

# **RECOMMENDATION FOR SANCTIONS AGAINST KAMAL GUNARATNE**

**Submitted to the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Affairs, pursuant to the Global Human Rights  
Sanctions Regulations 2020**

**Recommendation Submitted by: International Truth and Justice Project**

**Point of Contact for Submission:**

Redacted in public version

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT SUBMITTING ORGANISATION**

The ITJP is an independent, international, non-profit organization working since 2013 to protect and promote justice and accountability in Sri Lanka. The ITJP's team is comprised of international lawyers, expert investigators, historians, journalists, researchers, and trauma experts who collectively document war crimes and ongoing human rights violations. ITJP's mission is to pursue justice and accountability on behalf of victims, meticulously collecting and safeguarding evidence. Where possible, ITJP strives to find the linkage between human rights violations and financial crimes. The testimony and supporting documents we gather are preserved for future litigation, sanctions, vetting and screening, and UN submissions.

ITJP works in close collaboration with relevant multilateral institutions, including the United Nations Sri Lanka Accountability Project, as well as several governments, including the U.S. State Department and the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and national criminal justice authorities to assist wherever possible in alignment with ITJP's mission.

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## Section 1. Case Summary

**Country:** Sri Lanka

**Perpetrator:** **Kamal Gunaratne**, former Secretary to the Ministry of Defence (November 2019 – September 2024).

### **Summary:**

**Kamal Gunaratne** is a retired army general who has allegedly been involved in a wide range of human rights violations and war crimes during his service in the army. Allegations against him range across three phases regarding the following types of abuses: (1) arbitrary detention, torture (including sexual violence), enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial executions during Operation Riviresa in 1995, while he was the Commander of the 6 Gajaba Regiment; (2) unlawful killings of civilians and surrendered LTTE members *hors de combat* during the final phase of the Sri Lankan civil war, while he was the Commander of the 53 Division; and (3) arbitrary detention, torture (including sexual violence), enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial executions in connection with post-war army detention and internally displaced persons (IDP) camps from November 2009 to 2010, while he was the Commander of the Security Forces Headquarters – Wannai and Competent Authority for IDP camps in the Northern Province. After retirement from military service, he continued to serve several public posts, with the most recent being the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence and the State Ministry of National Security and Disaster Management from November 2019 to September 2024.

Sanctioning **Kamal Gunaratne** will meet the objectives of the UK's human rights sanctions programme to deter and provide accountability for serious violations of human rights. It will send a clear message to the Sri Lankan government that egregious human rights violations in the name of national security will not be tolerated by the UK. It will hold to account the individuals that bear ultimate responsibility for Sri Lanka's widespread and systematic practices of arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial executions, as well as violations of international humanitarian law during the civil war.

The proposed sanctions are consistent with the factors the UK Government has indicated it will consider when deciding whether to designate. It will advance two of the UK's human rights priority themes: the prevention of torture and the prevention of sexual violence in or related to conflict. The lack of prospect for domestic accountability, as well as the UK's existing sanctions against other Sri Lankan security forces officials with similar records of human rights abuses further make this situation an appropriate and urgent case for the use of UK sanctions.

## Section 2. Biographical Perpetrator Information



**Full Legal Name of Perpetrator:** Gabadage Don Harischandra Kamal Gunaratne

**Country:** Sri Lanka

**Title or Position:** Secretary to the Ministry of Defence (November 2019 – September 2024); Colonel of the Mechanized Infantry Regiment (MIR) (March – September 2016); Master General Ordnance (February 2015 – September 2016); Deputy Ambassador to Brazil (2012 – 2015); Colonel of the Gajaba Regiment (August – December 2012); Commander of the Security Forces Headquarters – Wannu (Joseph Camp) and Competent Authority for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Camps (2009 – 2011); Colonel of the Gajaba Regiment (July – August 2009); 53 Division Commander (April 2008 – July 2009); 55 Division Commander (September 2006 – April 2008); Centre Commander of the Gajaba Regiment (January 2004 – April 2005); Grade I Staff Officer at Joint Services Operational Headquarters (likely 1997 – 2004); Commander of the 6 Gajaba Regiment (May 1994 – June 1997); Second-in-Command of 6 Gajaba Regiment (1990 – 1994); Gajaba Regiment (1983 – 1990); Second Lieutenant in the Rajarata Rifles (1982); [*Joined army in August 1981*]

**Date of Birth:** 6 September 1961

**Other Known Personal Identifiers (place of birth, passport number, address, etc):** None known.

**Past Travel to the UK:** None known.

### Section 3. Known Family, Facilitators, and Assets of Perpetrators

#### Kamal Gunaratne:

##### List of Known Family Members:

Name	Bio identifiers	Relationship	Known benefit
Chithrani Gunaratne	Nationality: Sri Lanka DOB: [Unknown] POB: [Unknown]	Wife	She was the Chairperson of Sri Lanka Ministry of Defence's Seva Vanitha Unit, <sup>1</sup> as per tradition that the wives of the respective military unit commanders take on these roles. The SVU provides welfare facilities to next of kin of security forces members who died in service or are injured or missing in action.
[Kanchana]	Nationality: Sri Lanka DOB: [Unknown] POB: [Unknown]	Daughter	It is mentioned that Kamal Gunaratne has a daughter with his wife <sup>2</sup> . It appears that she is nicknamed "Pinky" (or "Pinkey"). <sup>3</sup>
Amith Gunaratne	Nationality: Sri Lanka DOB: [Unknown] POB: [Unknown]	Brother	He is a police officer in Sri Lanka who was allegedly involved in an instance of human rights abuse by Kamal Gunaratne in 2019 (see details in Section 7).

##### List of Assets:

None known.

<sup>1</sup> Sri Lanka Navy, *Chairperson of Defence Ministry's Seva Vanitha Unit visits NSVU projects in Trincomalee*, 12 December 2020, <https://news.navy.lk/sevavanithanews/2020/12/17/202012171615/>; and Sri Lanka Ministry of Defence, *Bringing fresh hopes for 2023 SVU Chairperson commences work*, 5 January 2023, [https://www.defence.lk/Article/view\\_article/27013](https://www.defence.lk/Article/view_article/27013).

<sup>2</sup> College of Military Engineering and Technology Sri Lanka, *Patrons - General Kamal Gunaratne (Retd)*, [https://www.cmetsl.lk/cmetsl\\_patron.php?patID=MQ](https://www.cmetsl.lk/cmetsl_patron.php?patID=MQ).  
[https://www.defence.lk/Article/view\\_article/27564](https://www.defence.lk/Article/view_article/27564)

<sup>3</sup> See Colonel Kamal Gunaratne of Gajaba Regiment, Anoja's webpage, <https://anojaw.tripod.com/kamal.htm> (this appears to be a website created by Kamal Gunaratne's sister-in-law, Anoja Wimalaratne).

## Section 4. Allegations of Human Rights Violations against Kamal Gunaratne

**Kamal Gunaratne** is alleged to have been involved in a wide range of human rights violations and war crimes during his 35 years of service in the army. Allegations against him range across three phases regarding the following types of abuses: (1) arbitrary detention, torture (including sexual violence), enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial executions during Operation Riviresa in 1995, while he was the Commander of the 6 Gajaba Regiment; (2) unlawful killings of civilians and surrendered LTTE members *hors de combat* during the final phase of the civil war, while he was the Commander of the 53 Division; and (3) arbitrary detention, torture (including sexual violence), enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial executions in connection with post-war army detention and IDP camps from November 2009 to 2010, while he was the Commander of the Security Forces Headquarters – Wannai and Competent Authority for IDP camps in the Northern Province.

ITJP has gathered first-hand victim accounts, news reports, public reports by the United Nations (UN) bodies and mechanisms as well as credible non-government organisations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, and documents compiled by several domestic Sri Lankan commissions of inquiry into certain human rights violations. For wartime violations, the Sri Lanka Ministry of Defence's Situation Reports (MoD SitReps) are also referenced. These credible, independent sources corroborate each other and establish reasonable grounds to believe that **Kamal Gunaratne** was indeed involved in the human rights abuses of which he has been accused. **Kamal Gunaratne's** own autobiography also lends insight into his state of mind as well as effective command and control over his subordinates who carried out the violations.

### A. Violations of Human Rights During Operation Riviresa

Operation Riviresa refers to the Sri Lankan government's recapture of Jaffna in 1995, after previously losing the peninsula in 1990. During this operation, hundreds of enforced disappearances were reported. According to the Secretary to the Commission on Disappearances in the Jaffna District, the commission received around 600 complaints from mothers in Jaffna about enforced disappearances during Operation Riviresa.<sup>4</sup> Amnesty International also found evidence of the enforced disappearances of approximately 540 people in six months in the middle of 1996 in the Jaffna peninsula.<sup>5</sup> Amnesty International further indicated that the enforced disappearances entailed arbitrary detention, torture (including sexual violence), and extrajudicial executions.<sup>6</sup>

**Kamal Gunaratne** was the Commander of the 6 Gajaba Regiment which was involved in Operation Riviresa.<sup>7</sup> In his autobiography, **Kamal Gunaratne** described in detail how Sri Lankan soldiers looted Tamil properties during the operation, which the soldiers called "borrowing parties".<sup>8</sup> This suggests **Kamal Gunaratne** was well informed of the situation

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<sup>4</sup> *The History of Commissions: The Politics of Betraying the Dead from Suriyakanda*, JOURNALISTS FOR DEMOCRACY IN SRI LANKA, 21 October 2015, <http://www.jdslanka.org/s/index.php/2014-12-24-03-23-00/2014-12-24-03-24-33/485-2015-10-20-23-36-58> (original article in Sinhala).

<sup>5</sup> Amnesty International, *Government's Response to Widespread "Disappearances" in Jaffna*, ASA/37/24/97, 1 November 1997, <https://www.refworld.org/reference/countryrep/amnesty/1997/en/36554>.

<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> General (Rtd) GDHK Gunaratne WWV RWP RSP USP ndc psc MPhill, Competent Authority for Sri Lanka, <http://competentauthority.gov.lk/profile.html>.

<sup>8</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, *ROAD TO NANDIKADAL* (2016), p. 200.

on the ground, to the extent of soldiers' conduct that was not military in nature and outside the military objectives of the operation. Given his physical presence in the region where the human rights violations took place, his command position, and his detailed knowledge of the soldiers' activities on the ground completely unrelated to the military operation (i.e., looting and pillage, which itself constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law), there are reasonable grounds to believe that **Kamal Gunaratne** knew or had reason to believe that the troops under his command were committing enforced disappearances and accompanying arbitrary detention, torture (including sexual violence), and extrajudicial executions, and yet consciously disregarded such information, failing to act to prevent these violations of human rights and to punish his subordinates.

## B. Unlawful Killings of Civilians and Surrendered Persons *Hors de Combat* during the Final Phase of War

### **1. Unlawful Killings of Civilians**

During the final phase of the war between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE, the Sri Lankan security forces, in violation of international humanitarian law (IHL), deliberately and continuously targeted and attacked civilians and civilian objects located within "no fire zones" (NFZs). The Sri Lankan government unilaterally declared three NFZs to which the army instructed civilians to move, ostensibly for safety, and then treacherously attacked. Protected facilities including medical and other humanitarian facilities, personnel, and transport also came under intense attack, even though the hospitals were clearly marked with the Red Cross emblems (as confirmed by Unmanned Aerial Vehicle/UAV footage and satellite imagery)<sup>9</sup> and their GPS coordinates conveyed to the Sri Lankan security forces at all times<sup>10</sup>.

The attacks were conducted without any prior warning to the civilians.<sup>11</sup> The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights' Investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL) found such lack of effective precautions "all the more concerning because the civilians in the NFZs had been encouraged by the Government and the security forces to move into these zones for their own protection",<sup>12</sup> and suggested that "the attacks were not isolated incidents but part of a pattern where the SLA [Sri Lanka Army] not only failed to take adequate measure to ensure that protected facilities are not hit but, in some cases, may have deliberately targeted the facilities".<sup>13</sup> The OISL investigation noted that despite the government's assertion that the NFZs were safe, the SLA repeatedly shelled them and employed heavy artillery weapons in such densely populated areas.<sup>14</sup> The OISL also cited the United

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<sup>9</sup> UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Report of the OHCHR Investigation on Sri Lanka (OISL) [*hereinafter* OISL Report], A/HRC/30/CRP.2, 16 September 2015, paras. 85 and 782, [https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session30/Documents/A\\_HRC\\_30\\_CRP\\_2.docx](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session30/Documents/A_HRC_30_CRP_2.docx).

<sup>10</sup> *Id.* at paras. 804, 811, 823, and 839-840.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.* at para. 64.

<sup>12</sup> *Id.* at para. 1156.

<sup>13</sup> *Id.* at para. 789.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at paras. 759-760, 765, 839, 874-833; Annex III to the Report of the UN Secretary General's Internal Review Panel on UN action in Sri Lanka, September 2012, paras. 64 and 67; and UN Secretary-General, Report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts on Accountability in Sri Lanka [*hereinafter* UN PoE Report], 31 March 2011, p. 33-36. <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/POC%20Rep%20on%20Account%20in%20Sri%20Lanka.pdf>.

Nations Panel of Experts' conclusion that "there is compelling evidence that the SLA established, maintained and updated throughout the last five months of the conflict, an operational military capability to fire substantial quantities of artillery munitions into areas heavily populated with IDPs and specifically the No Fire Zones", and that there was "active and sustained SLA targeting of No Fire Zones"<sup>15</sup>.

In total, tens of thousands of civilians were killed by these attacks during the final stage of the war, and even more have been injured.<sup>16</sup> As the OISL observed, "[t]he manner the attacks were carried out suggests that the security forces may have treated all of the NFZs as a single military objective".<sup>17</sup>

Throughout this phase, the UN repeatedly communicated to the Sri Lankan government and raised concern over the intense and constant shelling and bombardment of civilians and civilian objects,<sup>18</sup> as well as inadequate humanitarian assistance.<sup>19</sup> UN communications also highlighted the estimated number of civilian casualties<sup>20</sup> and the estimated number of civilians still in the Wanni (based on UN staff's first-hand witness reports and documentation of events as well as satellite images<sup>21</sup>). Still, none of these communications stopped the Sri Lankan government's continuous attacks against civilians.

The ITJP and the OISL investigations have gathered credible evidence suggesting that the conduct of hostilities by the Sri Lankan forces has been characterised by a general disregard for the basic principles of distinction, proportionality, and precautions set out by IHL.

During this final phase of the war, **Kamal Gunaratne** was the commander of the 53 Division of the Sri Lanka Army from March 2008 onwards. According to the UN, the 53 Division was one of the units surrounding the LTTE.<sup>22</sup> The location and movement of the 53 Division could further be ascertained from the Sri Lanka MoD SitReps (*see Annex I*). These locations generally coincide with the location of the intentional and indiscriminate attacks against civilians by the Sri Lankan security forces (as well as medical and humanitarian personnel and objects with protected status under IHL), which leads to the reasonable inference that the 53 Division under **Kamal Gunaratne's** command and control was implicated in these attacks. These at a minimum include the following incidents:

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<sup>15</sup> OISL Report, para. 762.

<sup>16</sup> Although the exact number of civilian casualties varies depending on the reporting organization/entity and the Sri Lankan government continuously reported far fewer numbers of civilians within the conflict area than was actually the case, there is a detailed report by the UN that focused on determining the accurate number, and the total amount of deaths and injured civilians goes by tens of thousands by any measure. *See generally* Annexes II and III to the Report of the UN Secretary General's Internal Review Panel on UN action in Sri Lanka, September 2012.

<sup>17</sup> OISL Report, para. 1148.

<sup>18</sup> Annex III to the Report of the UN Secretary General's Internal Review Panel on UN action in Sri Lanka, September 2012, paras. 27, 31, 36, 40, 41, 48, 49, 53, 64, 73, 85, 88-91, 93, 134, 137, and 139, and OISL Report, para. 832.

<sup>19</sup> Annex III to the Report of the UN Secretary General's Internal Review Panel on UN action in Sri Lanka, September 2012, paras. 42-46, 84, 86-87, and 92.

<sup>20</sup> OISL Report, paras. 18 and 20.

<sup>21</sup> *Id.* at paras. 18-23, and Annex III to the Report of the UN Secretary General's Internal Review Panel on UN action in Sri Lanka, September 2012, para. 101.

<sup>22</sup> OISL Report, para. paras. 94-95.

a. *Attacks against civilians in PTK and the PTK Hospital in February 2009*

In early February 2009, the 53 Division was sent to reinforce government forces around Puthukkudiyiruppu (PTK), a small town within the Wanni where many LTTE leaders were based.<sup>23</sup> The division attacked PTK from the southern front and advanced to PTK East by March 2009.<sup>24</sup>

According to his own account, **Kamal Gunaratne** was physically present in PTK from 1 February, personally in charge of the battlefield south of PTK on the ground.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, at the time, he was not only commanding the 53 Division but also the 59 Division, Task Force 4, and two battalions of the Special Forces.<sup>26</sup> When reinforcements arrived, **Kamal Gunaratne** further reorganised the command structure to better manage all the soldiers in battle – he stated that the officers all operated out of what he calls “*my headquarters*” (emphasis added).<sup>27</sup> The fact that he was in effective control of the government forces south of PTK during this time is thus evident.

Additionally, his effective control and knowledge of the operations were facilitated by real-time images captured by UAVs. In his autobiography, he stated that there was a monitoring system in his operations room in early February 2009, where he could “observe real-time images captured by the UAVs, of the battlefields and the enemy territory” and “identify the areas of civilian concentration, the terrorist positions and their attack positions”.<sup>28</sup> Similar statements were made during his testimony before the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC).<sup>29</sup> Multiple other government officials have also invariably described on multiple occasions the great assistance offered by UAVs.<sup>30</sup> His detailed knowledge of the operations on the ground is also demonstrated by his description of the division’s movement through the surrounding jungle, the capture of one of the LTTE leader’s underground bunker complexes, and fighting in the outskirts of the PTK town.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Annex I; Annex II – Tissa Ravindra Perera, *LTTE plays its final trump*, THE NATION, 8 February 2009 (original article no longer available online); and Annex III – *Army Enters the Last Bastion*, THE NATION, 22 February 2009 (original article no longer available online).

<sup>24</sup> Annex IV – Tissa Ravindra Perera, *Fall of Last Tiger Bastion Imminent*, THE NATION, 1 March 2009 (original article no longer available online); Annex V – *House-to-House Fighting Delays Final Victory*, THE NATION, 8 March 2009 (original article no longer available online); Annex VI – Tissa Ravindra Perera, *Grand Finale of Battles?*, THE NATION, 22 March 2009 (original article no longer available online); and KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 687.

