

<p>0.0 - 1.0</p>	<p>Where were you born?</p> <p>In Avissawella.</p> <p>Avissawella?</p> <p>Deraniyagala in Avissawella</p> <p>Deraniyagala. Ok..... Why..... How did you come here?</p> <p>I came here means that when I was young, my mother and father came from there to here. Those days I was in a bungalow in Colombo.</p> <p>Where?</p> <p>In Dehiwala</p> <p>Dehiwala. Ok.</p> <p>I was there. I was there until fourteen or fifteen years old from the age of nine years. Then after I attained puberty, my father came there. They said that they cannot let me go. Thereafter, they brought me by force. Then.... after coming, I was in different estates in various places.</p> <p>How long were you there? From the age of nine to which.....?</p> <p>I was there until the age of fifteen.</p> <p>Until the age of fifteen..... During what time? Which years?</p> <p>I was born in Seventy-Five. On the fifteenth of the third month in seventy-five.</p> <p>Aahaa...</p> <p>Then I was in Colombo. At the age of nine, I was brought there.</p>
<p>1.0 - 2.0</p>	<p>Father and mother?</p> <p>Yes. Then my father came and brought me back by force. After I was brought here, I stayed at home and worked in the estate. Then now, I am married.</p> <p>Did you marry from the estate?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>A person from the village or?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>With the consent of the father and the mother?</p>

	<p>Yes. They are the ones who arranged my marriage.</p> <p>Or was that a love marriage?</p> <p>No. Mother and father got me married with their consent.</p> <p>Got you married. Ok. Is your husband still here? Is he also working in the estate?</p> <p>Yes. He is working in the estate. He took the tea leaves to the factory now.</p> <p>Aaah... he took the tea leaves now..... Did you go to the work in a household at the age of nine?</p> <p>Yes. To work in a bungalow.</p> <p>Okay... Then do you have children?</p> <p>I have three children.</p> <p>What are the ages?</p> <p>The elder child, the elder son is twenty-one years old. Now he is in Weligama. He works in a hardware shop. The other son is sixteen years old. He is at home with me. The youngest one is eleven years old. He is eleven years on Friday, the sixteenth.</p>
2.0 - 3.0	<p>Really? Then... are they going to school?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Did all of them go to school well?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>We spoke with one or two persons.... They mentioned that the small children are not going to school. Do you know why?</p> <p>All the children are school going children. Only one or two in the estate are not going to school. All the other children are going to school. About twenty children are going to school. They are studying in Sinhala.</p> <p>Why? Are there no Tamil schools or Tamil classes?</p> <p>There are Tamil schools. A little far. They are not teaching that much there.</p> <p>Have to go far?</p>

	<p>Yes. That is why we put them in to Sinhala schools, as it is easy. Now they cannot understand even a single Tamil word now. Cannot understand a single Tamil letter. Everyone knows Sinhala, even the children.</p> <p>Oh really? Is that so? What do you think about that?</p> <p>We are also sad. What to do. If they are admitted to a Tamil school, we have to go to Deniyaya or to that side in Selvakanda. That is why we have admitted our children to a Sinhala school.</p>
<p>3.0 - 4.0</p>	<p>Then if classes are held here in Tamil?</p> <p>No</p> <p>If somebody come and hold classes in Tamil?</p> <p>If that is done, we also like to put the children.</p> <p>Yes..., to learn even a single Tamil letter. Isn't it? If not it will be a waste.</p> <p>Yes. Now only one of my children goes to school. A little bit Tamil should be taught even to him. There is nobody here to teach Tamil.</p> <p>Then do you usually speak and do everything in Tamil or in Sinhala?</p> <p>We speak in Tamil too. But speak most in Sinhala. The reason is that the children are learning in Sinhala.</p> <p>Ok...</p> <p>If we speak in Tamil at home for a long time, they cannot understand. We speak in Sinhala. We do not talk much in Tamil.</p> <p>Then the language will vanish?</p> <p>They also understand the language. Then we.....</p> <p>They understand. Then... are you Christian or Hindu?</p> <p>We are Hindu.</p> <p>If that so, is there a Kovil nearby?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Nearby</p>
<p>4.0 - 5.0</p>	<p>There is a Kovil means that there is one here in Adaradeniya. The big one is in Deniyaya. We go there too.</p> <p>So... do you have time to go there?</p>

