceiling of a house at Pamunuwa Road, Maharagama.

About midnight when we were exchanging fire with the insurgents who were at the Training College premises, late Mr. Anil Munasinghe walked into the police station with 5 of his security officers. PC Sabapathy was about to pull the trigger on them when I held on to his rifle and stopped the shooting whereby they were saved. The next day they were released when they rushed to the Temple Trees and by offering some false explanation they escaped from being implicated. Late Mr. Stanley Thilakaratne too came to the station to meet the insurgents in police custody.

Interestingly, the day prior to this incident, a member of the public arrived at the Station and warned that a JVP attack was imminent. By now there was public cooperation and they reposed immense confidence in the police. This inspired me and I nursed my own plans. With the help of the police dogs I combed the whole area. I succeeded in detecting a large number of bags containing hand made bombs. They were hidden in the culverts and near schools, The police station too was surrounded by armed groups of policemen. They were also along the High level road and the railway line.

It was the plan of the insurgents to capture the station and I was to be hanged publicly in the junction. Thereafter with the arms seized they were to attack Temple

Trees! However all their plans were foiled with the public cooperation, and the swift action by the police.

As usual , from the police higher ups there was no appreciation for our good deeds. The IGP who had earlier transferred me to a 'C' station was by that time attached to the defense Ministry. He suddenly summoned me and wanted me to produce all the information books pertaining to these incidents to him and Ian Wickremenayake. After I forwarded all the books, IBB and registers well typed and filed, they sent me back without seeing them and, not seeing me either nor questioning me, probably having realized everything was in order. In the end, in commensurate, I was given a cash reward of Rs. 500/- . The crowning reward came from the prime Minister Mrs. Bandaranaike herself . After having heard of my excellent discharge of duties , she transferred me to the Kolluptitiya police station as OIC , and the following year I was promoted as ASP.

Colpetty area had 14 ministers, and many Juniors, one powerful Minister next door, but I had not visited any of them for I had no spare time at all for such social visits soon after an insurgent attack. I had never in my life visited politicians, but I had arrested two government MPP of Gampola and Ratnapura on orders from the top. Yet, one of the Minister gunned me for 7 long years with his notorious legal man- but at the end I was the winner while those concerned perished totally from this earth lock, stock and barrel . Truth shall prevail and the innocents' prayers are always answered.

These are some of the untold stories; none to corroborate. But the Truth will always triumph! More I refrain mentioning as they are disgusting

As for me, life had always been a struggle perhaps because of my innate disposition to sincerity and true commitment to my duties while being in the police service as, latter is a place where those traits don't reap dividends. In a territory where nudity is honorable, it is difficult to prove that it is dishonorable. I wish to refrain from recalling all those incidents which testify to this truth though they would be eye openers to the new recruits to the police.

In sober retrospect ,

In Service I was for 38 years and now in retirement for 34 years. What is it that keeps me going- my efforts in Muthur for 5 years in many religious and social works. In religion I regained my life in full and this keeps me going up to date very well. Religion is my armour so to say.....? Destiny is what is in rehearsal !

Have published many books and some still in print, with web sites and email to help in propagating a better community among all of us the citizens of this beloved country;.

The one and the only one playground in the whole of Koddiyarpattu in the Muthur Division was my creation and are there now in the centre of Muthur.

.Attaching hereto is a photograph of the making of this play ground

We have made vast advancement in crime detection and other spheres of Police activities. Unfortunately with all the strides we have made, the crime wave has also shot up. May I pose to think why? In my opinion, it is because the close rapport that must be maintained between the Police and the people had not continued. POLITICIZATION of the Police is now the main cause.

Although there is always a trend to blame the Police whenever there is a crime wave upsurge, it is well for the people in general and the parents in particular to understand that they too have a duty to perform to stem the crime escalation. It is a universal truth that often a criminal is created by society and his family, not by the Police.. A well brought up child does not resort to criminal action. As inculcating discipline and good conduct in a child is not the duty of the Police, so it is the duty of the parents. This was well illustrated during the 1971, and 1988 -89 insurgency. Very rarely a child of good upbringing and religious background took to arms.