<sup>25</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 661, 672, 680, and 687.

<sup>26</sup> *Id.* at p. 662, 679, 682, and 688.

<sup>27</sup> *Id.* at p. 679.

<sup>28</sup> *Id.* at p. 681.

<sup>29</sup> Transcript of Kamal Gunaratne’s testimony before the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), September 8, 2010. Transcript on file with ITJP and available upon request.

<sup>30</sup> *See e.g.*, Annex III to the Report of the UN Secretary General’s Internal Review Panel on UN action in Sri Lanka, September 2012, para. 980; Transcript of Gotabaya Rajapaksa’s testimony before the LLRC, 17 August 2010; Transcript of Shavendra Silva’s testimony before the LLRC, 8 September 2010; and Transcript of Roshan Gunatilleke’s testimony before the LLRC, 8 September 2010. LLRC Transcripts on file with ITJP and available upon request.

<sup>31</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 684-685.

During this time when **Kamal Gunaratne** was physically commanding troops on the ground, significant bombardment in and around PTK by government forces was documented by the UN based on numerous witness accounts (including from UN and humanitarian workers) as well as UAV footage provided by the government.<sup>32</sup> This includes repeated attacks on the PTK hospital,<sup>33</sup> a medical facility protected under IHL. The hospital was clearly marked and visible to the military from satellite imagery and drone footage.<sup>34</sup> The UN received no information that the PTK hospital was being used by the LTTE for military purposes; it also has no information to suggest that the LTTE leadership took measures to prevent its forces from locating military positions close to the PTK hospital. Critically, no warnings were issued to civilians to evacuate from areas adjacent to military positions,<sup>35</sup> which is in breach of obligations under IHL to take all feasible precautions to protect civilians. The UN's findings are further corroborated by first-hand witnesses interviewed by the ITJP.<sup>36</sup>

These attacks are intentional and indiscriminate given the above-mentioned extensive use of UAV surveillance indicating the government's knowledge of the presence of large numbers of civilians and the protected status of the hospital and medical personnel. The indiscriminate nature of the attack is also evident in the nature of the weapons used – the attacks were carried out with unguided weapons and ammunition such as Multi-Barrelled Rocket Launchers (MBRLs)<sup>37</sup> – and thus also indicative of the government's intent in carrying out these indiscriminate attacks with these purposefully selected unguided weapons and ammunition. In particular, **Kamal Gunaratne** confirmed in his book that he gave orders to fire MBRLs in February 2009 from the front south of PTK, while being fully aware of its indiscriminate nature.<sup>38</sup>

The evidence establishes reasonable grounds to believe that **Kamal Gunaratne** both in his individual capacity and as a commanding officer, was responsible for the intentional and indiscriminate attacks on the PTK hospital and the unlawful killings of civilians as well as medical and humanitarian personnel in the area. He either ordered, authorised, or failed to prevent and punish these violations, in breach of his obligations under IHL.

*b. Attacks against civilians in April and May 2009*

Following the capture of PTK, the 53 Division further moved to Iranaippalai and the northern bank of the Nanthikadal Lagoon in late March/early April.<sup>39</sup> During

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<sup>32</sup> OISL Report, paras. 88, 750, and 801.

<sup>33</sup> *Id.* at paras. 801-834.

<sup>34</sup> *Id.* at para. 782. *See also* and Annex III to the Report of the UN Secretary General's Internal Review Panel on UN action in Sri Lanka, September 2012, paras. 69-106.

<sup>35</sup> OISL Report, paras. 833-834.

<sup>36</sup> Confidential ITJP witness statements.

<sup>37</sup> OISL Report, para. 750.

<sup>38</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 764-765.

<sup>39</sup> Annex VII – Tissa Ravindra Perera, *Army plans 'No Fire Zone' capture*, THE NATION, 5 April 2009 (original article no longer available online).

April 2009, the 53 Division advanced towards Valayarmadam and Mullivaikkal.<sup>40</sup> In the course of the troops' movement and together with other divisions, the 53 Division was involved in the warfare in towns along the way, including in Puttumatalan, Vellamullivaikkal, and Valayanmadam in April 2009,<sup>41</sup> and in Karaiyamullivaikkal in May 2009<sup>42</sup>.

The final battle which resulted in the capture of Puttumatalan lasted from 18 to 21 April. According to **Kamal Gunaratne**, the 53 Division first advanced from the south along the A35 road and captured a sandbank two kilometres south of the 58 Division's position.<sup>43</sup> The 53 Division then engaged in the final capture of Puttumatalan, "fighting non stop for three days".<sup>44</sup> During this time, according to OISL, civilians and civilian objects were repeatedly and relentlessly attacked.<sup>45</sup>

At the time of the attacks, more than 300,000 Tamil civilians were confined to a narrow spit of sandy land just 14km<sup>2</sup> (an area no larger than the size of London's Hyde Park), packed together without the possibility of escape or effective shelter.<sup>46</sup> The government's constant aerial surveillance renders it impossible for the security forces commanders to remain unaware of the presence the vast, densely concentrated civilian population. Indeed, the sustained shelling and bombardment cannot plausibly be perceived as accidental or incidental. Rather the pattern and intensity of the attacks indicates an intentional policy of targeting the trapped civilian population, in full knowledge of the potential devastating consequences.

In fact, **Kamal Gunaratne** explicitly said in his book that "around 300,000 civilians were cornered, along with all types of vehicles in Puttumatalan".<sup>47</sup> He even acknowledged civilian casualties in a defensive yet revealing manner, "it was inevitable some harm would come to them as they were corralled together among the terrorists," adding that "under the circumstances it was clear to anyone some harm would come to civilians caught in the middle of a battle".<sup>48</sup> However, the fact that he or any other officials of the government security forces did not even attempt to distinguish civilians from combatants and merely dismissed the large numbers of civilian casualties as "inevitable" shows that the attacks against civilians are indeed intentional and indiscriminate, clearly contrary to the requirements of IHL.

The UN found that civilian areas and protected objects in the vicinity of the 53 Division were subjected to repeated and systematic attacks. For example, from

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<sup>40</sup> Annex VIII – Tissa Ravindra Perera, *Biggest hostage rescue in military history*, THE NATION, 26 April 2009 (original article no longer available online); and KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 699.

<sup>41</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 689; Transcript of Kamal Gunaratne's testimony before the LLRC, 8 September 2010 (on file with ITJP and available upon request); and *How top secret visit went through*, LLRP BLOG, 19 April 2009, <https://lrp.wordpress.com/2009/04/19/>.

<sup>42</sup> Annex IX – Tissa Ravindra Perera, *Security Forces Poised for Victory*, THE NATION, 17 May 2009, (original article no longer available online); and OISL Report, paras. 93-94.

<sup>43</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 696.

<sup>44</sup> *Id.* at p. 689.

<sup>45</sup> See generally OISL Report, paras. 835-872.

<sup>46</sup> *Id.* at paras. 83 and 835.

<sup>47</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 694.

<sup>48</sup> *Id.* at p. 695.

February to April 2009, the Puttumatalan hospital was attacked numerous times<sup>49</sup> despite being clearly marked with the Red Cross emblem on the roof and walls and its GPS coordinates communicated to the Sri Lankan security forces positioned approximately one kilometre away across the lagoon – the troops were so close that the hospital could be seen with the naked eye; the UN also stated that government forces were aware of the location and function of the hospital via aerial surveillance as well.<sup>50</sup> A nearby UN hub likewise distinctly marked, and whose GPS coordinates similarly communicated to the security forces also came under attack.<sup>51</sup> The UN explicitly identified the presence of the 53 Division among the government security forces operating in the area at the relevant time,<sup>52</sup> which is further corroborated by MoD SitReps.<sup>53</sup> These attacks on clearly marked medical and humanitarian facilities, in an area under effective control of forces including the 53 Division, raise serious concerns of direct violations of the principle of distinction and the prohibition against targeting protected objects under IHL. Other non-government organisations as well as the U.S. government have also documented these unlawful attacks;<sup>54</sup> witnesses interviewed by ITJP offered further corroboration and details.<sup>55</sup>

In May, the UN estimated that more than 100,000 civilians remained trapped within an area of 3km<sup>2</sup> and were subjected to daily shelling and bombardment.<sup>56</sup> The 53 Division was one of the units that surrounded the area.<sup>57</sup> **Kamal Gunaratne**'s autobiography further described how he continued the fighting and attacks under the orders of then Secretary of Defence Gotabaya Rajapaksa,<sup>58</sup> an individual sanctioned by Canada for gross and systematic violations of human rights during Sri Lanka's civil conflict<sup>59</sup>. Again, given the small area, the extreme population density, and the government's constant aerial surveillance, it is impossible that security forces officials such as **Kamal Gunaratne** was unaware of the presence of large numbers civilians and the attacks against them. The lack of effort to distinguish civilians from combatants and the continuous and repeated nature of the attacks clearly reflect an intent to carry out the attacks indiscriminately in violation of IHL.

The above establishes reasonable grounds to believe that **Kamal Gunaratne** was involved in the unlawful killings of civilians during the final phase of the civil war, especially those in April and May 2009.

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<sup>49</sup> OISL Report, paras. 843-845.

<sup>50</sup> *Id.* at para. 840.

<sup>51</sup> *Id.* at para. 840.

<sup>52</sup> *Id.* at para. 840.

<sup>53</sup> Annex I.

<sup>54</sup> See e.g., International Crisis Group, War Crimes in Sri Lanka, 17 May 2010, <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-asia/sri-lanka/war-crimes-sri-lanka>; Public Interest Advocacy Centre, *Island of Impunity? Investigation into international crimes in the final stages of the Sri Lankan Civil War*, 12 February 2014, <https://jec.org.au/resources/island-of-impunity/>; and U.S. Department of State, *Report to Congress on Incidents During the Recent Conflict in Sri Lanka*, 2009, <https://2009-2017.state.gov/documents/organization/131025.pdf>.

<sup>55</sup> Confidential ITJP witness statements.

<sup>56</sup> OISL Report, paras. 93 and 873-887.

<sup>57</sup> *Id.* at para. 873.

<sup>58</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, *ROAD TO NANDIKADAL* (2016), p. 710-712.

<sup>59</sup> Government of Canada – Global Affairs, *Sanctions imposed on Sri Lankan state officials*, 10 January 2023, <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2023/01/sanctions-imposed-on-sri-lankan-state-officials.html>.

## 2. Extrajudicial Killings of Surrendered LTTE Members *Hors de Combat*

In addition to the unlawful attacks directed against civilians, the UN also established that the 53 Division, while operating in the north of Vellamullivaikkal, accepted the surrenders of LTTE members.<sup>60</sup> It further concluded that some of these individuals, after having laid down their arms and being *hors de combat*, were subsequently disappeared or summarily executed, in flagrant violation of IHL.<sup>61</sup> The UN also concluded that Isaipriya, a prominent Tamil TV broadcaster and singer, was extrajudicially executed by the 53 Division after her surrender, based on the Sri Lanka Army's own communique on its official website in which the 53 Division itself claimed responsibility.<sup>62</sup>

As the commander of the 53 Division at the time, **Kamal Gunaratne** has admitted in his own book that he issued special instructions to troops under his direct command to kill those who attempted to surrender, whom he regarded as “terrorists”,<sup>63</sup> although his testimony before the LLRC claimed the surrendered combatants were regarded as internally displaced people<sup>64</sup>. Still, he further stated in his book that the surrendered LTTE cadres were handed over to intelligence agencies and sent for rehabilitation, and that those in rehabilitation would still need to be under surveillance,<sup>65</sup> which implies his true attitude towards the surrendered LTTE members. He has also claimed on Facebook that he was proud to be the commander of the division that killed Vellupillai Prabhakaran.<sup>66</sup>

Moreover, as the commander of the 53 Division, **Kamal Gunaratne** stayed informed of the situation on the ground as he confirmed he had independent access to intelligence and equipment that enabled him to command troops in real time and to send troops to locations where hostilities were taking place. As mentioned above, he testified before the LLRC about being able to have real-time information through UAVs on “exactly” where his troops were.<sup>67</sup> There is no evidence that the chain of command had broken down to the point where **Kamal Gunaratne** could not exercise effective control over his troops or could not stay up-to-date of their activities.

Given his position as the commanding officer, the existence of intact and functioning chain of command, and the evidence of orders he gave to his subordinates operating in areas where extrajudicial killings occurred, there are reasonable grounds to believe that **Kamal Gunaratne** knew or at a minimum had reason to know of information clearly

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<sup>60</sup> OISL Report, para. 287.

<sup>61</sup> *Id.* at paras. 95 and 285-322.

<sup>62</sup> *Id.* at para. 314.

<sup>63</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 716-717 and 721.

<sup>64</sup> Transcript of Kamal Gunaratne's testimony before the LLRC, 8 September 2010. Transcript on file with ITJP and available upon request.

<sup>65</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 711.

<sup>66</sup> Kamal Gunaratne, Facebook post on 13 June 2009. *See also* Sri Lanka Army, *New Wannai Commander Takes Office*, <https://www.army.lk/news/new-wanni-commander-takes-office>, (“Major General Gunaratne who has a proven record of warfare was the one in charge of Nanthikandal lagoon area when Prabhakaran heaved his last”).

<sup>67</sup> Transcript of Kamal Gunaratne's testimony before the LLRC, 8 September 2010. Transcript on file with ITJP and available upon request.

indicating that the troops under his command and control were committing enforced disappearances and summarily executing those who had surrendered, and consciously disregarded such information, failing to act to prevent these violations of human rights and to punish his subordinates.

### C. Arbitrary detention, Torture, Enforced Disappearances, and Extrajudicial Killings at Joseph Camp

After the civil war, from July 2009 to December 2010, **Kamal Gunaratne** was in command of the Wannu Security Forces Headquarters (SFHQ-W) in Vavuniya,<sup>68</sup> also known as Joseph Camp. It has been widely established that Joseph Camp functioned as one of Sri Lanka's most notorious torture site.<sup>69</sup>

Located in Vavuniya, Joseph Camp has been a major hub for military and counter terrorism operations in the northern districts of Sri Lanka both during and after the civil war.<sup>70</sup> It is close to the town's centre and is surrounded by residential communities, with a number of distinct official entrances.<sup>71</sup> Victims were usually arrested or abducted under the pretext of suspected links to the LTTE, transported (blindfolded or hooded) to Joseph Camp, and detained there under extremely inhumane conditions.<sup>72</sup> Torture and sexual violence are pervasive and employed with total impunity. According to witnesses interviewed by ITJP (many of whom are now in the UK), Joseph Camp maintained purpose-built interrogation and torture chambers as an integral component of a carefully planned and deliberate policy of torture and sexual violence as well as other human rights violations and abuses.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, the torture facilitated not only the intelligence-gathering imperatives of the security services, but in many instances was designed to humiliate and break detainees, whilst gratifying an array of grotesque perversions by

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<sup>68</sup> Security Force Headquarters (Wanni), Past Commanders, <https://alt.army.lk/sfhqwanni/past-commanders>.

<sup>69</sup> See e.g., ITJP, *Joseph Camp*, 16 March 2017, <https://www.itjpsl.com/reports/joseph-camp>; Human Rights Watch, "We Will Teach You a Lesson": *Sexual Violence against Tamils by Sri Lankan Security Forces*, 26 February 2013, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2013/02/26/we-will-teach-you-lesson/sexual-violence-against-tamils-sri-lankan-security-forces>; Report of the Special Rapporteur, Sir Nigel Rodley, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 1999/32, Civil and Political Rights including Questions of Torture and Detention, Commission on Human Rights, E/CN.4/2000/9, 2 February 2000, para. 966; OISL Report, paras. 371, 557, 563, 589, 595, 597, and 602; UN Human Rights Council, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment on his mission to Sri Lanka*, A/HRC/34/54/Add.2, 22 December 2016, <https://www.refworld.org/reference/mission/unhrc/2016/en/115640>; *R (on the application of Sinnathuri) v. Secretary of State for the Home Department*, [2008] EWHC 2917 (Admin), United Kingdom: High Court (England and Wales), 4 December 2008, <https://www.refworld.org/jurisprudence/caselaw/gbrhcqb/2008/en/64030>; Freedom from Torture, *Sri Lanka: The urgency of bearing witness*, 27 July 2009, <https://www.freedomfromtorture.org/news-and-stories/sri-lanka-the-urgency-of-bearing-witness>; and Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice, *Crimes against humanity in Sri Lanka's northern province: a legal analysis of post-war human rights violations*, 4 March 2014, [https://cja.org/cja/downloads/Crimes%20Against%20Humanity%20in%20Sri%20Lanka\\_s%20Northern%20Province.pdf](https://cja.org/cja/downloads/Crimes%20Against%20Humanity%20in%20Sri%20Lanka_s%20Northern%20Province.pdf).

<sup>70</sup> ITJP, *Joseph Camp*, 16 March 2017, <https://www.itjpsl.com/reports/joseph-camp>, p. 14.

<sup>71</sup> *Id.* at p. 15.

<sup>72</sup> *Id.* at p. 15 and 20-21. Detainees were held in extremely small cells with no windows and no lights, in filthy conditions and without ablution facilities. Detainees also mentioned not being allowed to keep their clothing on during incarceration or only in their underwear. There is also little food and medical care.

<sup>73</sup> *Id.* at p. 23-37.

security force members.<sup>74</sup> Repeated allegations of bribery and extortion by ransom for the release of witnesses also corroborate an established pattern of organized crime at the heart of Sri Lanka's security services.<sup>75</sup>

Given **Kamal Gunaratne's** role as the military leader in charge of and in physical proximity to Joseph Camp at the relevant time, he knew or ought to have known of the violations committed there.<sup>76</sup> His failure to take the necessary and reasonable measures to prevent these violations of human rights and to punish those responsible which constitutes a breach of his command responsibility under international law.

#### D. Arbitrary detention, Torture, Enforced Disappearances, and Extrajudicial Killings in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Camps

From at least November 2009, **Kamal Gunaratne** was appointed the "Competent Authority for IDPs" in the Northern Province,<sup>77</sup> which put him in overall charge of IDP camps such as Manik Farm which illegally detained hundreds of thousands of people.<sup>78</sup> Speaking at a defence-related seminar in Sri Lanka in 2012, **Kamal Gunaratne** confirmed that he was the Competent Authority for IDPs, stating that his job was to "take care of all activities related to IDPs" in the Northern Province and to "house them properly".<sup>79</sup>

The UN established that the screening and interrogation processes at the IDP camps, which continued throughout 2009 and into 2010, resulted in widespread and systematic violations against Tamil civilians, including acts of torture, rape, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killings.<sup>80</sup> **Kamal Gunaratne** in his testimony before the LLRC acknowledged his personal involvement in the screening process,<sup>81</sup> which provides direct evidence of his participation in, or at minimum acquiescence to practices that constitute serious breaches of international human rights and humanitarian law.