	<p>If there is a pooja we are going. If not we perform the pooja in the Kovil here. If there is a vow that we have made, there is a Kovil nearby. We go there and give the pooja.</p> <p>Usually how is the day like? At what time do you get up?</p> <p>In the morning I wake up at about four or four thirty. On some days I get up at five. Since this is school vacation period, I wake a little bit late.</p> <p>If not... do you have to cook and send food to them?</p> <p>Have to send food to them. Also I need to do household works. Time is not enough to do the work in the morning, even though how much early I get up.</p> <p>Do you get any help?</p> <p>No</p> <p>Alone?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Does the husband help you for cooking?</p> <p>He also does some help to do some cooking works. I have to do all the other works. Have to cook and prepare food for the sons. I have to prepare food for myself too.</p> <p>Can you tell a little about what kind of work are you doing in the estates? What are you doing?</p> <p>I pluck tea leaves.</p>
5.0 - 6.0	<p>At what time do you go? Tell us some details like that?</p> <p>After going at seven thirty in the morning in a queue, I come home again at twelve noon after weighing the tea leaves. Then after going at 01.00 pm, I come back home at this time.</p> <p>So... to what extend the tea leaves are available here?</p> <p>From here.... there is some..... Near the Adaradeniya factory, which is a little far from here. Tea is being plucked twice or thrice a week. Then it is here in the estate.</p> <p>So... for a week.... aaah.... thereafter in the estate. If that so, do you work on Saturdays and Sundays?</p> <p>If there is work, we will do. If not, estate superintendents stop the work if there are no tea leaves.</p>

	<p>Yes... Then what do you do when the tea leaves are less? Do you have any other work? Do you engage in any self-employment?</p> <p>No</p> <p>Now how many kilograms are needed in the name?</p> <p>Twenty-five kilogram is needed</p> <p>Twenty-five...?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Then what about the time when there are no tea leaves?</p> <p>During those times also they ask for the same amount.</p> <p>Then what do you do at those times when there are no tea leaves?</p>
6.0 - 7.0	<p>But when we pluck twenty-four or twenty-three kilogram, they put half payment.</p> <p>Even the times when there are no tea leaves....?</p> <p>Yes. In the last month also a half payment has been put for twenty-four kilograms.</p> <p>At the time when there are tea leaves available, they get more tea leaves? Then how are you paid for that?</p> <p>They pay for that too.</p> <p>How much?</p> <p>An amount has not been mentioned. Since all are calculated altogether, we cannot find out how much is paid. But... when I asked about the additional tea leaves, they said that they are paying.</p> <p>Normally, how much is your monthly salary? Tell us if you like to say... otherwise...?</p> <p>Salary is calculated based on the work we did. If we take less amounts of advance, we can get a good salary. If loans are taken, the salary would be somewhat less.</p> <p>How much is paid for a day?</p> <p>Six hundred and eighty rupees.</p> <p>Do you get work for all the twenty-four days?</p> <p>Last month I have received twenty-seven days. Out of the twenty-seven days, we stay at home when my children are sick and when we are sick as well. Somehow we make it twenty-five or twenty-four days.</p>

<p>7.0 - 8.0</p>	<p>When you work for more than twenty-four days, get an extra amount like a bonus. Isn't it? Is that paid to you in this estate also?</p> <p>Bonuses are given.</p> <p>If that so... commonly... what are the facilities do you have in an estate here?</p> <p>There are facilities available. But there are more defects.</p> <p>Defects....? What kind of defects?</p> <p>We do not have enough water to have a bath on time. There is a well. Everybody in the estate has to bathe from that well. When the water level goes down, the water gets muddy. Then when it is muddy, we have to go near the bridge to have a bath.</p> <p>Doesn't water come up here?</p> <p>No</p> <p>No pipe line water?</p> <p>There are pipes. There is one tap which is only for drinking. For drinking and for washing utensils. As it is not raining, water is stopped in the morning and again it is opened at twelve noon. Then it is closed at 01.00 pm and again opened at 04.00 pm. Then it is again closed at 05.30 pm or 06.00 pm. Then opened again in the next day morning.</p>
<p>8.0 - 9.0</p>	<p>What....? You mean water?</p> <p>Yes. Since it is not raining there is no water....</p> <p>Since there is no water.... is it closed at times when there is no water or otherwise...?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Water problem. What else?</p> <p>We do not have any other defects to tell</p> <p>What about the toilet facilities?</p> <p>It is available.</p> <p>That means... are they available separately in the houses or if not...?</p> <p>They are constructed outside the houses.</p> <p>Did they construct outside... isn't it?</p> <p>That means.... they constructed each per house in the outside.</p>