We can inspire confidence in others only if we have that confidence ourselves. Only if we are enthusiastic about our duties that we can infect others with it. If we are exemplary, only then others will also follow us. If not, others including the subordinates will lead and we will have to follow them . If we discharge our duties duly, honestly and sincerely the reward for that is peace of mind contentment and permanent success in life not necessarily in career which is temporary, for career success can be achieved even by stooping to sordid biddings and self centered ambitions. We are discharging a public duty, and all our aims must be geared to giving of our best to achieve that end. All else must be subordinated to that.

It is a rare profession where an entire Nation is dependent on us. At the time of my recruitment, this was the best police force in the East but now what has befallen this great department? See:

Daily Mirror 12.6.2013-

“ From People’s police to a political police-

Abduction and killing by a D.I.G. highlights the plight of the police and their gradual loss of independence. “

Daily Mirror 19/6/2013-

“With the scrapping of the 17th amendment and the Independent Police Commission, we have seen a politicization of the Police, a criminalization of politics and a politicization of crime. This has led to a breakdown in Law and Order, the judiciary and plunder of public resources on an unprecedented scale.”

He was indeed an honest, loyal and efficient officer, but he fell from grace by alienating himself with the powers be probably their promises were so great a loss to be turned down. He should have overcome this temptation. When I was chased from

pillar to post I did not succumb to their manifestations as I had not sought favors from Officers or the Politicians, but turned my attention in doing some social service at least, rather than police work and saved my life.

This should be the golden rule: We can make or mar the image of the country. Our uniforms must radiate love. Law abiding citizens must look at us as a source of hope and security at all times. We must not deem public anger as a thorn in our side, rather as a Warner and making the police officers to take stock of them. But as it is, there is no hope of regaining the lost esteemed position for a very long time to come.

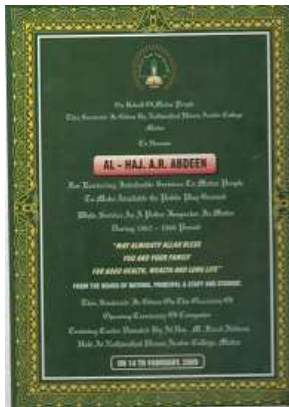
It is ninety years since I made my advent into this world and 34 years since I retired from the police service. This period had taught me an unassailable truth - nothing is permanent and every success in this world is just a flash in the pan. At this age I have realized after my creator the almighty Allah, it is only my family that can care for me. Friends and foes are obverse and reverse of the same coin. It is just circumstances that make a friend or foe. In the best of circumstances all are friends, but in the worst none at all, except my best, most sincere and trusted friend – Allah the Almighty.

When I was in the police service my foes thought when they have gone past me in the rat race they have defeated me but they did not know I was winning in another race much more superior than the one they were competing in. It is the victory in that race which had blessed me with a life without disease, a family of four sons and daughter without flaws , a wife who is a perfect match who inspires me in every day to day activity including religious.

Now, after reaping the fruits of my religious pursuits, I am trying to share them with those who prefer truth to falsehood, sincerity to hypocrisy, piety to society, God to all else and religious pursuits to those worldly .

It is with this objective in mind that I am spending my time, energy and money in my retired life I have printed many volumes on the Quranic verses imparting wisdom and knowledge. I have tried my best in my efforts in the direction of divine truth and seeking it, to give as liberally as possible whatever fruits I have reaped through my labors. All the books and literature I have printed and all the DVDs I have produced are freely available.

(abdeenara@sltnet.lk) ucrescents7@gmail.com, www.abideendhawwa.com



The Memento



Playground in the making



Opening ceremony



Asst.Suptd of Police