Given his command position and his direct involvement in the screening process during which the abovementioned human rights abuses took place, there are reasonable grounds to believe that **Kamal Gunaratne** knew or had reason to know about these human rights

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<sup>74</sup> *Id.* and p. 43. For example, one of the 60 informers based in Joseph Camp after the war, described seeing a woman tied to a chair and being raped and sexually violated by multiple perpetrators, her breasts bitten and her body covered in scratch marks. He said part of his job was not just to identify his former comrades but also "beautiful girls" for the military to rape at nights when they were drinking. He described hearing them bragging about each raping at least 15 Tamil women. In another incident, soldiers tried to force a male detainee to rape a female detainee, and they laughed at the two victims and took photographs. *Id.* at p. 32.

<sup>75</sup> *Id.* at p. 37.

<sup>76</sup> *Id.* at p. 43.

<sup>77</sup> OISL Report, paras. 1065 and 1074.

<sup>78</sup> Visit of High Commissioner H.E. Shri Alok Prasad to IDP camps in Menik Farm, Vavuniya, High Commission of India in Colombo, Sri Lanka, <https://hcicolombo.gov.in/press?id=eyJpdil6IjNoeGFYS3E4ZFJaOERWMGZnZEdFamc9PSIsInZhbHVlIjoiajJMdzkzUXpWUG5nYWJQclhSQ0VNdz09IiwibWFjIjoiaWNTUxNDNmOTA4NDYwNzZlZDg4NGZiNzkxMTYyMmlwZjdjMjZlZjE2YjE2MjA2MwVlZODI5MjYzMWVlZmMlYTdmNyJ9>.

<sup>79</sup> Maj Gen G.D.H.K. Gunarathne 01 – Defseminar 2012, SL Army Director Training Youtube Channel, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mQ4AoEHbMI> (7:13-7:25).

<sup>80</sup> OISL Report, para. 366.

<sup>81</sup> Transcript of Kamal Gunaratne's testimony before the LLRC, 8 September 2010, and OISL Report, para. 1065.

violations and consciously disregarded such information, failing to act to prevent such violations and to punish his subordinates.

## Section 5. Application of Legal Standards

ITJP submits that, pursuant to the GHRS Regulations, there are reasonable grounds to suspect that **Kamal Gunaratne** is an involved person (Regulation 6(1)(a)) responsible for (Regulation 6(3)(a)) serious violations of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Regulation 4(2)(a) and (b)). ITJP further submits that it would be appropriate to designate the perpetrator, having regard to the purposes of deterring and providing accountability for serious violations of human rights (Regulation 6(1)(b)(i)) and the likely significant effects of the designation on those persons (Regulation 6(1)(b)(ii)).

### Serious Violation of the Right to Life and the Right Not to Be Subjected to Torture

The right to life and the right to freedom from torture are two of the three protected rights under Regulation 4(2) of the GHRS Regulations.

#### A. Right to Life

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of persons.<sup>82</sup> The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights further provides that every human being has the inherent right to life and prohibits the arbitrary deprivation of life.<sup>83</sup> This prohibition is non-derogable and therefore applicable at all times.<sup>84</sup> This is a principle not only in international treaties but also in customary international law; in their statements before the International Court of Justice in the Nuclear Weapons case and Nuclear Weapons case, several States which were not at the time party to the main human rights treaties stressed the elementary and non-derogable character of the right to life.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, the prohibition of “arbitrary deprivation of the right to life” under human rights law also encompasses unlawful killing in the conduct of hostilities, i.e., the killing of civilians and persons *hors de combat*.<sup>86</sup> The Sri Lankan security forces’ unlawful killings of civilians and surrendered LTTE members *hors de combat* during the civil war clearly constitute violations to the right to life.

Additionally, extrajudicial executions are closely associated with the arbitrary detention, torture, and enforced disappearances that took place in Joseph Camp and the IDP camps elaborated above. Such extrajudicial killings also constitute violations of the right to life, which, according to the UN, shall be prohibited and criminalised.<sup>87</sup> Furthermore, according to the Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance, enforced disappearances and torture constitute a grave threat to the right to life.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art. 3.

<sup>83</sup> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Art. 6.

<sup>84</sup> *Id.* at Art. 4(2).

<sup>85</sup> ICRC Database, Customary IHL, Violence to Life, <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/customary-ihl/v1/rule89>.

<sup>86</sup> *Id.*

<sup>87</sup> UN Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions (1989), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/executions.pdf>, and UN Manual on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions (1991; revised 2016), <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-executions/minnesota-protocol>.

<sup>88</sup> Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance, Art. 1(2), <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-protection-all-persons-enforced-disappearance>.

## B. Right Not to Be Subjected to Torture

The UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (UNCAT) defines torture as “any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person” for the purposes of obtaining a confession, punishment, intimidation, coercion or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind.<sup>89</sup> It is clear that the continuous and systematic abuses perpetrated by the Sri Lankan army at Joseph Camp and in IDP camps meet this standard. These actions constitute torture under the international definition, as they caused severe physical pain and were intentionally inflicted for the purpose of obtaining confessions, intimidation, coercing the provision of information and punishment.

Enforced disappearances, which place the victims outside the protection of the law and inflict severe suffering on them and their families, also constitutes violations of the right not to be subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, arbitrary detention increases the risk of torture.

### **Role of the Individual Perpetrator**

The GHRS Regulations provide for the sanction of individuals who are “involved persons” on the basis that they were “responsible for” (Regulation 6(3)(a)) serious violations of human rights. As explained previously, **Kamal Gunaratne** held command positions within the Sri Lanka Army during the periods in which the severe human rights violations detailed above were perpetrated.

During Operation Riviresa where enforced disappearances were widely reported and which further entailed arbitrary detention, torture (including sexual violence), and extrajudicial executions, **Kamal Gunaratne** was the Commander of the 6 Gajaba Regiment which participated in the operation. His detailed description of soldiers looting Tamil properties during the operation indicates that he was well informed of the situation on the ground. Given his physical presence in the region where the human rights violations took place, his command position, and his detailed knowledge of the soldiers’ activities, there are reasonable grounds to believe that **Kamal Gunaratne** knew or had reason to know that the troops under his command were committing the violations, and chose to consciously disregard such information, failing to act to prevent these violations of human rights and to punish his subordinates.

During the final phase of the civil war when the Sri Lankan security forces deliberately and continuously targeted and attacked civilians and civilian objects located within the NFZs, **Kamal Gunaratne** was the commander of the 53 Division which surrounded the LTTE. The location and movement of the 53 Division coincide with the location of intentional and

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<sup>89</sup> UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Art. 1. The UNCAT definition of torture also requires that the actions be carried out with the involvement of a public official or a person acting in an official capacity. However, the GHRS Regulations allow for the designation of non-State actors if the acts would have amounted to a serious violation of the relevant protected right, had they been carried out by a State: see Regulation 4(2).

<sup>90</sup> Declaration on the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance, Art. 1(2).

indiscriminate attacks against civilians (and persons and objects with protected status under IHL), which leads to the reasonable inference that the 53 Division under **Kamal Gunaratne**'s command and control was involved in these attacks. Importantly, regarding attacks on civilians in PTK and against the PTK hospital in February 2009, by his own admission, **Kamal Gunaratne** was physically present in PTK from 1 February, personally in charge of the battlefield south of PTK on the ground.<sup>91</sup> At the time, he was not only commanding the 53 Division but also the 59 Division, Task Force 4, and two battalions of the Special Forces.<sup>92</sup> When reinforcements arrived, **Kamal Gunaratne** personally reorganised the command structure to better manage all the soldiers in battle – he stated that the officers all operated out of what he calls “*my headquarters*” (emphasis added).<sup>93</sup> That he was in effective control of the government forces south of PTK during this time is thus evident. Additionally, his effective control and knowledge of the operations were facilitated by real-time images captured by UAVs. **Kamal Gunaratne** further confirmed in his book that he gave orders to fire MBRLs in February 2009 from the front south of PTK, while being fully aware of its indiscriminate nature.<sup>94</sup> Regarding attacks in April and May, the small sizes of the NFZs, the extreme population density, and the government’s constant aerial surveillance make it impossible for the security forces commanders to remain unaware of the presence of civilians and the attacks against them. In fact, **Kamal Gunaratne** explicitly acknowledged the large number of civilians and civilian casualties.<sup>95</sup> In regard to the extrajudicial killings of LTTE members who had laid down their arms and were *hors de combat*, **Kamal Gunaratne** admitted in his book that he issued special instructions to troops under his direct command to kill those who attempted to surrender, whom he regarded as “terrorists”.<sup>96</sup> There is no evidence that the chain of command had broken down to the point where **Kamal Gunaratne** could not exercise effective control over his troops or could not stay up-to-date of their activities.

After the war, **Kamal Gunaratne** was in charge of Joseph Camp from July 2009 to December 2010. Given the pervasiveness of arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killings that took place there and the blatant impunity, it is improbable that Sri Lanka’s top military leadership such as **Kamal Gunaratne** are unaware of the violations carried out at this camp. From at least November 2009, he was also appointed the “Competent Authority for IDPs” in the Northern Province, which put him in overall charge of IDP camps which illegally detained hundreds of thousands of people. Importantly, **Kamal Gunaratne** himself admitted to being involved in the screening process which the UN found to have exposed the Tamils to torture, rape, enforced disappearances, and extrajudicial killings.

More generally, the evidence set out in this submission demonstrates a pattern and practice of systematic human rights violations by the Sri Lankan army that could have existed only with the acquiescence, tolerance, or active endorsement of officials at all levels of authority. Given the widespread, systematic and publicly documented nature of these violations including unlawful killings, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, torture, and sexual violence, over an extended period, the ITJP submits that **Kamal Gunaratne** was knowingly complicit in these abuses. He knew or had reason to know that the units under his command and the

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<sup>91</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, ROAD TO NANDIKADAL (2016), p. 661, 672, 680, and 687.

<sup>92</sup> *Id.* at p. 662, 679, 682, and 688.

<sup>93</sup> *Id.* at p. 679.

<sup>94</sup> *Id.* at p. 764-765.

<sup>95</sup> *Id.* at p. 694-695.

<sup>96</sup> *Id.* at p. 716-717 and 721.

subordinates within those units, were committing IHL and human rights violations. Despite this knowledge, he failed to take necessary and reasonable measures to prevent the commission of further violations, halt the abuses or to investigate them in a genuine effort to impose punish those responsible. Accordingly, Kamal Gunaratne qualifies as an “involved person” who is “responsible for” serious violations of human rights, within the meaning of Regulation 6(3)(a).

### **Appropriateness of Designation**

The GHRS Regulations require that the designation be “appropriate”, having regard to the purposes of the Regulations (Regulation 6(1)(b)(i)) and the likely significant effects of the designation on the person designated (Regulation 6(1)(b)(ii)).

Designating **Kamal Gunaratne** would meet both purposes of the GHRS Regulations in deterring and providing accountability for (Regulation 4(1)) serious violations of human rights. The Sri Lanka Army’s practices of unlawful killings, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, and torture (including sexual violence) are extensive, systematic, and long-lasting. Imposing sanctions will send a clear message to the Sri Lankan government that egregious human rights violations in the name of national security will not be tolerated by the UK. Sanctioning **Kamal Gunaratne** specifically will hold to account one of the individuals that bear ultimate responsibility for the widespread and systematic practices of a wide range of human rights violations.

Sanctioning the perpetrators is consistent with the factors the UK Government has indicated it will consider when deciding whether to designate. It will advance two of the UK’s human rights priority themes: the prevention of torture and prevention of sexual violence in or related to conflict. The lack of prospect for domestic accountability, as well as the UK’s March 2025 designation of other Sri Lankan army officials for similar abuses<sup>97</sup> further make this situation an appropriate and urgent case for the use of sanctions (elaborated below).

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<sup>97</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, The Rt Hon David Lammy MP and Catherine West MP, *UK sanctions for human rights violations and abuses during the Sri Lankan civil war*, 24 March 2025, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sanctions-for-human-rights-violations-and-abuses-during-the-sri-lankan-civil-war>.

## Section 7. Relevant Policy Considerations for Decision to Designate

It is in the UK Government's interest to ensure that unlawful killings, arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, sexual violence, and torture and other prohibited forms of ill treatment do not go unnoticed or unpunished. The Sri Lanka Army's human rights violations are well-known and well-documented. The designation of **Kamal Gunaratne** would demonstrate the commitment and leadership of the UK to promoting accountability among human rights violators in Sri Lanka.

The designation aligns with the purposes of deterring and providing accountability for serious violations of human rights set out in the GHRs Regulations and particularly in the context of Sri Lanka. The Secretary of State, in announcing UK sanctions in March 2025 for human rights violations and abuses during the Sri Lankan civil war, has stated:

“The UK government is committed to human rights in Sri Lanka, including seeking accountability for human rights violations and abuses which took place during the civil war, and which continue to have an impact on communities today.”<sup>98</sup>

Two of the four sanctioned individuals announced at the time are former Sri Lankan army officials who were similarly involved in torture, sexual violence, and unlawful killings of civilians and surrendered LTTE members during the civil war. A further designation for **Kamal Gunaratne** would reinforce the existing UK sanctions' aim to “seek accountability for serious human rights violations and abuses ... and to prevent a culture of impunity”.<sup>99</sup> This is all the more appropriate considering that **Kamal Gunaratne** was trained by British army officer Colonel John S. Field CBE in 1997 and 1998, when **Gunaratne** was a student at Sri Lanka's Army Command & Staff College (now renamed as Defence Services Command and Staff College) and Colonel Field was the British Military Adviser Training.<sup>100</sup>

Moreover, as set out in its policy paper, “Global Human Rights Sanctions: Consideration of Designations” (the Policy Paper), in deciding whether a person should be considered for designation, the UK Government has committed to taking into account all “relevant considerations.”<sup>101</sup> A number of the specific factors identified in the Policy Paper are present in this situation, as set out below.

### A. UK Government's Human Rights Priorities

The recommended sanctions designations align with at least two of the UK's key human rights priorities:

- **Prevention of torture, and**
- **Prevention of sexual violence in conflict.**

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<sup>98</sup> *Id.*

<sup>99</sup> *Id.*

<sup>100</sup> Phil Miller, *Britain's Dirty War against the Tamil people – 1979-2009*, June 2014, p. 20, [https://www.puradsimedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/britains\\_dirty\\_war.pdf](https://www.puradsimedia.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/britains_dirty_war.pdf).

<sup>101</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, *Policy Paper: Global Human Rights Sanctions: consideration of designations*, 6 July 2020, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/global-human-rights-sanctions-factors-in-designating-people-involved-in-human-rights-violations/global-human-rights-sanctions-consideration-of-targets>.

The Sri Lankan government's systematic use of torture directly undermines progress towards the prevention of torture. Similarly, the prevalence of sexual violence during the civil war and in post-war detention facilities implicates the priority theme of preventing conflict-related sexual violence.

Other factors to consider include:

### 1. Nature of the Victims

The Sri Lankan diaspora has a substantial presence in the UK, with many members having advocated for accountability for human rights abuses committed in Sri Lanka. Moreover, as the FCDO has itself stated, "The UK and Sri Lanka share strong cultural, economic and people to people ties."<sup>102</sup> Sri Lankans living in the UK as well as communities and allies in other countries have been pushing for UK sanctions against individuals like **Kamal Gunaratne** for years.<sup>103</sup> Given the community's sustained calls for action, the designation of **Kamal Gunaratne** would be consistent with community expectations and prior UK actions, including the sanctions imposed on Shavendra Silva and others in March 2025.<sup>104</sup>

### 2. Seriousness of the Conduct

Extensive and credible evidence, including UN reports, witness testimonies, NGO reports, and press reporting referenced in Section 4, confirms that the Sri Lanka Army engaged in widespread and systematic violations including arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, torture, sexual violence, and extrajudicial killings of civilians and surrendered LTTE members. The gravity and systematic nature of these violations is clearly serious enough to warrant sanctions.

### 3. Status and Connections of the Involved Persons

Given **Kamal Gunaratne's** leadership position in the Sri Lanka Army during the relevant time, sanctioning him "would have most impact in providing accountability for the violation or abuse in question."<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, The Rt Hon David Lammy MP and Catherine West MP, *UK sanctions for human rights violations and abuses during the Sri Lankan civil war*, 24 March 2025, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sanctions-for-human-rights-violations-and-abuses-during-the-sri-lankan-civil-war>.

<sup>103</sup> See e.g. *Time to Use Human Rights Sanctions in Sri Lanka*, SRI LANKA CAMPAIGN FOR PEACE & JUSTICE, 10 December 2021, <https://srilankacampaign.org/time-to-use-human-rights-sanctions-in-sri-lanka/>; Letter to the Secretary of State on Sri Lanka from Members and Friends of the UK Atrocity Prevention Working Group, 1 July 2022, <https://protectionapproaches.org/news/f/uk-atrocity-prevention-working-group-letter-on-sri-lanka>; *UK govt. urged to impose sanctions against Shavendra, Kamal, Pillayan*, LANKAN LEADER, 24 November 2024, <https://lankaleader.lk/news/10941-uk-govt-urged-to-impose-sanctions-against-shavendra-kamal-pillayan>.

<sup>104</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, The Rt Hon David Lammy MP and Catherine West MP, *UK sanctions for human rights violations and abuses during the Sri Lankan civil war*, 24 March 2025, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sanctions-for-human-rights-violations-and-abuses-during-the-sri-lankan-civil-war>.

<sup>105</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, *Policy Paper: Global Human Rights Sanctions: consideration of designations*, 6 July 2020, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/global-human-rights-sanctions-factors-in-designating-people-involved-in-human-rights-violations/global-human-rights-sanctions-consideration-of-targets>.

As the commander of the units that committed the violations, **Kamal Gunaratne** carried ultimate responsibility for the systematic practices of abuse carried out by the security agents under his command. He is therefore an appropriate individual to be held to account for those violations and human rights.