	<p>Each per house. Ok. Ok.</p> <p>They have constructed one toilet for each house.</p> <p>All of them have to be cleaned by themselves?</p> <p>Yes. They have to be kept clean.</p> <p>Were they built for you by some organization or if not...?</p> <p>By an organization. They built it for us. When we say that we have something, they make that.</p>
9.0 - 10.0	<p>If that so... when the children get sick, then are there any facilities to take them to the hospital? That means.... what are the health facilities that you have? Does somebody come to see?</p> <p>No. in the past days.... there was a hospital here and a doctor came in the evening. This estate management gives us tokens to go and take medicine. When it is given to the estate.... a letter is given from here. When that is given to the estate, they deduct that. Now that facility is not available. Now.... we have to go to the hospital early in the morning. There was a medical shop... but... now it is closed.</p> <p>Is it closed?</p> <p>Now... if we get any illness, we have to go to Deniyaya. If not.... to get medicine... we have to go to the Deniyaya town or to the general hospital. If we get an illness at night times, we have to go by hiring a three-wheeler and keep that stopped there.</p> <p>Generally, for how long have you been residing in this estate?</p> <p>Previously, we were living here for eight years. As the eldest son got into a little trouble, we went away for six months and came back here. It turns one year on the fourteenth in the next month. Previously, I was here for eight years.</p>
10.0 - 11.0	<p>What was the problem of the eldest son?</p> <p>He worked in the estate and when he was asked to go to the factory, he has not gone. Then he told to the estate superintendent that he wants to leave the estate. But.... superintendent has not asked him like that. However, he said that he wanted to go. Then, I went and we were nearby. Then I could not stay there like here. Since it does not suit me there, I returned here. The problem is that, we have no freedom to stay at home even on a Poya day. We have to go to the factory even on Poya days. If we do not go to the factory on a Poya days, then we do not have work on the next day.</p> <p>Have to go even on Poya days?</p>

	<p>Yes. On Sundays and Saturdays. If there are no tea leaves on Sundays, the work will be stopped. If there are tea leaves, there will be work. It is on the Poya days, that we have the main problem.</p> <p>If that so... will they get together and take action by telling to that estate superintendent?</p>
11.0 - 12.0	<p>Nobody tries to talk on behalf of that. There is no use in talking, Miss. It is like this.... There is no use even if they tell so much. When we tell that, they tell us to stay if we want or to go as we wish. Now in our house.... three persons are working. There is only one little one, who is ten or eleven years old. When all we three go, it is at about 05.30 pm to finish our work in the factory. It is at about 06.00 pm that we come back home. We have no time to have a bath or to do the household chores. Then at what time we cook and give food to them?</p> <p>Are you paid for 1½ day on Poya days?</p> <p>The salary is for 1½ day. However, there is something called as freedom. If there is no holiday even on a Poya day, there is no use. The children are learning in Sinhala, there is no means even to take them to a <i>Pansla</i>. There is no chance even bring them on the Vesak Poya day. That is the biggest problem that we have here.</p> <p>The fact that you have no holiday?</p> <p>We are given extra holidays. But we cannot stay at home only on Poya days.</p> <p>Other Saturdays and Sundays?</p>
12.0 - 13.0	<p>Holidays are given on those days. We work on Saturdays.</p> <p>Work?</p> <p>Yes. It is only on few Sundays that the work is stopped. That means, the tea leaves problem. If there are tea leaves, there is work. If the tea leaves are less, work is stopped. As there were no tea leaves on the last Sunday, we had to weed for three consecutive days. The work was stopped on the next Sunday.</p> <p>Then do you have time to wash your clothes?</p> <p>All are being washed from that well.</p> <p>All are from the well?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>You take them and wash? When do you do that on Saturdays and Sundays?</p> <p>Yes</p>