#### 4. Effectiveness of Other Measures

Domestic accountability for these abuses is highly unlikely. The sanctionable activities appear to form part of a broader policy approach that has been set at the highest levels of the Sri Lankan government for decades. Instead of being held accountable, those responsible for the violations, including **Kamal Gunaratne**, have earned promotion from higher authorities (see Section 2) and public praise from state media. Even after his retirement from the military, he has been rewarded with public office positions, including diplomatic postings which has been characterised as “safe havens for criminals who carried out ... human rights abuses” under the Rajapaksa’s administrations<sup>106</sup>. He has also received several gallantry awards, distinguished service medals, campaign medals and service medals for his “acts of bravery and exceptional acts of valour in the battlefield”.<sup>107</sup> His political career continued to prosper until September 2024, when the new government was formed.

**Kamal Gunaratne** has remained remorseless and consistently defended or outright denied the unlawful killings of civilians during wartime, with statements and behaviour that reveals his complete lack of respect for human rights and hate speech against Tamils, including the Tamil diaspora in the UK.<sup>108</sup> He has also expressed Islamophobic views after the Easter Sunday attack in April 2019.<sup>109</sup>

**Gunaratne**’s post-conflict conduct has been marked by persistent disregard for human rights. The culture of impunity and the close relationship to the higher political

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<sup>106</sup> *Sri Lanka’s war general faces investigation over embassy murder*, ECONOMY NEXT, 5 May 2017, <https://economynext.com/sri-lanka-embassy-war-general-faces-investigation-over-embassy-murder-7508/>.

<sup>107</sup> College of Military Engineering and Technology Sri Lanka, *Patrons - General Kamal Gunaratne (Retd)*, [https://www.cmetsl.lk/cmetsl\\_patron.php?patID=MQ==](https://www.cmetsl.lk/cmetsl_patron.php?patID=MQ==).

<sup>108</sup> See e.g., *Supporters Of New Constitution ‘Must Be Killed’: Major General Kamal Gunaratne*, COLOMBO TELEGRAPH, 24 October 2017, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/supporters-of-new-constitution-must-be-killed-major-general-kamal-gunaratne/>; Video clip of Kamal Gunaratne’s speech on 28 March 2018. <https://www.facebook.com/viyathmagaPBF/videos/2162293243798820/> (demonstrating lack of respect towards senior UN officials working on human rights, dismissive attitude towards accountability for the past, and opposition to a political settlement or any concessions to Tamils – translated transcript of relevant parts on file with ITJP and available upon request); Video clip of Kamal Gunaratne’s speech at a 1 March 2019 conference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wB3sXNm-PDU&t=9s> (in support of former UK defence attaché Brig. Priyanka Fernando, subject of a Public Order trial in Westminster Magistrate’s Court in the UK after being filmed thrice making throat-slitting gestures towards Tamil protestors outside the Sri Lankan High Commission on 4 Feb 2018, repeating the gesture himself on camera, and saying the whole incident made his blood boil); KAMAL GUNARATNE, *ROAD TO NANDIKADAL* (2016); Shanika Sriyananda, *Road to Nandikadal*, DAILY FT, 6 September 2016, archived at: <https://sangam.org/road-nandikadal-maj-gen-kamal-gunaratne/>; and *Sri Lanka calls for sharing of UK military intelligence to tackle Tamil diaspora*, TAMIL GUARDIAN, 16 January 2020, <https://www.tamilguardian.com/content/sri-lanka-calls-sharing-uk-military-intelligence-tackle-tamil-diaspora>.

<sup>109</sup> *The measure of patriotism*, DAILY FT, 17 December 2021, archived at <https://dbsjeyaraj.com/dbsj/?p=75385> (he defended State Intelligence Service Director Suresh Sallay, allegedly involved in the attack, by saying, “Sallay is a Muslim name, but as far as I know he is not involved in extremism. He cannot even speak a word of Tamil or Arabic. He has not even read the Qur’an. He is married to a Buddhist lady and both their children have Sinhalese names”, which suggests that he thinks one is involved in terrorism simply because they are practising Muslims).

leadership has emboldened **Kamal Gunaratne** to commit more wanton and blatant acts of violence in both his public and private life. In December 2016, **Kamal Gunaratne** allegedly squeezed the throat of a student at DS Senanayake College and threatened to pulverize him, on the grounds that the student was accused of bullying **Gunaratne's** nephew.<sup>110</sup> **Kamal Gunaratne** initially denied the allegations on the grounds that he was not in Sri Lanka at the time,<sup>111</sup> but later admitted to the police that he had been involved in a dispute at the request of a relative.<sup>112</sup> The case was settled out of court<sup>113</sup> with no real consequences for **Kamal Gunaratne**. In 2017, while the Sri Lankan deputy ambassador to Brazil, he came under investigation over the murder of an employee named Nimal Rupasinghe, yet no follow-up has been found after he was called to the police to give a statement.<sup>114</sup> In 2019, while the Administrative Director of a private school, **Kamal Gunaratne** reportedly humiliated several children with pending school fees by locking them up in classrooms and not allowing them to attend class; he later terminated two children who did not pay the fees.<sup>115</sup> It was further alleged that **Gunaratne** used his brother in the police emergency services (Assistant Superintendent of Police Amith Gunaratne) to take four parents in for inquiry as a pressure tactic.<sup>116</sup> However, **Gunaratne** simply resigned from the school and was never held accountable despite parents' complaints against him to the police.<sup>117</sup>

It is imperative that **Kamal Gunaratne** is no longer able to enjoy impunity, and, given the systematic and widespread nature of the human rights violations that **Kamal Gunaratne** has committed over decades, it is long overdue that he be held responsible through some accountability mechanism. A designation based on the GHRS Regulations would be a step forward in the right direction.

## B. Other factors

<sup>110</sup> 'Major General Kamal Gunaratne seized me by the neck and assaulted me while threatening to break all my bones', LANKA-E-NEWS, 17 December 2016, <https://www.lankaenews.com/news/1789/en>.

<sup>111</sup> Retired Major General Kamal assaults Ordinary Level student of DS?, GOSSIP LANKA NEWS, 17 December 2016, <https://english.gossiplankanews.com/2016/12/retired-major-general-kamal-assaults.html>.

<sup>112</sup> *Id.*

<sup>113</sup> D.B.S. Jeyaraj, *Major-General (Retd) Kamal Gunaratne Under Investigation For Alleged Murder of Employee at Brazil Embassy Discloses Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera*, DBSJAYARAJ.COM, 5 May 2017, <https://dbsjeyaraj.com/dbsj/?p=52803>.

<sup>114</sup> Sri Lanka's war general faces investigation over embassy murder, ECONOMY NEXT, 5 May 2017, <https://economynext.com/sri-lankaes-war-general-faces-investigation-over-embassy-murder-7508/>. Two other individuals involved in the murder had reportedly been given promotions and sent to the U.S from Brazil.

<sup>115</sup> Janaka Ranaweera, *Royal Institute: Kids Suffer As 'War Veteran' Kamal Gunaratne's Thuggery Continues*, COLOMBO TELEGRAPH, 3 March 2019, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/royal-institute-kids-suffer-as-war-veteran-kamal-gunaratnes-thuggery-continues/>; Janaka Ranaweera, *Royal Institute: Retired Major General Kamal Gunaratne Muscles His Way To Terminate Children*, COLOMBO TELEGRAPH, 7 March 2019, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/royal-institute-retired-major-general-kamal-gunaratne-muscles-his-way-to-terminate-children/>; Janaka Ranaweera, *Royal Institute: Viyathmaga Kamal Gunaratne Puts NCPA, Education Ministry And Police In A Major General Soup*, COLOMBO TELEGRAPH, 18 March 2019, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/royal-institute-viyathmaga-kamal-gunaratne-puts-ncpa-education-ministry-and-police-in-a-major-general-soup/>; and Dasun Jayakody, *Royal Institute: Defence Secretary Rules Above Supreme Court*, COLOMBO TELEGRAPH, 16 January 2020, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/royal-institute-defence-secretary-rules-above-supreme-court/>.

<sup>116</sup> *Id.*

<sup>117</sup> *Id.*

In addition to the factors set out in the Policy Paper, the UK’s strategic interests support a sanctions designation. In announcing sanctions against four Sri Lankan individuals in March 2025, the FCDO stated, “For communities to move forward together, there must be acknowledgement, and accountability for past wrongdoing, which the sanctions listings introduced today will support. We want all Sri Lanka communities to be able to grow and prosper.”<sup>118</sup> Further designating **Kamal Gunaratne** is directly in line with this aim. It is also in line with the UK’s long-standing efforts to promote accountability in Sri Lanka alongside partners in the Core Group on Sri Lanka at the UN Human Rights Council.<sup>119</sup>

Moreover, the UK has signalled a continued commitment to “work constructively with the Sri Lankan government on human rights improvements as well as their broader reform agenda including economic growth and stability”<sup>120</sup>. For example, it has supported Sri Lanka’s economic reform through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme, supporting debt restructuring as a member of Sri Lanka’s Official Creditor Committee and providing technical assistance to Sri Lanka’s Inland Revenue Department.<sup>121</sup> To a large extent, accountability (or the lack thereof) for human rights violations and for corruption and economic crimes are interconnected in Sri Lanka, as both types of violations are usually perpetrated by the same actors and shielded by the same mechanisms and culture of impunity. Sanctioning **Kamal Gunaratne** would thus be beneficial to the UK as it would contribute to economic accountability as well, and further materialize the UK’s commitment and aligns with the UK’s Plan for Change, which recognises that promoting stability overseas is good for the UK’s national security<sup>122</sup>.

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<sup>118</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, The Rt Hon David Lammy MP and Catherine West MP, *UK sanctions for human rights violations and abuses during the Sri Lankan civil war*, 24 March 2025, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-sanctions-for-human-rights-violations-and-abuses-during-the-sri-lankan-civil-war>.

<sup>119</sup> *Id.*

<sup>120</sup> *Id.*

<sup>121</sup> *Id.*

<sup>122</sup> *Id.* and Prime Minister’s Office, *Policy Paper: Plan for Change*, 5 December 2024, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6751af4719e0c816d18d1df3/Plan\\_for\\_Change.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6751af4719e0c816d18d1df3/Plan_for_Change.pdf).

## Section 8. Discussion of Contrary Evidence/Arguments

ITJP is aware of refutations made by **Kamal Gunaratne** in response to the allegations against him. However, ITJP finds these claims lack credibility given the extensive documentation of such acts by credible sources, including his own admissions before the LLRC and the book that he authored, as referenced throughout this submission. Still, this section lays out the relevant claims and the reasons why they should not be trusted.

As mentioned above, he claimed before the LLRC that the surrendered LTTE members were regarded as internally displaced people.<sup>123</sup> However, he has admitted in his own book that he issued special instructions to troops under his direct command to kill those who attempted to surrender, whom he regarded as “terrorists”.<sup>124</sup> The claim is also contradicted by the UN’s findings as well as other credible sources which concluded that the Sri Lanka Army killed surrendered persons *hors de combat*. This clearly shows that **Kamal Gunaratne**’s claims are only hallow lies motivated by self-interest and should not be trusted.

Moreover, he has generally denied the unlawful killings of civilians during wartime or defended the “civilian casualties” as inevitable. However, his remorseless and dismissive attitude is also manifest from these statements and reveals his complete lack of respect for human rights and hatred against Tamils.<sup>125</sup> These claims clearly lack credibility given the extensive documentation of such acts by credible sources as referenced throughout this submission, and do not constitute any legal defence or excuse for the serious human rights violations and war crimes committed by him and his subordinates.

Therefore, **Kamal Gunaratne**’s refutations do not hold up to scrutiny and should be disregarded.

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<sup>123</sup> Transcript of Kamal Gunaratne’s testimony before the LLRC, 8 September 2010.

<sup>124</sup> KAMAL GUNARATNE, *ROAD TO NANDIKADAL* (2016), p. 716-717 and 721.

<sup>125</sup> See e.g., *Supporters Of New Constitution ‘Must Be Killed’: Major General Kamal Gunaratne*, COLOMBO TELEGRAPH, 24 October 2017, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/supporters-of-new-constitution-must-be-killed-major-general-kamal-gunaratne/>; Video clip of Kamal Gunaratne’s speech on 28 March 2018. <https://www.facebook.com/viyathmagaPBF/videos/2162293243798820/> (demonstrating lack of respect towards senior UN officials working on human rights, dismissive attitude towards accountability for the past, and opposition to a political settlement or any concessions to Tamils – translated transcript of relevant parts on file with ITJP and available upon request); Video clip of Kamal Gunaratne’s speech at a 1 March 2019 conference: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wB3sXNm-PDU&t=9s> (in support of former UK defence attaché Brig. Priyanka Fernando, subject of a Public Order trial in Westminster Magistrate’s Court in the UK after being filmed thrice making throat-slitting gestures towards Tamil protestors outside the Sri Lankan High Commission on 4 Feb 2018, repeating the gesture himself on camera, and saying the whole incident made his blood boil); KAMAL GUNARATNE, *ROAD TO NANDIKADAL* (2016); and Shanika Sriyananda, *Road to Nandikadal*, DAILY FT, 6 September 2016, archived at: <https://sangam.org/road-nandikadalmaj-gen-kamal-gunaratne/>.

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## Situation Reports on 08th January , 2009

### Terrorist lose more ground in Jaffna Peninsula; Troops liberate Soranpattu

Soldiers of Sri Lanka Army 55 Division have liberated Soranpattu village this evening (Jan 8), said the defence sources in the Jaffna peninsula.

### Troops Liberate Murasumoddai; more escape routes opened for civilians under terror clutches

Soldiers of Sri Lanka Army 58 Division have liberated Murasumoddai, a key township located on the A-36 road (Paranthan- Mullaittivu), this afternoon (Jan 8).

### Pallai liberated

Sri Lanka Army soldiers have liberated the Pallai town this morning (Jan 8). According to the defence sources in the battlefield, troops of Army 53 Division operating in the Jaffna theatre, have liberated the town after beating off the terrorists.

### Air Strikes at LTTE positions - Wannai

Sri Lanka Air Force fighter jets have carried out two more air strikes targeting LTTE terrorists now loosing the battle in Wannai.

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**Situation Report on 16 February 2009****SLAF raids LTTE resistance point - south of Puthukkudiyiruppu**

Sri Lanka Air Force MI-24 helicopters have raided LTTE strong point observed in south of Puthukkudiyiruppu junction this morning, 16 February.

**Two LTTE 130mm artillery barrels found - Puthukkudiyiruppu west**

Troops of 5 Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment (5VIR) serving under 533 Brigade led by Lt Col Jayanath Jayaweera have found two 130mm artillery barrels from general area west of Puthukkudiyiruppu...

**108 civilians flee amidst indiscriminate LTTE attacks: seek protection with security forces:**

108 Tamil civilians have fled from LTTE terrorists and sought protection with Sri Lankan Army and Navy troops at Point Pedro, Pulmoddai and North Visuamadu since yesterday morning (Feb 15).

**Troops of 57 uncover a large quantity of LTTE military items - Visuamadu**

Troops of 571 and 572 Brigades serving under 57 Division operating in Visuamadu area are continuing search and clear operations in recently liberated areas while strengthening own defences, defence sources in battlefield said.

**LTTE suffers heavy losses in a confrontation, more LTTE military items found - south of Sugandirampuram**

Troops of 58 Division have confronted with LTTE terrorists detected in general areas Ampalavanpokkanai, south of Sugandirapuram, while consolidating in recently liberated areas, the military report received from the battlefield said.

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### **Situation Reports on 17th Feb, 2009**

#### **Army 58 Division dominating west of Puthukkuduyiruppu**

Troops of Sri Lanka Army 58 Division are now in the process of dominating the entire Puthukkuduyiruppu western area, the latest battlefield reports reveal.

The soldiers have manoeuvred from north of A-35 road (Paranthan- Mullaittivu), crossing several waterways and eliminated terrorist strongholds on their way before they reach their current positions.

According to available information, troops have collected 14 bodies of LTTE cadres during yesterday's clashes while another 9 bodies along with 9 T-56 weapon have been collected today itself.

#### **Navy rescues 19 Tamil Civilians fleeing from LTTE Clutches in the Seas off Nayar**

Sri Lanka Navy rescued nineteen (19) Tamil civilians who were fleeing from the LTTE clutches in a fiber glass dinghy on the 16th February 2009 in the seas off Nayar around 11.40 a.m. The group consisting of seven (07) males, six (06) females and six (06) children was safely brought to Pulmudai.

#### **57 Div uncovered more LTTE military items - Visuamadu**

Troops of 571, 572 and 574 Brigades engaged in search and clear operations in recently liberated area in Visuamadu uncovered LTTE military items and vehicles left away by the fleeing terrorists.

#### **More LTTE military items found from Puthukkudiyairippu**

Troops of 533, 593 and 632 Brigades under command to 53 Division on consolidating operations in Puthukkudiyairippu have found more LTTE military items confronted with LTTE terrorists inflicting heavy damages to the enemy in several occasions yesterday, 16 February.

#### **440 Tamil civilians in LTTE grip brought to Trincomalee hospital**

Four hundred and forty civilians including 315 patients who had been trapped by the LTTE terrorists as human shield have been brought to the naval camp in Trincomalee yesterday, 16 February.

#### **One complete LTTE 130mm artillery gun found - Puthukkuduyiruppu west**

Troops of 5 Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment (5 VIR) of 533 Brigade commanded by Lt Col Jayanath Jayaweera, who found two 130mm artillery barrels last morning (16 Feb), were able to locate the remaining accessories of one complete artillery gun including the wheels of the gun carrier by the evening, defence sources said.

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## Situation Reports on 18th Feb, 2009

### LTTE's largest fuel distribution center captured - Puthukudiyiruppu

Troops of 641 and 642 Brigades serving under Task Force 4 (TF 4) have confronted with LTTE terrorists with several occasions yesterday, 18 February, while on offensive towards Puthukudiyiruppu built-up entrapping terrorists to less than 100 Sq Km, defence sources said.

### Three LTTE infiltrators killed; LTTE military items found - Oddusudan

Troops of 533 Brigade serving under 53 Division attacked at group of LTTE terrorists detected in general area Oddusudan last morning, 18 February, while engaged in further consolidating operations in recently.

### More catholic priests from Wannu receive Tender Hospitality

Four more members of the clergy from Ceylon American Mission in Visuamadu after vacating Tiger-held areas have managed to arrive in Omanthai two days ago.

### Heavy confrontations result more damages to LTTE; 5 LTTE bodies found - Puthukkudiyiruppu

Infantrymen of 58 Division engaged in moping operations in Puthukkudiyiruppu area confronted with a group of LTTE terrorist last morning, 18 February.

### Troops make further inroads at Puthukkudiyiruppu: LTTE confined to mere 100sq.Km's

Following days of intense fighting security forces have made decisive inroads into the LTTE's remaining garrison township at Puthukkudiyiruppu, entrapping LTTE to a mere 100sq.km area in the Mullaittivu jungle.

### 57 Div troops uncover 50 AP mines, 32 claymore mines in search operations - Mullaittivu

Sri Lankan Army troops of the 57 Division have uncovered 50 anti-personnel (AP) mines, 32 claymore mines, one thermo-baric weapon and a decomposed LTTE body during a search operation conducted in general area Visuamadu, Mullaittivu yesterday (Feb 18).

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## **Situation Report on 20 February 2009**

### **The 'last-night-flight'- security forces nail LTTE's rudimentary 'air wing'**

Now cornered in a mere 87sq.km land patch in the Mullaitivu district the psycho terror chief Prbakaran may have thought to showcase a stunt out of his sleeves on Friday (Feb 20) in the Colombo skies pushing for a turn of tables, drawing skeptical analysis from the 'Colombian elites' ...

### **LTTE air raid thwarted; both terrorist aircraft destroyed - Colombo**

The latest reports indicate that both LTTE aircraft entered into the Colombo aerospace were destroyed by the air defence system.

### **4th batch of sick and wounded Tamil civilians trapped in Mullaitivu evacuated under Naval escort**

The fourth batch of 397 sick and wounded Tamil civilians along with their immediate families was evacuated under the Naval escort on Friday, 20th February 2009.

### **Entire Ampalavanpokkani area comes under army control**

Sri Lanka Army 58 Division troops have brought the entire Ampalavanpokkani area under their control this afternoon (Feb 20).

### **Heavy loses to LTTE in Puthukkudiyirippu; 17 terrorists killed - Mullaitivu**

Troops of the 58 Division operating in general areas North and West of Puthukkudiyirippu have engaged decisive blows to remaining LTTE resistances in the area, reportedly killing 17 terrorists and injuring 10 others on Friday (Feb 20).

### **Viskund Asia donates speedboat for Coastguard**

Viskund Asia Private Limited, a boat manufacturing company affiliated to the Board of Investment has donated a brand new speedboat to the Ministry of Defence Sri Lanka.

### **Air Force strafes terror reinforcements - Puthukkudiyirippu**

Sri Lanka Air Force has bombed an LTTE reinforcements detected close to the Puthukkudiyirippu junction this evening (Feb 20).

### **Army Poised to Liberate Last Town Under Terror Clutches**

Sri Lanka Army offensive elements are gradually encircling the Puthukkudiyirippu built-up, the last town to be liberated from terrorist clutches.

### **Three storied underground bunker found - Puthukkudiyirippu South**

Sri Lanka Army Task Force 8, currently operating under the Army 53 Division found a three storied underground bunker from the Puthukkudiyirippu South area last evening (Feb 20).

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### **Situation Reports on 23rd February, 2009**

#### **Navy rescues Twelve Tamil civilians fleeing from LTTE hostage**

Twelve Tamil civilians fleeing from the LTTE hostage were rescued by the Sri Lanka Navy in the seas of Mullaithivu on the 22nd February 2009 around 1030 hrs

#### **58 Div troops thrash terrorist resistances; capture sections of LTTE built earth bund at Kombavil-Mullaithivu**

Troops of the 58 Division have forced into general area Northwest of Puthukkudiyirippu and gained control over sections of the LTTE built earthbund at Kombavil, also recovering 3 LTTE bodies and 2 T-56 weapons yesterday(Feb 22).

According to battlefield sources, LTTE terrorists have put-on stiff resistances which were successfully neutralized by the advancing 58 Division infantrymen. The terrorists have built an earth bund running North to South fortifying the Iranapali area, which is considered a key LTTE foothold in Northeast Puthukkudiyirippu, the sources said.

Security forces have now encircled Puthukkudiyirippu town and positioned in some 400m striking distance, military sources said. The 58 Division and Task Force- 8 troops are now leading the two main offensive fronts into the last LTTE stronghold.

#### **A large LTTE boat, boats manufacturing yard and LTTE torture camp found - west of Puthukkudiyirippu**

Troops of 58 Division on final phase of the Wannu liberating offensive uncovered the largest LTTE boat ever found during the Wannu offensive from northwest of Puthukkudiyirippu yesterday, 23 February.

#### **58 Div further advances into Puthukkudiyirippu**

Intense fighting ensued with troops of 58 Division and LTTE terrorists yesterday, 23 February, as troops further advanced into LTTE's remaining stronghold, Puthukkudiyirippu, causing heavy damages to the terrorists, military report received from the battlefield said, 23 February.

More LTTE warlike items found - Puthukkudiyirippu Troops of 57 Division have found more LTTE warlike items while conducting search and clear operations in general area Puthukkudiyirippu yesterday, 23 February.

#### **53 Div inflicts heavy damages to terrorists - Puthukkudiyirippu**

Infantrymen of 53 Division continued their offensive operations to fully liberate the Wannu region and the innocent Tamil civilians trapped by LTTE terrorists inflicting heavy damages to the enemy.

#### **Navy rescues 56 Tamil civilians from LTTE clutches**

Sri Lanka Navy rescued fifty six Tamil civilians who were fleeing from the LTTE clutches in the seas of Mullaithivu on the 23rd February 2009 around 0600 hrs.

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**Situation Reports on 24Th February, 2009****LTTE infiltration bid foiled- Mullaittivu**

Sri Lanka Army 59 Division soldiers today (Feb 24) foiled an attempted infiltration bid by the LTTE terrorists in Mullaittivu. According to battlefield sources, heavy fighting have erupted as troops of 1 Sinha Regiment (1SR), and 9 Field Engineers intercepted a group of terrorist trying to infiltrate army forward boundary east of the Nanthikadal lagoon this morning.

**A large LTTE boat, boats manufacturing yard and LTTE torture camp found - west of Puthukudiyirippu**

Troops of 58 Division on final phase of the Wannu liberating offensive uncovered the largest LTTE boat ever found during the Wannu offensive from northwest of Puthukudiyirippu yesterday, 23 February. A boats manufacturing yard and LTTE torture camp were also uncovered in further search and clear operations military sources said.

**58 Div further advances into Puthukkudiyirippu**

Intense fighting ensued with troops of 58 Division and LTTE terrorists yesterday, 23 February, as troops further advanced into LTTE's remaining stronghold, Puthukkudiyirippu, causing heavy damages to the terrorists, military report received from the battlefield said, 23 February.

**More LTTE warlike items found - Puthukkudiyirippu**

Troops of 57 Division have found more LTTE warlike items while conducting search and clear operations in general area Puthukkudiyirippu yesterday, 23 February.

**53 Div inflicts heavy damages to terrorists - Puthukkudiyirippu**

Infantrymen of 53 Division continued their offensive operations to fully liberate the Wannu region and the innocent Tamil civilians trapped by LTTE terrorists inflicting heavy damages to the enemy. 533 and 682 Brigades under command to 53 Division confronted with LTTE terrorists in several occasions yesterday, 23 February.

**Navy rescues 56 Tamil civilians from LTTE clutches**

Sri Lanka Navy rescued fifty six Tamil civilians who were fleeing from the LTTE clutches in the seas of Mulaithivu on the 23rd February 2009 around 0600 hrs.

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## **Situation Reports on 04th March, 2009**

### **Troops aim at eastern coast; terrorists desperately fighting on their last stand**

Troops of 58 Division and Task Force 8 after liberating Puthukkudiyiruppu have commenced an eastward thrust towards the coast, defence sources reveal. The LTTE terrorists lost the last town under their clutches as Puthukkudiyiruppu fell to the Sri Lankan soldiers yesterday (Mar 3).

### **Police and CDF personnel avert possible LTTE infiltration - Buttala**

Sri Lankan Police and Civil Defence Force personnel today (Mar 4) averted a possible infiltration of LTTE terrorists to remote villages in the Buttala area, defence sources said.

### **LTTE takes heavy beating as troops close-in on last LTTE stronghold- Mullaittivu**

Troops of the Task Force- 8 operating under the overall command of 53 Division made further advances into the remaining terrorist resistance positions located further Northeast of Puthukkudiyirippu junction yesterday (March 3).

### **Colossal mortar & mine producing LTTE factory found**

57 Division troops operating in Visuamadu area during a search carried out into deep jungles on Monday (2) after the area was brought under them came across an LTTE mass-scale mortar and bomb manufacturing factory that used metal, granite, iron and chemicals for production of explosives.

### **Startling huge 10 ft tall experimental bombs & model aircraft among discoveries**

Startling discoveries that are being made from Tiger strongholds amply prove that terrorists, thanks to technology that has been smuggled into the country during their heyday, have been experimenting on their own at will with money sent from the Diaspora.

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**Situation Report on 12 March 2009****Puthukkudiyirippu hospital liberated from LTTE - Mullaittivu**

Sri Lankan Army soldiers of the 53 Division and Task Force 8 entered the Puthukkudiyirippu Hospital premises today (March 12) morning, driving away LTTE terrorists who had turned the hospital into a major LTTE hideout since the fall of Mullaittivu town on 25th January.

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## **Situation Reports on 16th March, 2009**

### **Sri Lankan soldiers continue fighting terrorists, rescue more civilians - Puthukkudiyiruppu**

Reports received from the battlefield so far indicate that the soldiers of Sri Lanka Army 53 Division, 55 Division and 58 Division are continuing on their noble mission to rescue civilians forcibly held by the LTTE in the remaining terrorist hiding areas in Puthukkudiyiruppu. Despite all the restriction that the soldiers have to face due to terrorist use of human shield, Sri Lankan soldiers were able to rescue more than 400 civilians by this afternoon (Mar 16), indicate the reports.

Also, soldiers of Army 53 Division operating in Puthukkudiyiruppu East battled the terrorists from morning to evening inflicting heavy damages to the terrorists. Troops found 7 bodies of LTTE cadres, along with seven T-56 rifles and one radio communication set after the clashes. A sniper deployed in the same division area of responsibility, confirmed acquisition of one terrorist target during daytime.

Separately, troops of Task Force 2 now engaged in active defence and mine clearing operation in the Puthukkudiyiruppu West area uncovered 900 ammo used for 9mm pistols, 780 firing devices of claymore bombs, 42 fuses of mortar bombs during the day's operations

### **Navy rescues 66 Tamil Civilians fleeing from LTTE Grip**

Sri Lanka Navy rescued 66 Tamil civilians who had been fleeing from the heartless LTTE grip in Mulaithivu. The Navy rescued them on the 15th March 2009 in the seas between Chundikulam and Vettileikerni around 0730 hrs.

### **Over 1000 civilians seek protection with security forces amidst indiscriminate LTTE shelling**

A total of 1011 civilians including 458 children have fled from LTTE hostage and sought protection with the 58 Division troops operating in general area Ampalavanpokkanai South yesterday (March 15).

### **Fleeing civilians shot at by LTTE: 3 killed including a 9 year old - Mullaittivu**

3 civilians were reported killed including a 9 year old who were among 66 people who sought protection with troops fleeing from LTTE hostage at Pudumathalan on Sunday (March 15).

### **Army discovers LTTE ware house containing thousands of bags of chemical fertilizers**

Sri Lanka Army soldiers who are continuing to venture into the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) held Puthukkudiyiruppu area have discovered a large warehouse containing thousands of tons of chemical fertilizer issued to the Northern farmers for rice cultivation.

### **UN worker injured in LTTE shooting**

"UN worker, Sutharshani Tharmila and 13 others were injured when the LTTE shot at them when they arrived in the cleared areas of Puthukkudiyiruppu on Saturday (March 14) evening.

### **257 AP mines, 7 LTTE bodies uncovered during search operations in Mullaittivu**

Security forces engaged in search and clearing operations in general area Chundikkulam and Puthukkudiyiruppu have uncovered 257 anti-personnel (AP) mines and 7 bodies of slain LTTE terrorists yesterday (March 15).

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## **Situation Report on 18th March, 2009**

### **Intense fighting in Iranapalai; 10 LTTE bodies found**

Battlefront report on yesterday's (17 March) military offensive against LTTE terrorists indicated heavy defeats to them as troops advanced further into LTTE hiding areas with the falling of strategically vital Iranapalai junction in Puthukkudiyirippu.

### **55 Div troops gain control over Pattikarai area in Mullaittivu**

Troops of the 55 Division have gained total control over general area at Pattikarai after hours of intense gunfire exchange that ensued with LTTE Tuesday (March 17).

### **8 bodies of slain terrorists found at Puthukkudiyirippu**

53 Division troops operating in general area Puthukkudiyirippu, Mullaittivu, have uncovered bodies of 8 terrorists killed in confrontations with security forces on Tuesday (March 17) along with 7 T-56 assault rifles, security sources reported.

### **Navy foils LTTE attempt to kill 643 Fleeing Civilians held in LTTE hostage**

Sri Lanka Navy saved the lives of 643 civilians who had been fleeing amidst the LTTE's merciless firing. The Navy rescued them on the 18th March 2009 in the Northern seas.

### **LTTE pistol group cadre killed in retaliatory fire- Akkaraipattu**

An LTTE pistol group cadre was killed in an Army retaliatory fire in general area Kannagipuram at Akkaraipattu today (March 18).

### **98 more Tamil civilians reach security forces - Jaffna**

Total of 98 Tamil civilians who had been forcibly held by LTTE terrorists, have managed to reach security forces in Jaffna in last 24 hours, defence sources said.

### **Over 2000 Tamil civilians seeks security forces protection - Puthukkudiyiruppu**

Over 2000 Tamil civilians who have been kept as hostages were manage to escape the LTTE's grip and reach security forces in Puthukkudiyiruppu in last 48 hours, defence sources said.

### **11th Batch of Patients and Civilians trapped in Mullaittivu evacuated with the Naval Assistance**

The eleventh batch of 481 patients and civilians was evacuated on board "MV Green Ocean" on 16th March 2009. The evacuation of patients and civilians trapped in LTTE Clutches in the un-cleared areas in Mullaittivu is being carried out under the ICRC flag. Sri Lanka Navy is providing safe passage for evacuees on humanitarian grounds.

### **Navy troops uncover a haul of ammunition - Trincomalee**

Acting on civilian information received, Naval troops have unearthed a haul of ammunitions and grenades hidden in an abandoned land at Erakkandy in Trincomalee today (March 18) at around 8.30a.m.

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**Situation Report on 21 March 2009****7 LTTE bodies uncovered, LTTE takes heavy beating**

The LTTE's end game is nearing quite faster than many have expected. The once most feared ruthless terrorist outfit is on the 'run of the millennium' while its proxies and stooges are caught with their pants down.

**Intense fighting in Puthukkudiyairippu; 5 LTTE bodies found**

Infantrymen of 5 Gemunu Watch (5GW) and 6 Gajaba Regiment (6GR) serving under 53 Division continued their offensive gaining control over more area while strengthening the defences yesterday, defence sources in battlefront said.

**Senior sea tiger killed in Mullaitivu fighting: Body recovered by 55 Div troops**

55 Division troops led by Major General Prasanna Silva have recovered bodies of 4 LTTE terrorists including the body of 'Sindu' a senior 'sea tiger', subsequent to heavy confrontations that ensued with LTTE on Friday (March 20), South of Patikkarai at the Northern Mullaitivu battlefront.

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### **Situation Reports on 25th March, 2009**

#### **LTTE terrorists face heavy setback: Troops thwart LTTE offensive attempt- Mullaittivu**

Scores of terrorists were reported killed and many injured when troops of the 58 Division pushed back LTTE offensive elements moving towards the military forward defences North of Iranapalai, at the Mullaittivu battlefield today (March 25).

#### **SAM missiles fired from No-Fire-Zone - Puthukkudiyirippu**

LTTE terrorists have reportedly fired surface-to-air-missiles (SAM) at two Sri Lankan Air Force Bell- 212 helicopters, engaged in casualty evacuation operations in general area Puthukkudiyirippu today (March 25) at around 11a.m.

#### **1386 civilians seek protection with security forces in Mullaittivu**

A total of 1,386 civilians have sought protection with troops of the 58 Division now operating North of Iranapalai and Andampuram in Mullaittivu, through out yesterday (March 24).

#### **5 paddy farmers killed, 2 wounded in LTTE genocidal attack - Dehiwatte**

5 paddy farmers were killed and 2 wounded when a group of LTTE terrorist infiltrators stormed into Dehiwatte village, a remote locality at Serunuwara yesterday (March 24) at around 11p.m.

#### **LTTE offensive repulsed: Terrorists take heavy beating- Mullaittivu**

Sri Lankan Army troops of the 58 Division repulsed an LTTE offensive thrust towards the advancing military formations North of Iranapalai, reportedly killing many and leaving scores injured on Tuesday (March 24).

#### **53 Div, TF -8 troops close-in-on last LTTE foothold: seize section of earth bund at Puthukkudiyirippu**

Combined troops of the 53 Division and Task Force-8 continuing advances into the last LTTE foothold East of Puthukkudiyirippu, have seized control over a section of the LTTE built earth bund cum ditch across the A-35 main road, West of the Nanthikadal lagoon, yesterday (March 24).

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## Situation Reports on 28th March, 2009

### LTTE built earth bund cum ditch North of Palamathalan seized

55 Division troops under the command of Brigadier Prasanna Silva have breached LTTE defences and gained control over an LTTE built earth bund cum ditch constructed North of Palamathalan, Saturday (March 28).

### Stretch of LTTE supply route seized: at least 9 terrorists killed, 11 injured - Mullaittivu

Troops of the 53 Division and Task Force - 8 advancing further East from Puthukkudiyirippu have seized control over an LTTE supply route stretching towards Iranapalai following hours of fierce fighting yesterday(March 28).

### LTTE suicide bomber blows himself in fear of arrest - Vavuniya

An LTTE suicide bomber blew himself in fear of arrest by security forces personnel engaged in a cordon and search operation in general area Varikottoru, South of Mannar - Vavuniya road yesterday (March 28) at around 12.45 p.m.

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**Situation Reports on 29 March, 2009****LTTE built earth bund cum ditch North of Palamathalan seized**

55 Division troops under the command of Brigadier Prasanna Silva have breached LTTE defences and gained control over an LTTE built earth bund cum ditch constructed North of Palamathalan, Saturday (March 28).

**58 Div troops inflict heavy damages to terrorist; more LTTE military items found**

Troops of 58 div engaged in fierce battle with LTTE terrorist right throughout the day March(28).