	<p>On other days is it difficult to do that?</p> <p>Yes. On days like Sunday, when these people get a holiday, we take all the clothes at 06.00 am or 07.00 am in the morning, wash them and let them dry. We do not have a free day before that. We cannot wash them after come at this time in the evenings. It is only the clothes that we are wearing can be washed at this time and come after having a bath.</p> <p>How about savings? Do you have bank accounts?</p>
13.0 - 14.0	<p>It is recently. We deposited money in the banks before. A few days ago... it has been arranged by the estate. It will be deducted by the estate in our salary from next month onwards.</p> <p>To be deposited in the bank account?</p> <p>Everything was made and gave. From the next month. It was prepared on the first of this month. We were told that it will be deducted from the salary of the next month.</p> <p>So... generally in estates..... generally in the estate..... are you not afraid to go alone at night?</p> <p>No</p> <p>There is no problem. Can girls go alone?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Do any outsiders come to the estate?</p> <p>No</p> <p>If somebody comes, he will be seen?</p> <p>Here... in this side... all are like this... all the people in this village are acquaintances. That is why... we have no problem. No any trouble. Even today, all are friendly with us. All are living like brothers.</p>
14.0 -15.0	<p>Then... do you remember what was it like at the time when there were problems, at the time of war or in the year of Eighty-Three? Were there any problems in the Matara District?</p> <p>I do not know much. I cannot understand to tell.</p> <p>During the war period?</p> <p>Not here.</p>

	<p>No problem? So... if there is a war in some other area, you do not have any trouble even if you are Tamil?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>No? Didn't you feel frightened?</p> <p>We were afraid. But we did not get any difference. Once during the JVP period, when my parents have gone somewhere leaving aside all documents including our birth certificates, we had many problems due to that. Later... I made new ones again.</p> <p>When was that?</p> <p>In the eighties. During the JVP period.</p> <p>In the year of Eighty-Eight... Eighty-Nine?</p> <p>Like that</p> <p>During that period?</p> <p>There were riots.</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>During those days.... what they have done is that they have come leaving aside all the goods and the birth certificates of the children. That means those of two or three have been left. Then.... my birth certificate was lost. Later... I went and brought everything and have done everything to make the National Identity Card. The identity card has not come yet.</p>
15.0 - 16.0	<p>So it is difficult to be made? Can a birth certificate be made in one day?</p> <p>I went to Pitabeddara after filling a form. I got the birth certificate from Pitabeddara. After seeing the form, they said that the birth certificate is there and gave me. Later, I gave it to make the identity card. Two months have passed now.</p> <p>So... now.... generally..... you said that you were a little scared? What kind of fear did you get?</p> <p>Fear means.... that we were afraid that any trouble will happen to us. if anything happens to us, it is alright. We were sad thinking what will happen to our children? That was our worries.</p> <p>But you did not get any problem?</p> <p>No problem happened to us.</p>

	<p>Did you go here and there during the war period?</p> <p>No. we did not go anywhere.</p> <p>You stayed here?</p> <p>Yes</p>
16.0- 17.0	<p>Ok. Ok. If that so.... what are your expectations about your children?</p> <p>My expectation is that they have to be happy. My idea is that they have to study well and go to a good place.</p> <p>What do you mean by ‘a good place’? Is it out of the estate or within the estate?</p> <p>Out of the estate or within the estate, they have to live happily by doing a good job. I was thinking about the eldest son also like that. Now he has an idea of going abroad. He will go at the end of this year.</p> <p>Where does he wish to go?</p> <p>No definite decision yet.</p> <p>To do what?</p> <p>He was telling that he needs to go abroad. I do not know what he will do next. When he came last month, he said to me that he will go. Then I said that it will be a great thing for me, if you may go and stay happily, because they are the ones who are living in the future and not us.</p> <p>Yes.... Yes....</p> <p>I said that if you live well, it will good for the little brother too.</p> <p>Yes</p>
17.0 - 18.0	<p>Because there is only one. I have a sick child. That is why I am scared.</p> <p>Why did you say that there is a sick child?</p> <p>Sick means.... at the age of five a surgery was done in his stomach. Later, when he was fighting with the children at school, a stone has bumped in his eye and the eye got damaged. Then, a surgery has been done in his eye. I took him to Karapitiya hospital for months. The eye has been cured after such surgery was done.</p> <p>Is the eye okay now?</p> <p>Yes</p>