**258 Tamil civilians sought protection with security forces**

A total of 258 Tamil civilians who were forcibly kept by the LTTE terrorist as human shield, were able to reach government controlled area yesterday (March 28).

**Stretch of LTTE supply route seized: at least 9 terrorists killed, 11 injured - Mullaittivu**

Troops of the 53 Division and Task Force -8 advancing further East from Puthukkudiyirippu have seized control over an LTTE supply route stretching towards Iranapalai following hours of fierce fighting yesterday(March 28).

**Another 248 civilians fleeing the LTTE clutches rescued.**

The fifteenth batch of 507 patients and civilians was evacuated on board "MV Green Ocean" on the 28th March 2009.

**LTTE suicide bomber blows himself in fear of arrest - Vavuniya**

An LTTE suicide bomber blew himself in fear of arrest by security forces personnel engaged in a cordon and search operation in general area Varikottoru, South of Mannar - Vavuniya road yesterday (March 28) at around 12.45 p.m.

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## **Situation Reports on 01st April, 2009**

### **Troops gain control over Pachchapulmuddai area - Puthukkudiyiruppu east**

Troops of 58 Division engaged in fierce fighting with LTTE terrorists in east of Puthukkudiyiruppu have gained control over the Pachchapulmuddai area by this afternoon, 1 April, latest military report said.

### **LTTE's technical wing chief killed in confrontation - Mullaittivu**

LTTE's technical wing chief S. Kirupakaran alias Madivalahan was confirmed killed following a confrontation with Sri Lankan security forces at the Mullaittivu battlefront recently, defence sources said citing intercepted LTTE communication.

### **9 terrorists killed, military hardware recovered at Mullaittivu**

Sri Lankan Army's 53 Division troops operating in general area East of Puthukkudiyiruppu confirmed killing 9 terrorists, injuring 13 others and also recovering a cache of military hardware yesterday(March 31).

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**Situation Reports on 02nd April, 2009****Army hunts down LTTE infiltrators - Piramanthalkulam North**

Soldiers of Army 57 Division now manning the active defence in the rear areas of the main theatre of the battle attacked a group of LTTE infiltrators detected in the Piramanthalkulam North area this morning (Apr 2).

**Heavy fighting in north-east of Puthukudiyiruppu; 13 LTTE bodies found**

According to the latest information received from the battlefield, fierce fighting ranged in northeast of Puthukudiyiruppu as troops of 53 (Task Force 8 also attached to 53 Div) and 58 Divisions surrounded the LTTE's remaining area in the offensive continued after capturing Pachchapulmudai junction by last evening, 1 April.

**Navy rescues 149 civilians fleeing from LTTE Clutches**

Sri Lanka Navy rescued 149 Tamil civilians who had been fleeing from the LTTE clutches in Mulaithivu on five occasions.

**55 more Tamil civilians escape LTTE grip - Puthukkudiyiruppu**

Fifty-five innocent Tamil civilians who had been forcibly held by the LTTE terrorists in no fire zone were able to escape the terror grip and reached security forces controlling area seeking safety for their lives yesterday, 1 April.

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**Situation Reports on 03rd April, 2009****Mop up operations in Anandapuram terror pocket continue; 40 LTTE bodies collected**

Sri Lankan soldiers continuing their mop up operations in the captured Anandapuram terrorist stronghold today (Apr 3) gave a heavy beating to the terrorists.

**Police Commandos ambush LTTE group; 13 terror bodies found - Panama**

Police Special Task Force (STF) personnel attacked a group of LTTE infiltrators detected in the Panama area this morning (Apr 3).

**LTTE loses two battle hardened leaders Amuthab & Gobith**

Defence Intelligence sources have revealed that leader of the "Charles Antony" band of the LTTE, Amuthab, and former leader of the same band Gobith were killed in recent fighting in Puthukkudiyiruppu.

**Troops of 53 Div and Task Force 8 extend their forward boundaries further into terror enclave-Puthukkudiyiruppu**

Troops of Army 53 Division and Task Force 8 yesterday (Apr 02) further extended their forward boundaries into the remaining LTTE enclave in Puthukkudiyiruppu East.

**Army annihilates terror pocket in Anandapuram; LTTE loses its final stronghold in Puthukkudiyiruppu**

Sri Lankan soldiers today (Apr 2) destroyed the last stronghold of the LTTE in Puthukkudiyiruppu general area. The soldiers of 58 Division marched into the pocket held by the terrorists at Anandapuram, early this morning and wiped out the terrorists in a close quarter fighting that lasted till the evening.

**More civilians seek refuge with armed forces**

At least 279 civilians who escaped from the terror clutches in Wannu sought refuge with the army and navy during the daytime yesterday (Apr 2).

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**Situation Report on 06 April 2009****Troops continue mop up operations; 72 LTTE bodies found - east of Puthukkudiyirippu**

Troops of 58 Division engaged in further mop up operations today, 6 April, following pitched battles that ensued in general area Anandpuram, east of Puthukkudiyirippu killing over 500 LTTE terrorists including senior LTTE rankers, have found more bodies of LTTE terrorists killed during the battle.

**LTTE Woman suicide bomber blows up herself - Ramanathapuram**

An LTTE woman suicide bomber has blown herself up immediately after she noticed the troops conducting search and clear operations in general area Ramanathapuram, military sources said.

**More LTTE war materials uncovered - Welioya**

Troops have recovered the LTTE war materials while conducting a search operation in the Thannimuruppukulam area today (06), military sources said.

**Counter terror operations continued - Puthukkudiyiruppu East**

Sri Lanka Army 53 Division soldiers now advancing beyond the eastern limits of the Puthukkudiyiruppu today (Apr 8) had daylong clashes with the LTTE.

**Army 53 Div maneuvers towards northern bank of Nanthikadal Lagoon**

Sri Lanka Army 53 Division soldiers are now maneuvering towards the northern bank of the Nanthikadal lagoon which is still under terrorist hold.

**Navy launches emergency salvage operation on disabled MT Granba to prevent environmental implications off Trincomalee harbour**

Sri Lanka Navy has launched an emergency salvage operation to rescue the disabled merchant tanker, MT Granba off Trincomalee Harbour.

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**Situation Report on 08 April 2009****Army 58 Div continues to rescue civilians from LTTE clutches - Ampalavanpokkanai**

Sri Lanka Army 58 Division soldiers yesterday (Apr 7) rescued 42 civilians from the clutches of LTTE terrorists in the No Fire Zone [NFZ].

**Army 53 Div maneuvers towards northern bank of Nanthikadal Lagoon**

Sri Lanka Army 53 Division soldiers are now maneuvering towards the northern bank of the Nanthikadal lagoon which is still under terrorist hold.

**ICRC President visits Sri Lanka**

On the invitation of Foreign Minister Rohitha Bogollagama, the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Mr. Jakob Kellenberger visited Sri Lanka on 7th April 2009. He was accompanied by Mr. Jacques De Maio, Head of Operations for South Asia.

**Reception hall for each IDP camp**

Disaster Management and Human Rights Minister Mahinda Samarasinghe yesterday said a reception hall where IDPs in welfare camps can meet their friends and relations would be set up in each camp by April 11.

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## Situation Reports on 13th April, 2009

### Troops crush LTTE attempt to breach own defence line - Puthukkuddyiruppu East

Sri Lankan soldiers of 53 Division today (Apr 12) successfully repulsed several LTTE attempts to breach own defence line in the Puthukkuddyiruppu.

### Civilians seek refuge with army - Ampalavenpokkanai

A group of 174 civilians sought refuge with Sri Lankan soldiers of 58 Division manning their defences in the Ampalavenpokkanai area today (Apr 12).

### 57 Div finds more LTTE military items - Visuamadu

Troops of 571 and 572 Brigades uncovered more LTTE war materials while conducting further consolidating operations in general area Visuamadu, military report received from the battlefield said.

### Army snipers gun down 18 LTTE terrorists - Ampelavanpokkana

Army snipers attached to 581 Brigade have gunned down 18 LTTE terrorists ahead of own defence line in general area Ampelavanpokkanai right through out yesterday, 12 April, the military report received from the battlefield said.

### TF-2 uncovered more LTTE military items - Visuamadu

Troops of 622 Brigade serving under Task Force 2 (TF-2) uncovered more military items left behind by the terrorists while conducting search and clear operation in general area Udayarkattu Kulam last afternoon, 12 April.

### TF-5 uncovers ten 60 mm mortar bombs

Infantrymen of 651 Brigade serving under Task Force-5 (TF-5) uncovered 10 x 60 mm mortar bombs while conducting search and clear operations in general area Kiranchi yesterday, 12 April.

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**Situation Reports on 15th April, 2009****Civilian exodus continue despite LTTE shelling and mortar fire: 135 escape terror hostage - Mullaittivu**

Civilians held hostage by LTTE continued to escape from the terror clutches at Puthumathalan and Valayarmadam, seeking protection with security forces as 135 more people have reportedly arrived into liberated territory today (April 15).

**53 Div uncovers dumped SAM missiles in Puthukkudiyirippu**

53 Division troops led by Major General Kamal Gunarathne have uncovered 4 surface to air missiles (SAMs) dumped by LTTE terrorists in general area East of Puthukkudiyirippu yesterday (April 14) evening.

**57 Div troops uncover military hardware during search operations - Visuamadu**

57 Division troops while conducting search and clearing operations in general area Visuamadu, in the Mullaittivu District have uncovered a hoard of military hardware including an anti-tank mine and mortar bombs on Tuesday (April 14).

**239 civilians seek protection, flee LTTE hostage at Puthumathalan**

A total of 239 civilians including 96 children have fled from LTTE hostage and sought protection with security forces now manning defences in the borders of the government declared No Fire Zone at Puthumathalan on Tuesday (April 14).

**LTTE shelling and mortar fire injure 5 soldiers during humanitarian pause- Mullaittivu**

5 soldiers were reported injured due to continued LTTE artillery shelling and mortar attacks launched from the government declared No Fire Zone yesterday (April 14).

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**Situation Reports on 16th April, 2009****53 Div seize control over LTTE built earth bund East of Puthukkudiyirippu**

Sri Lankan security forces stepped-up fresh advances on Wednesday (April 15), towards the remaining non-liberated territory along the coast of Mullaittivu, following a government declared 48 hour unilateral humanitarian pause since Monday (13).

**Heavy weapon barrel, bombs uncovered during search operations- Mullaittivu**

Sri Lankan Army infantrymen of the 57 Division now engaged in active defence at Visuamadukulama have uncovered a heavy weapon barrel, LTTE improvised 'Arul' type bombs and grenades during search and clearing operations conducted on Wednesday (April 15).

**Nehru-Gandhi clan still under LTTE's threat: Priyanka**

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, poll manager for her mother Sonia Gandhi and brother Rahul, on Monday (April13), said her family was still under threat from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE).

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**Situation Reports on 17th April****53 Div advances towards Vellamullivaikkal**

Troops of 53 Division continuing with its hostage-rescue operations made further advances towards Vellamullivaikkal from East of Puthukkudiyirippu amidst heavy indirect fire launched by the LTTE terrorists from the government declared No Fire Zone, yesterday (April 16).

**93 Tamil civilians seek protection with security forces**

Ninety-three Tamil civilians among the thousands, who have been forcibly held in No Fire Zone by the LTTE terrorists, managed to escape the terror grip and sought protection with security forces yesterday, 16 April.

**8 civilians seek protection with security forces**

6 people including 3 men and 3 children have fled from LTTE hostage and sought protection with security forces at Mullikulama, yesterday (April 16).

**Hidden military hardware uncovered during search operations**

57 Division troops while conducting search operations in general area Ramanathapuram have uncovered two RCL bombs and 5 60mm mortar bombs on Thursday (April 16).

**More military hardware uncovered by TF-2 troops at Puthukkudiyirippu**

Task Force -2 troops have uncovered a haul of military hardware and accessories during clearing operations conducted in general area East of Puthukkudiyirippu and Kalmadukulama on Thursday (April 16).

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**Situation Reports on 19th April****Troops manoeuvring to open main road access to NFZ; hostage rescue mission continues**

Sri Lankan soldiers of 53 and 58 Divisions were just 700m to 800m short of the bridge on the A-35 road (Paranthan - Mullaittivu) at Vellaimullaivaikkal last night (Apr 18), defence sources said.

**TF 3 finds more LTTE military items - Kilinochchi**

Troops of Task Force 3 (TF-3) continuing search and clearing operations in recently liberated areas in Kilinochchi uncovered more military items left behind by the fleeing terrorists.

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## **Situation Reports on 20th April 2009**

### **Five thousands more civilians rescued- Palamattalam**

Over 5000 civilians have sought refuge with the soldiers of Army 55 Division manning the northern boundary of the No Fire Zone (NFZ) at Palamattalam, South of Chollai, reveal defence sources.

### **World's largest hostage rescue mission becomes success; over 30,000 rescued**

Latest reports received from the Sri Lanka Army 58 Division indicate that over 30,000 civilians held hostage by LTTE terrorists at Puthumathalan and Amplalavanpokkani areas have been liberated.

### **Sailors join hands with soldiers for rescue mission; over 1500 hostages seek refuge with Navy sea units**

Sri Lanka Navy sea units deployed in the northeastern coastal waters of the Island have rescued 92 boats with over 1500 civilians onboard.

### **24 civilians seek protection with security forces- Mullaittivu**

A total of 24 civilians from 6 families including 7 children have fled from LTTE hostage and sought protection with 53 Division troops now flanked at the anterior of the government declared No Fire Zone, East of Puthukkudiyirippu this evening (April 20).

### **LTTE suicide bomb attack targets Tamil civilians - NFZ**

An LTTE suicide bomber has attacked thousands of Tamil civilians who are now trying to seek refuge with Sri Lankan Army, this morning (April 20).

### **Rescue mission becoming success, Several thousands of civilians rescued - Puthumathalan**

Sri Lankan soldiers have been able to rescue several thousands of civilians held hostage by the LTTE terrorists in the government declared No Fire Zone this morning (Apr 20).

### **58 Div troops uncover a large stock of LTTE military hardware - Anandapuram**

Infantrymen of 7 Sri Lanka Sinha Regiment (7 SLSR) serving under 58 Division uncovered A massive haul of weapons, ammunition and other military hardware while conducting a search and clearing operation in general area Anandapuram yesterday, 19 April, military report received from the battlefield said.

### **Another 172 fleeing civilians rescued with Naval assistance**

The twenty third batch of 483 patients and civilians was evacuated on board "MV Green Ocean" on 18th April 2009.



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**Situation Reports on 22nd April, 2009****Daya Master and George seek refuge with Army**

Two top LTTE leaders, Velayuthan Thayanithi alias Daya Master and Kumar Pancharathnam alias George have sought refuge with Sri Lanka Army.

**Navy continues its special rescue mission in North-Eastern seas: Mass exodus of trapped Tamil civilians still on, Navy rescues 5400 in 255 boats**

Sri Lanka Navy is continuing its special rescue mission in the North-eastern seas to facilitate the mass exodus of Tamil civilians for the fourth consecutive day. Naval personnel and vessels have been on special deployment for this mission. Tens of thousands of trapped innocent Tamil civilians broke themselves free from the LTTE clutches in the No Fire Zone soon after the valiant Sri Lanka Defence Forces personnel broke through the LTTE defences Monday morning. Relieved civilians defying the LTTE dictates have started to make the final exit from the cruel terror grip in large numbers.

**LTTE suffers heavy losses in desperate bid to halt army humanitarian operation**

Sri Lanka Army 53 and 58 Divisions continuing on their humanitarian mission to free civilians held hostage by LTTE terrorists, yesterday (Apr 21) encountered stiff resistance. The terrorists in a desperate bid to halt troops manoeuvring into their last foothold on the northeastern coast of the Island, mounted several futile counter attacks in the Puthumathalan and Putuhukkudduyirupp East areas.

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### **Situation Report on 27 April 2009**

#### **Navy thwarts LTTE offensive, destroys LTTE boat - Mullaittivu**

Sri Lanka Navy's Fast Attack Craft and elite Special Boat Squadron (SBS) thwarted an LTTE attack on ground troops in the seas off Mullaittivu today (27th of April 2009).

Naval troops intercepting two LTTE boats around 0430 hours directed Naval gun fire completely destroying one LTTE boat and inflicting heavy damages on the other. The intercepted LTTE boats had been on a mission to mount attacks on the advancing ground troops operating in the front lines when the Naval troops engaged them killing four sea tiger cadres. The damaged enemy boat had run aground being unable to withstand the Naval onslaught. The Navy suffered no casualties and none of its craft received any damages in the incident.

#### **Another 3000 civilians rescued, LTTE intensifies violence against civilians to win international sympathy**

Sri Lankan soldiers engaged in the world's largest hostage rescue mission yesterday (Apr 26) freed 3141 civilians from LTTE clutches.

According to the defence.lk special correspondent on the field, troops of 58 Division rescued 3147 people when they liberated the Valayarmadam coastal village. The group included a large number of LTTE child soldiers. Separately another 107 civilians were rescued by 53 Division soldiers now operating in the Puthukudduyiruppu East area.

#### **'Combat operations reach conclusion, priority to rescue hostages' - SL Government**

Government of Sri Lanka has decided that combat operations have reached their conclusion. Our security forces have been instructed to end the use of heavy caliber guns, combat aircraft and aerial weapons which could cause civilian casualties.

Our security forces will confine their attempts to rescuing civilians who are held hostage and give foremost priority to saving civilians

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**Situation Report on 28 April 2009****Humanitarian operations continue: 53, 58 Div troops advance through mined earth bunds**

LTTE terrorists suffered double blows losing two heavily fortified defence positions as 53 and 58 Division troops made predawn incursions at identified terror strongpoints located South of Valayanmadam today (April 28).

**58 Div troops liberate Rektavaikkal: Operations continue to rescue remaining hostages**

The 58 Division troops continuing with its forward march to rescue the remaining civilians held hostage with LTTE have liberated the Rektavaikkal junction located 2km South of Valayanmadam, this afternoon (April 28).

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## Situation Report on 04 May 2009

### More arrests in pro-LTTE attack on Indian Army convoy

At least 20 persons have now been arrested in connection with the attack on an Indian Army convoy in South India, by pro-LTTE groups, reports from, Coimbatore state.

### LTTE takes heavy beating, troops capture earthbund - Mullaittivu

The 58 and the 53 Divisions cleared their paths towards the remaining five km stretch of the No Fire Zone after 53 Division stormed another heavily fortified earthbund built across the Paranthan-Mullaittivu, A-35 road following close quarter fighting that continued for long in the early hours of yesterday (May3).

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## Situation Report on 08 May 2009

### 58 Div captures Karayamullivaikkal earth bund; 35 LTTE bodies found

Infantrymen of 58 Division have gained total control over the entire earth bund built by the LTTE terrorists in Karayamullivaikkal by this afternoon (8 May) following hours-long fighting, latest military report received from the battlefield said.

### "New Safety Zone" Restricted to 2.5 sq km - Army

Sri Lanka Army, now in full control of more than two thirds of the existing Puthumattalan "New Safety Zone", friday (8) afternoon officially announced the re-demarcation of the "New Safety Zone", restricting to the strip, south of Karayamullivaikkal including Vellamullivaikkal with an area of some 2 km in length and 1.5 km in width, the Army Headquarters declared.

### 58 Div gains more control over LTTE earth bund - Karayamullivaikkal

Troops of 58 and 53 Divisions continued their advances further into No Fire Zone amidst stiff resistance as LTTE terrorists made their maximum effort to hold the earth bund built to obstruct the security forces' advance

### Navy rescues 32 Tamil Civilians fleeing from LTTE Clutches

Sri Lanka Navy rescued 32 Tamil civilians, who had been fleeing from the LTTE clutches, in the North-eastern seas on two occasions on the 06th and 7th of May 2009 respectively.

### 43 Tamil civilians seek protection with security forces

A total of 43 more Tamil civilians held hostage by the LTTE terrorists in government declared No Fire Zone (NFZ) were able to escape the terror grip and reached security forces seeking safety for their lives, military sources said.

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**Situation Reports on 10th May, 2009****Two senior LTTE leaders killed**

So called "spokesperson" of the world's most ruthless terror outfit, LTTE, known as Ilanthirayan has succumbed to his injuries today, 10 May, pro-LTTE websites claimed.

**Mortar locating radar indicates LTTE fired heavy mortars at civilians in new "Safe Zone"**

LTTE terrorists have fired heavy mortars targeting the civilians in the new "Safe Zone" using heavy guns mounted in the "Safe Zone" itself from morning hours today, 10 May, Mortar Locating Radar of Army confirmed.

**53, 58 Divs advance further to rescue civilian hostage held by LTTE**

Infantrymen of Air Mobile Brigade under command to 58 Division further advanced into the "No Fire Zone" capturing LTTE strong positions in general area Karaiyamullivaikal yesterday, 9 May.

**57 Div uncovers more LTTE military items - Visuamadu**

Troops of 57 Division on massive search and clearing operations continuously in recently liberated area uncovered large consignment of military hardware left behind by the fleeing terrorists, military report received from the battlefield said.

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## Situation Reports on 11th May, 2009

### **LTTE takes heavy beating: Troops seize control over terrorist gun positions - Vellamullivaikkal**

58 Division troops now operating South of Rektavaikkal have advanced further 800m and positioned at the outskirts of the newly declared 2km long civilian safety zone while destroying several LTTE gun installations today (May 11).

### **Another 1000 civilians break out of captivity**

Defense sources have reported in that over 1000 civilians broke out of the conflict zone at the Mullaittivu end over 24 hours, ending noon, May 11. The LTTE sentries, initially overwhelmed, recovered and opened fire on the fleeing civilians.

### **53, 58 Divs continue ground operation to rescue civilian hostages; LTTE suffers heavy damages**

Troops of 58 Division operating in close proximity to the newly declared "Civilian Safe Zone (CSZ)" have further continued their ground advances to rescue the civilian hostages held by the LTTE terrorists yesterday, 11 May.

### **53 Div uncovers 2 LTTE used paddle guns and many other warlike items**

Two paddle guns and a cache of military hardware left behind by the fleeing terrorists were uncovered by the troops of 53 Division in a clearing operation conducted at the newly liberated Karayanmullivaikkal area yesterday, (10 May).

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## **Situation Reports on 14th May, 2009**

### **Final phase for the hostage rescue mission; over 3000 rescued**

Sri Lanka soldiers have rescued over 3300 civilians held at hostage by the LTTE terrorists by this evening (May 14) reveal defense forces. According to the sources , the rescue mission is underway with thousand more civilians seeking refuge with the soldiers in the Vellaimullaivaikkal area even at the time of filing this report.

### **Security forces open-up escape route for hostages: Over 1500 rescued**

Military formations advancing in three fronts determined to rescue civilian hostages held by LTTE at the newly declared civilian safe zone, at Velamullaivaikkal have succeeded in their objective this afternoon (May 14), with an estimated number of over 1500 civilians freed from LTTE hostage.

### **Army maneuvers further southwards along the coast**

Sri Lanka Army 53 and 58 Division are now sweeping around the new civilians safety zone, reveal latest reports from the battlefield.

### **18 LTTE bodies uncovered during search operations - Vellamullivaikkal**

Troops of 58 Division further advanced into the "Civilian Safety Zone" to rescue the civilian hostage held by the LTTE terrorists in general area Vellamullivaikkal yesterday, 13 May.

Heavy fighting between LTTE terrorists and troops took place in the area causing heavy damages to the enemy, military said.

18 bodies of LTTE terrorists killed during recent fighting were also found by the troops engaged in clearing operations in the area. In addition to the above recoveries made, troops also found one disposable rocket propelled grenade launcher(RPG), 01x RPG gun, an LTTE improvised 'baba' mortar launcher, a T-81 assault riffle, 02 I-com sets and a 12.7mm anti-air craft gun.

### **18 high explosive claymore bombs found in Grand-Pass**

Army intelligence, subsequent to a tip-off given, made a breakthrough on Wednesday (13) afternoon in Colombo when the troops stormed a garage premises on Lucas Mawatha, Colombo 15 (Grandpass) and unearthed 18 powerful claymore mines, 85 kg of high-powered explosives, two radio sets and two pull switch.

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### **Situation Reports on 17th May, 2009**

#### **LTTE leaders boxed in less than one square kilometer stretch**

Sri Lankan soldiers have boxed the remaining LTTE cadres into a 400m x 600m land stretch in the Vellaimullaivaikkal area reveal the latest battlefield reports.

#### **All hostages rescued - Army**

Troops have rescued all remaining civilians held hostage by LTTE terrorists; revealed military spokesperson Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara a few minutes ago today (May 17).

#### **Army rescues seven POWs from LTTE grip**

Army 59 Division troops have rescued 7 servicemen held captive by LTTE terrorists at Vellamullaivaikkal this morning (May 17).

According to information received, 4 sailors and 3 soldiers were among the rescued.

#### **Over 36,000 hostages rescued; troops enter LTTE's last hideout**

Sri Lankan soldiers have reached the concluding phase of their humanitarian operation in the Island's northeast as they rescued over 36,000 civilians from LTTE hold during last 24 hours.

According to the battlefield sources, Army 53, 58 and 59 Division soldiers have entered into the area where LTTE leaders have been cowering among the civilians during last couple of weeks. Soldiers are now looking for sick and disabled people that may be left in the area as almost all the others held at hostage by the terrorists have been rescued.

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### **Situation Report on 18 May 2009**

#### **Armed Force Commanders promoted to next higher ranks - 18th May 2009**

His Excellency Mahinda Rajapaksa, President of Sri Lanka and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces has granted promotions for the commanders of Army, Navy and Air Force who have been instrumental in winning the historic battle against LTTE terrorism in Sri Lanka.

#### **53 and 58 Divs uncover over 350 LTTE bodies - 18th May 2009**

Troops of 53 and 58 Divisions have uncovered over 350 bodies of LTTE terrorists killed while conducting the search and clearing operations in general area Vellamullaiwaikkal this evening, 18 May.

Infantrymen of 53 Division have found uncovered 181 bodies of LTTE terrorists along with a large quantity of weapons and ammunition, latest military sources said. Over 10 Million rupees were also found in possession of killed top LTTE leaders, military sources added.

#### **Bodies of 18 senior LTTE leaders positively identified; clearing operations continue - 18th May 2009**

Armed forces officials have positively identified 18 bodies of senior LTTE cadres including that of Pottu Amman. The following is list of identified LTTE leaders found among the dead today (May 18).

#### **Army foils LTTE's last attempt to evacuate its leaders; bodies being identified - 18th May 2009**

Sri Lankan army elites and infantrymen of 53, 58 and 59 Divisions have foiled the LTTE's last attempt to evacuate its top leaders this morning (May 18). According to the latest battlefield reports, soldiers have located over 150 bodies of LTTE cadres so far. The process of identifying the terrorist bodies is in progress.

#### **Mop-up operations continue: Kapil Amman, Ilango also among dead - 18th May 2009**

Sri Lankan security forces continuing mop-up operations at the 100m x 100m remaining land patch, North of Vellamullivaikkal have uncovered three more bodies of key LTTE leaders, this morning (May 18).

According to latest battlefield reports received, the 53 and 58 Division troops including Special Forces and Commandos have uncovered the bodies, suspected to be of Ilango (LTTE 'Police' wing chief), Sudarman (Charles Anthony's close aid) and Kapil Amman( LTTE intelligence wing). The bodies were found abandoned in the area, the sources further said.

#### **Three top LTTE leaders killed: Bodies found abandoned - 18th May 2009**

Sri Lankan Special Forces soldiers have found bodies of three key LTTE leaders identified as Nadeshan, Pulidevan and Ramesh during the mop-up operations in the last LTTE foothold this morning( May 18). According to the latest information, the remaining LTTE cadres are now boxed into a 100m x 100m area, North of Vellamullivaikkal.

#### **LTTE terrorists abandon their chief's son; body found - 18th May 2009**

Sri Lanka Army special forces soldiers have found a body suspected to be of Charles Anthony, the elder son of LTTE chief V. Prabhakaran in the Karayamullavaikkal area this morning (May 18).

#### **Army elites spearhead the final assault; Sri Lanka awaits total liberation from terror - 18th May 2009**

Sri Lanka Army elites have entered into the final foothold of the LTTE terrorists that has been shrunk to a 350m x 250m area on the northeastern coast, reveal latest battlefield reports. Troops are now engaged in mop-up

operations in a heavily mined and trapped stretch of a land where the remaining terrorists are hiding in, the reports add.

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## LTTE plays its final trump

**The advancing forces observed the area through an unmanned aircraft (UAV) and confirmed that the defence line was manned by about 60 terrorists. Alfa Company of the 7th VR, under Captain Arangallage and the Charlie Company of Captain Prasanna using changed tactics and broke into the LTTE defence line**

**By Tissa Ravindra Perera**

The LTTE, facing the ignominy of total battlefield defeat, played their last trump this week, but failed to deliver a signal blow to halt the security forces' final push. They launched their desperate bid, as the security forces (SF) were approaching Pudukudyirippu and Chalai, the last bastions held by them. The LTTE was by then trapped in an area less than 150 sq. km.

When their previous week's plan to create havoc by blasting Iranamadu and Kolamadu tanks failed, they decided to use vehicles loaded with explosives and suicide cadres to cause havoc on the advancing forces this week. Their abortive plan to re-occupy Mullaitivu and raise the Eelam flag there on February 4, ended with the fall of the main Sea Tiger bastion at Chalai. The LTTE's plan was to push the forces back to Oddusudan, re-capture A-34 Mankulam-Mullaitivu highway and to regain Mullaitivu and cut off the forces there.

The 48-hour cease-fire period for the civilians to enter Government controlled areas, ended on January 31. The terrorists who made capital out of the unofficial truce, planned to attack the SF from three directions. Meanwhile, the SF were approaching the Paranthan-Mullaitivu, A-35 highway.

On the afternoon of January 31, the Army Chief instructed the Commanding Officer of 59 Brigade to bridge a gap in the defence line. Sea Tiger leader Soosai used this gap, essentially a marsh, to attack the SF from boats in the west of Nandikadal lagoon on February 1. The attack from three directions commenced with RPG fire on a bus transporting soldiers of the 59 Brigade from Mullaawali.

The terrorists who obstructed the roads from Mullaawali to the A-34 Highway, launched the attack and at the same time infiltrated the area from the direction of the Watalappalai Kovil. While this fight was raging, 55 Brigade under Brig. Prasanna de Silva was advancing towards the last and the biggest Sea Tiger base at Chalai.

Soosai was heard over intercepted LTTE messages telling other Tiger leaders: "I am not worried about this fight. What matters is Chalai. If Chalai falls, we will all perish"

Meanwhile, a group of terrorists under "Rekkie Jeyam", who had infiltrated the defence line, launched an attack. The 7th Gemunu Regiment (7GR), however, fought valiantly and foiled the preliminary stage of the LTTE's plan. Forces of the 15th Infantry and 9th Sinha Regiments too, faced a massive onslaught, as the LTTE launched suicide attacks using explosive laden lorries.

Army Chief Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka immediately sent Brigade Commander 57 Brigade, Maj. Gen. Jagath Dias and Brigade Commander 53 Brigade, Brig. Kamal Gunaratne to assist Brigade Commander 59 Brigade, Brig. Nanadana Udawatta.

The Borne Brigade, two Special Force units, and 13 eight-man Commando teams too, were deployed to beat back the Tigers.

Although the terrorists were commanded by their frontline commanders Bhanu, Swarnam, Soosai, and Jeyam, they suffered extensive damage under artillery and multi-barrel fire of the SF. The 7GR, of 593 Brigade, after its victory at the Mullaitivu battle, was instructed on January 31 to advance from Pudukudyirippu West. They faced this attack on the very day they entered the Pudukudyirippu battlefield.

The LTTE onslaught, however, resulted in the forward defence line (FDL) of the SF being pulling back three kilometers and the establishment of a strong second defence line. The 1st Vijayaba, 6th Gajaba, the Special Forces, and the Commando Brigade were deployed in the defence line.

From then onwards, the Special Forces and the Commando Regiment launched a major counterattack on the terrorists, with round-the-clock air support from helicopter gunships and attack aircraft.

On Tuesday February 3, the terrorists made another attempt to break through the FDL, by blasting four explosive laden vehicles

The Operational Headquarters, the armoury, and the helipad came under continuous LTTE artillery fire, in an attempt to cripple the operation. Even the field operational centre of the three Divisional commanders were targeted.

Taking no chances, the Army Chief then personally took charge of the situation and commanded the SF's fightback and the deployment of reinforcements. He remained at Army Headquarters till 2.30 am on Independence Day.

Under his direct command, the SF were able to neutralise the terrorist attacks and build up a strong FDL, consolidating their positions. Ultimately, the LTTE's dream on Independence Day was shattered.

55 Brigade under Brig. Prsanna de Silva was, by this time, instructed by the Army Chief to take Chalai.

The aerial attacks of the Sri Lanka Air force, using Kfir ground attack aircraft on LTTE targets at Nallathannithoduwai, on Saturday (31), had set the stage for the capture of Chalai.

After the 8th Vijayaba Regiment of 552 Brigade led by Col. Kapila Udalupola, captured the last remaining stretch of the Jaffna district border, 553 Brigade under Col. Mahinda Weerasuriya, was called upon to launch the operations from there to Chalai.

The 4th Gemunu Regiment of 553 Brigade, under Maj. Upul Senerath, on January 31, advanced towards the enemy's FDL through landmines and broke through the 800 metre-long FDL the following morning. From there, troops of the 7th Vijayaba Regiment of the 583 Brigade under Lt Col Deepal Pussella, and the 6th Infantry Regiment under Maj. Manada Yahampath, broke through another defence line about 700 meters ahead. On Monday February 2, they noticed a fourth LTTE defence line camouflaged with thick foliage about 2.7 kilometres from the third defence line. The following morning they launched a major attack on the defence line and broke through.

The advancing forces observed the area through an unmanned aircraft (UAV) and confirmed that the defence line was manned by about 60 terrorists. Alfa Company of the 7th VR, under Captain Arangallage and the Charlie Company of Captain Prasanna using changed tactics and broke into the LTTE defence line.

The 7th Infantry Regiment provided support fire from the direction of the sea. The LTTE used four Sea Tiger craft during the confrontation. However, the artillery and multi-barrel fire of the SFs neutralized the terrorists. It was confirmed that 24 terrorists were killed and 35 others injured during the operation in Paperapetti area, to break through the LTTE's third defence line. During this confrontation, intelligence was received that the LTTE had sent reinforcements, but 30 of them disappeared, unable to face the intense fire from the forces.

The operation was launched by 55 Brigade under Brig. Prassana Silva, Deputy Brigade Commander Brig. Nissanka Ranawana and Col Mahinda Weerasuriya. Delta and Echo Companies of the 1st Commando Regiment, under Maj. Krishantha Gunaratne, assisted the infantry regiments.

The advancing troops of 55 Division had broken through four LTTE defence lines in an area of five kilometres from January 1. Military Intelligence confirmed that 23 terrorists were killed during the confrontations to overrun the fourth defence line. Three bodies of terrorists and several weapons were recovered by the SF.

The 7th VR and the 6th IR and the small groups of the 1st Commando Regiment that advanced from the fourth defence line of the Tigers, on Independence Day, fought the enemy from 12.30 pm to 2.00 pm. The third in command of the Sea Tiger Force and four LTTE leaders were among those killed on that day.

The SF that gunned down LTTE Lt. Col Sinnkannan (Organisation No. 0205) and seven LTTE cadres, recovered one RPG, two machine guns, and two T.56 rifles.

During a confrontation at about 2pm on February 4, the third in Command of the Sea Tiger Force Vinayagam (Organisation No.0205) was killed. Vinayagam who had been the personal bodyguard of former LTTE deputy leader Mahathaya lost one eye in a confrontation in Jaffna in 1995. He visited Norway, under the pretext of peace talks in 2004, to raise funds for the organisation. He was also, at one time, Sea Tiger intelligence leader and the coordinator for the LTTE arms deals. Identified by the code name 'Mike Four, Vinayagam functioned as the third in command of the LTTE Sea Tiger Force since 2007. Born at Maradankarni, in Vadamarachchi, Jaffna, he had been in the LTTE organisation for 25 years.

Another Sea Tiger leader called Pahalavan (0053) was also killed during the confrontation. He had been rewarded by Prabhakaran for being a Sea Tiger leader who led most of the attacks during his 15-year service. In this clash, Cader alias 'Kilo Romeo' (0856) who had been in charge of operations up to Chalai, was also killed.

LTTE Sea Tiger Leader Soosai launched another attack under Ramesh, one of the LTTE military wing leaders in Batticaloa on February 4. The attack that started at 4pm was beaten back by the Infantry Regiments.

A 14-year-old female suicide cadre who came forward under the pretext of surrendering to the SF, blasted herself. A commando was injured in the incident, as he challenged her to halt her advance. It was revealed that six suicide cadres had been deployed to carry out similar attacks. It is not clear whether the child soldier triggered the explosion or the terrorists exploded the explosives strapped to her body by remote control.