	<p>If that so... doesn't he have any problem in living a normal life?</p> <p>Yes. Now.... he cannot do any work like us by getting tired. It is in his name that we save something. We save some money in his name in banks. The reason is that in the future, he cannot work by getting tired. When he is twenty or twenty-two years old.... even though he is working like this... it is only twenty or twenty-one days he will work. He is working like that. I do not say anything. He shouts. I do not force him that much to go to work. Even today he is at home. He went to Deniyaya and did not come back yet.</p>
18.0 - 19.0	<p>So..... generally, in this estate..... does everyone stay together in unity?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>There are no any problems?</p> <p>No</p> <p>Not of anyone?</p> <p>No. even when we go to the workplace all work together and all are coming together.</p> <p>Like a village?</p> <p>Yes. Even if we go to drink tea, every one sits together and drinks tea. We do not drink that alone staying at different places. All of us sit together and drink tea. I eat the things brought by the other. They eat the things brought by me. That is how we stay. We live happily without any difference.</p> <p>Ok... If that so... is everyone who is working here Tamil or Sinhala?</p> <p>Most of them are Tamil people.</p> <p>There are some Sinhala people?</p> <p>There is only one person. There is only one from outside. All the others are Tamil people, our people.</p>
19.0 - 20.0	<p>Then in this area..... that means even during your life time what is there as a memory? It means.... has anything or any incident happened? If not so... has any good thing happened...? If not, even like a flood happened? That means... something which can be added as a memory during your lifetime?</p> <p>A flood came in the year of two thousand. We were a little affected by that. All our belongings were washed away. Thereafter we recovered from it with much difficulty. We lost everything including the clothes of my children.</p>

	<p>In which period that was?</p>
<p>20.0 - 21.0</p>	<p>In 2003....</p> <p>Was that in this estate?</p> <p>No... not in this estate. In another estate.</p> <p>Where was that?</p> <p>There is an estate close to the hospital here. It was there. A factory which was built was destroyed.</p> <p>Aaahh...</p> <p>There is the Andiripana junction a little away from the hospital. It was close to there. It was from there that we were a little</p> <p>Then you were living there during those days?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>For how long were you there?</p> <p>We were there for five years. Then we did not get any relief from that village. Then we came back. Thereafter we came to this side. Later, we built our lives again somehow.</p> <p>Now if you say that you have troubles, they will say to stay if you wish or to go away. Didn't you ever feel to go and to reside at some other place and to start the life in another way?</p> <p>No</p>
<p>21.0 - 22.0</p>	<p>Does this estate belong to a private individual?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>To whom?</p> <p>To <i>Sudhu Mahattaya</i>.</p> <p>Is that the only estate which belongs to him?</p> <p>No, he has a number of estates. The Batuwangala Factory in Ratnapura. That factory is in the Neluwa road. It is also belonging to him.</p> <p><i>Sudhu mahattaya</i> means... a white man or a foreigner?</p> <p>No. that is how he is called. He has another name. All are calling him like this.</p>

	<p>Ok... Ok... he is called as <i>Sudhu Mahattaya</i>. Do you know why he is called as <i>Sudhu Mahattaya</i>? Is he fair?</p> <p>No, he is called from his childhood as <i>Sudhu Mahattaya</i>. His family also has called him like that. Now the people in the estate are also calling him like that. That means... when we say that name, everyone knows. They know him by that name not only in Sri Lanka but also in abroad. Everyone knows when we say <i>Sudhu Mahattaya</i>.</p> <p>Then doesn't he look into your problems?</p>
22.0- 23.0	<p>Looking into means.... those people do not come now. That means... the boss comes once in six months. His younger brother is supervising the work in this factory here. His younger brother is here in the factory. This estate belongs to the elder brother. The younger brother is the one who involves in administration.</p> <p>Then... cannot these difficulties be told to them?</p> <p>Even if we tell, they do not listen. That is what has happened.</p> <p>If that so, does this house belong to yourselves?</p> <p>No</p> <p>Does not belong to you?</p> <p>No. We have to leave with our things when they ask to leave.</p> <p>It means... you are given this house until you work in this estate?</p> <p>Yes. To stay. If we are asked now to leave from here, we have to go to some other place by taking our things.</p> <p>Built this house... and the back side of this house and other construction works done by you... or...?</p> <p>No... no... they have built this house from here to that door. We built the kitchen separately with clay as the space was not enough. We built it on our own effort.</p>
23.0 - 24.0	<p>How was the time when you were in the bungalow?</p> <p>I do not have much knowledge of the time that I was in the bungalow. I was taken care well. I stayed well there. I came here due to the troubles of my parents. If not, I will be there even today.</p> <p>Do you like to stay there those days?</p> <p>Yes</p>

During the childhood?

Since my parent brought me there when I was a child, they are the ones who looked after me like a mother and a father. I had no difference. So I did not like to come here back. They said that they will look after me until they live and also said, thereafter, they would build a house for me and do everything for me. I came here due to the troubles caused by my father. He said that he will go to the police and this and that.

Thank you for speaking. We are leaving.

Okay.

Thank you very much.