Meanwhile, 621 and 622 Brigades of Task Force II under Brig. Rohana Bandara, were approaching Pudukudyirippu. The advancing forces of 621 Brigade under Lt. Col. Atula Ariyaratne and 622 Brigade under Lt Col Kirithi Gunasoma, were overrunning a large number of LTTE strongholds, sometimes after hand-to-hand fighting. Intercepted LTTE messages confirmed that about 70 LTTE cadres were killed during the confrontations for the week. The SF recovered 40 bodies.

Commanding Officer of the Artillery Regiment in Jaffna, Lt .Col. Kirithi Gunasoma was appointed to 622 Brigade and his predecessor Lt Col. Jayashantha Gamage to the Gajaba Regimental headquarters.

Lt Col Senerath Bandara returned to 57 Division after undergoing an overseas training programme, as Brigade Commander of 572 Brigade, in place of Lt. Col. Dhammika Jayasundara who was appointed to the Mechanical Infantry

Regiment as Brigade Commander.

572 Brigade under Lt Col Senerath Bandara and 574 Brigade under Senka Wijesuriya were proceeding from the direction of Vishvamadu. They faced stiff resistance from the LTTE, but the 3rd Gajaba, 12th Sinha, 7th Infantry, 8th Infantry and 16 Singha Regiments of the two Brigades, were able to kill more than 80 terrorists during the confrontations.

It was confirmed that 30 bodies of the LTTE cadres that could not be removed, were burnt by the terrorists. The LTTE hospital housed in Vishvamadu Technical College, came under the SF this week. Terrorists had taken away the drugs and medical equipment of the Kilinochchi hospital for use in their hospital. Vishvamadu LTTE hospital was camouflaged with cadjan. The security forces recovered two ambulances and several machinery and equipment including a generator belonging to the Kilinochchi hospital.

Meanwhile, the 16 Sinha Regiment of 574 Brigade, came across a torture house run by terrorists with 60 cells located on a five-acre plot south of Vishvamadu. The LTTE had used the prisoners to cultivate the land. The Sinha Regiment recovered a haul of arms including six Thermobaric weapons, which is a banned weapon, 16 disposable RPGs and 16 RCL bullets and a host of equipment recovered from naval craft destroyed by Tigers.

The 8th IR that captured a terrorist camp, recovered the parts of six 120mm mortar guns. Four oil bowsers and a container of lubricant oil.

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## ARMY ENTERS THE LAST BASTION

Heavy fighting was reported yesterday from several parts of Pudukudyirippu, as the troops moved into the last bastion of the LTTE from several directions.

The 14 Gajaba Regiment of the newly established Task Force VIII under the command of Col G.V. Ravipriya and the 14 Vijayaba Regiment of the 53 Division under Brig. Kamal Gunaratne were advancing from the south of this last major town held by the Tigers, while Brig. Shavendra Silva's 58 Brigade was moving in from other directions.

Army Commander Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka said that the advancing forces entered the town on Friday from the south and by then the enemy area of control had been reduced to 45 sq. kms.

As the war front got reduced, Brig. Rohana Bandara led Task Force II, was withdrawn from combat operations and redeployed to the rear as a reserve unit.

Accordingly at present, only 58 Division, the Task Force VIII and Task Force IV under the command of Col. Nishantha Wanniarachchi are in the Pudukudyirippu front for the final battle. The Task Force IV too is scheduled to be redeployed to the rear defence. A regiment of the 53 Division too is in the Pudukudyirippu front.

The 55 Division under the Command of Brig. Prasanna de Silva will continue the advance south from Chalai along the coastal belt and the 59 Division under Brig. Nandana Udawatta, from Wadduwakal in Mullaitivu.

Meanwhile, the LTTE continued their attacks with 122mm artillery guns from the 12-km strip of safe zone demarcated for civilians along the Mullaitivu beach.

"We have identified from where they attack. They have installed artillery guns in the neutral zone for the civilians. However, we will not retaliate so as to avoid civilian casualties," said a senior military official.

Earlier, LTTE leaders mingled with the civilians in the Pudukudyirippu neutral zone, to prevent military operations. Under the circumstances, military operations in the area were at a slow pace last



The 58 Division this week came across a Tiger training camp for airmen. A ten feet long plane had been gutted by the fleeing LTTE. It is believed that it was destroyed when the LTTE found it difficult to move it to a safer location. Troops also found bombs made for the LTTE's Zlin aircraft, and a German book on manufacturing those bombs was also found

week. However, the security forces (SF) intensified operations to take Pudukudyirippu, on the instructions of the Army Chief, after the civilians moved to the present neutral zone declared from previous Thursday.

Maj. Gen. Jagath Dias who was seconded to the 59 Division during the short lived massive assault launched by the LTTE in the run up to the Independence Day to recapture Mulaitivu Town, has returned to the Command of his 57 Division having completed his assigned task.

Because of the dedication of the heroic forces who fought valiantly to beat back the waves of attacks launched by the terrorists on Independence Day, the last major attempt of the Tigers to turn the war around too was foiled.

Meanwhile the 57 Division troops having combed areas recently liberated by them have recovered large haul of arms and ammunition, including claymore mines.

It is believed that the LTTE leaders now trapped mainly in the small area outside the civilian safe zone are planning to carry out a series of suicide attacks during the final showdown. Intelligence has been received about Black Tigers being trained for this task. However, the Security Forces are prepared to face what ever the desperate enemy is ready to throw at them.

As we exclusively reported last week, security forces' eyes in the sky, the UAVs have confirmed that weapons and Sea Tiger attack craft are being buried in the Mulaitivu beach. The 58 Division also liberated Ampalavan Pokkanai town by Friday (20).

The Ninth Gemunu Watch, Sixth Gemunu Watch, and the Tenth Infantry Regiments that commenced their operation on February 19, captured the 12 square kilometer area with LTTE camps.

After the capture of Sugandirapuram by the 58 Division last week, the only three towns still under the LTTE were Pudukudiruppu West, Pudukudiruppu East and Ampalawan Pokkanai. The 11th Infantry, Tenth Gajaba, 12th Gemunu, and Seventh Sinha, Regiments that stormed Pudukudyirippu West, captured the area by the evening of February 19, killing 17 terrorists. Intercepted LTTE messages confirmed that 38 LTTE cadres were killed during the previous day's confrontations.

Pudukudyirippu West, separated by a tank in the shape of an arch, had been protected with bunkers. The SF that entered from the north of the arch broke into the LTTE defence line and occupied Pudukudiruppu West and Ampalawanpokkanai area.

The Pudukudyirippu West region along the A-35 Paranthan Mulaitivu Road covers an area of about 3.5 kilometres.

The SF recovered the bodies of 42 LTTE cadres during the confrontations that lasted four days. They recovered five bodies on Friday alone.

"We recover ten bodies of the enemy a day. However, the kill rate is about 25 per day. The LTTE leaders, who each controlled an area of hundreds of square kilometers, are today, in charge of one square kilometer each. Bhanu, Theepan and Swarnam have been appointed to be in control of one kilometer areas. The LTTE is making every effort to halt the advancing forces of 58 Division which is advancing a minimum of one kilometre a day", a front line commander said.

The SF received information that Theepan and Velavan are entrapped in the face of the ongoing military operations.

#### **German Technology for LTTE aircraft bombs**

The 58 Division this week came across a Tiger training camp for airmen. A ten feet long plane had been gutted by the fleeing LTTE. It is believed that, it was destroyed when the LTTE found it difficult to move it to a safer location. Troops also found bombs made for the LTTE's Zlin aircraft and a German book on manufacturing those bombs was also found.

It is believed that foreign technology had been used to manufacture the frame of the aircraft found there. The SF had earlier recovered a frame of a helicopter fitted with wheels, from the Dharmapuram area. It was in the shape of a MI 24 helicopter gun ship.

Three underwater scooters and a large stock of diving kits were also recovered from Ampalawanpokkanai area which was liberated this week.

It was confirmed that the underwater scooters had been manufactured in Europe. Several rigifoam boxes found from the scene were in the process of being checked on Friday. There was evidence that the LTTE had shifted the boxes here from Chalai Sea Tiger base.

The LTTE acquired underwater scooters to stick magnetic bombs on ships and to attack harbours. It is still a mystery how the LTTE acquired machinery and equipment made in England or Norway. In the coming days troops are expecting to make more such discoveries as they comb other areas liberated by the 58 Division.

The 68-1 Brigade under Lt. Col. Lalantha Gamage of Task Force VIII captured an underground three storey compound of LTTE leader Prabhakaran at Pudukudyirippu. The luxury house, about 40 feet underground, was in a high security zone of the LTTE. The area was secured with a 14-strand barbed wire fence and bunkers. The site was covered with a 2ft-thick reinforced concrete slab and an ordinary house built on it.

“The house was complete with water purifiers and power generators and covered with camouflage nets. It was obviously Prabhakaran’s hideout in Pudukudiruppu” a senior military official said.

The access road to the area had been carpeted and dog kennels erected around the complex. A firing range for the LTTE leader’s personal use was among other facilities there.

The 14th Gajaba Regiment of the 68-1 Brigade under the command of Maj. Janaka Pallededa, reached the underground housing complex after clearing a large number of booby traps and mines.

Earlier several soldiers of Task Force IV were victims of pressure mines and booby traps during a previous military operation to capture the area. The SF, after capturing the housing complex, set about pulling down the LTTE’s earth barricade defence line in the south of Pudukudyirippu.

LTTE ‘Lt. Col’ Anbu and 13 other cadres were killed and 20 injured during the confrontations with the Task Force VIII on Thursday (19) alone.

Meanwhile, the 15th Infantry and the First Gemunu Watch of 68-2 Brigade under Lt. Col. Subhashana Welikala, are advancing across the open space in Nandikadal lagoon. Lt. Col. Welikala had a narrow escape from LTTE gunfire during the tedious operation in the open land area. However, Pvt Jayawardene, providing protection to the Brigade Commander, was shot in his forehead and killed.

Meanwhile, for the first time in the ‘Eelam War’, two 130mm artillery guns were recovered by the Fifth Vijeyabha Regiment under Lt. Col. Kalpa Sanjeeewa of the 53 Division in the Pudukudyirippu West region.

This regiment had been deployed on the 2nd Defence Line in the area liberated by the Task Force IV.

Sgt Udayakumara and his men of the ‘Charlie’ Company under Capt Buddhika Atukorala had noticed that plants in the area had withered, and could be uprooted easily. This aroused their suspicion and as they dug up the area to a depth of about eight feet a greased Artillery barrel wrapped cloth and polythene was found.

While Sergeant Udayakumara, Lance Corporals Thusithapriya, Ajith Kumara, and Private Elvitigala, unearthed the barrel of one artillery gun, Staff Sergeant Aruna Shantha, Lance Corporals Herath and Wijeyakoon dug up the earth about 300 metres away and unearthed another one. The two barrels had been buried to a total depth of about 12 feet. Lt. Colonel Kalpa Sanjeeewa and Major Sanjeeewa Gunawarden and other officers spent the night there to unearth the two weapons.

Bravo Company under the command of Capt. Suminda Gunasinghe and including Staff Sergeant Jayatissa, Sergeants Silva, Nilmini, Saman Kumara, recovered the other parts of the two artillery guns.

The two 130mm artillery guns bore serial Nos. 6000031 and 260144 and model No.T-559. The Chinese made guns had been supplied to North Korea. The question is how did the LTTE receive weapons supplied to North Korea.

A suicide Sea Tiger cadre in custody disclosed that a consignment of arms were brought ashore by a trawler and unloaded at Wellamullaivaikkal in Mullaitivu on December 23. It is believed that the two artillery guns were among that consignment.

The main heavy weapon known to have been possessed by the LTTE previously was the 152mm artillery gun and such a weapon recovered from Vakara had been acquired by the LTTE through Laos.

The 120mm mortar recovered from the enemy by the 58 Division recently had been manufactured in Pakistan, Iran and Singapore.

Meanwhile another LTTE attempt to launch attacks in the Jaffna Peninsular was foiled by the security forces this week. Two cadres of the Charles Anthony Brigade who came for the task were gunned down in Kappathivu area. On evidence gathered at the scene the security forces carried out a raid on a house in Jaffna recovered stock of dry ration, clothes and medicine for about 15 terrorists hidden in its kitchen.

The Army Commander who was on a visit to Jaffna this week met Jaffna Commander Major General Mendaka Samarsinghe and other senior military men and discussed the security situation in the peninsula.

#### **ARMY CHANGES**

Several changes in the military establishment will take place next week. Former commander East and Army Chief Of Staff Major General Nissanka Wijesinghe will retire on Feb.28 on completion of 55 years of age.

Major Gen L.M. Samarawera who commanded Military Engineers too will retire on completion of 55 years of age.

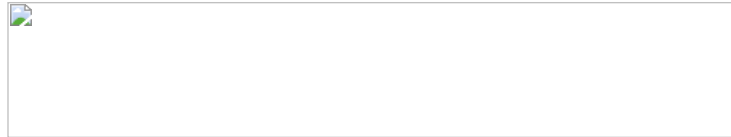
Major Gen. G.A.Chandrasiri who rendered a yeoman service for three years as Jaffna Security Forces Commander will be appointed as new Chief of Staff.

Military Secretary Major General Deepal Alwis will move over as Head of Field Engineers. He will be responsible for demining and construction works, including bridge building in the liberated areas.

The Director of Personnel Administration Brigadier Sumith Padumadasa has been appointed as Military Secretary.



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LTTE high-tech satellite communication center captured - west of Puthkudyiruppu



A swimming pool used by the LTTE located in Puthkudyiruppu



Troops of the 58 Division now operating West of Puthukkudiyirippu located two large LTTE boats hidden in a jungle patch on Friday

## FALL OF LAST TIGER BASTION IMMINENT

By Tissa Ravindra Perera

Heavy fighting raged throughout this week, as troops continued their advance into Puthkudyiruppu, the last LTTE bastion. All Tiger counterattacks, using maximum firepower to halt the troops advance, was to no avail.

The advancing forces of 58 Division under Brig. Shavendra Silva, 53 Division under Brig. Kamal Gunaratne, and Task Force VIII under Col. G.V. Ravipriya, continued to make headway, despite heavy resistance.

### Puthkudyiruppu in the crossfires

They entered the town from several directions, demolishing earth barricades and other obstacles of the LTTE, and were nearing its centre. When the 12 Gajaba Regiment (GR) of 58 Division and 1 GR of Task Force VIII, linked up on Thursday (26), Task Force IV was pulled back as a Reserve Support Division.

10 GR and 12 GR that proceeded from Puthkudyiruppu West to Puthkudyiruppu East, amidst resistance, from 8 p.m. on Wednesday to 3 a.m. the following day, linked up with Task Force VIII

The bitter battles fought this week were in the highly built up urban areas. The Security Forces (SF) came under attack from terrorists taking cover behind buildings of Puthkudyiruppu town. Even though the open spaces were 'guarded' by Tiger snipers, the SF managed to clear the areas, sector by sector.

The 5th Armoured Corp, under Lt. Col. Ninhal Samarakoon, operating with e 58 Division, helped the infantry immensely.

Troops of 58-1 and 58-2 Brigades and small groups of the 2nd Commando Regiment met the brunt of enemy resistance

Revealing the desperate plight facing them, for the first time in the history of the Eelam War, LTTE intelligence wing leader Pottu Amman was, this week, compelled to seek assistance from other leaders, to defend the area around his underground hideout.

### Recruiting of IDPs

Once the LTTE resistance in Puthkudyiruppu's urban areas is completely crushed in the coming days, what remains of the terror organisation will have to retreat to the Mullaitivu coastal belt.

The Air Force Beachcraft has made video recordings of the LTTE checking civilians entering the newly declared 'Safe Zone' on the Mullaitivu coast

Civilians fleeing into Government controlled areas have revealed that the LTTE has recruited a force of about 1,000 civilians arriving in the 'Safe Zone' and sent them to the front, after a day's military training



in the Iranapalai area.

UN employees who fled from the LTTE controlled area revealed that they saw Prabhakaran in Matalan area on the Puthkudiyiruppu-Iranapalai road last month. There is also information that Prabhakaran's wife, Madiwadani, and daughter, Dwarka, fled from Wellamullaivaikkal area by sea. They are reported to have been picked up by an LTTE vessel off Mullaitivu coast and taken to an East Asian country.

Civilians who fled from the LTTE controlled area, have also revealed that the LTTE plunders the essential consumer goods distributed by the Government through the ICRC, in the presence of the ICRC officials.

Task Force VIII demolished the LTTE's two kilometre long earth barricade south of Puthkudiyiruppu on Tuesday (24), and forged ahead despite heavy resistance.

#### **Counterattack to recapture Mullaitivu**

Meanwhile, the LTTE made a fresh bid to recapture Mullaitivu town, but it was foiled by 59 Division, which included the 1 Sinha Regiment (SR) under Lt Col Keerthi Bandara.

Throughout this week, there were indications of a possible counterattack on Mullaitivu town. The 26 National Guard gunned down four infiltrators, while 19 Infantry Regiment arrested an LTTE woman cadre, who was among a team of Tigers who swam across the Nandikadal lagoon. At another place, a group of terrorist infiltrators who had slaughtered a bull and was feasting on its flesh, was attacked by the SF.

These incidents revealed the extent of infiltrations, resulting in the stepping up of 'Search and Destroy' operations.

The 2IC of 1 SR, Maj. Ratnapriya Bandu and several companies launched a search operation in Mullaitivu town. They shot dead 13 Tigers in a confrontation with a group of about 15 infiltrators hiding in a palmyrah plantation. In the firefight, CO of Delta Company of 1 SR, Capt. Devapriya and several other soldiers were also killed. When Col. Laksiri Waduge rushed to the scene, to evacuate the injured, his vehicle came under LTTE fire. At the same time, CO of 59 Division, Brig. Nandana Udawatta was also caught up in the attack.

Finally, the SF launched a massive search operation covering the entire area, to weed out the infiltrators. By this time, 57-4 Brigade under Lt. Col. Senaka Wijesuriya too was deployed in the area. Taking no chances, Army Chief Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka immediately detailed Brig. Chagi Gallage to assist the CO of 59 Division. Incidentally, Brig. Gallage led the capture of the LTTE's last bastion in the East, Toppigala, in July 2007.

While soldiers were combing the area for terrorist infiltrators, a suicide cadre lying in ambush, darted at the vehicle of the CO of the 11 Gemunu Watch, Maj. Tisantha Fernando, near the Mullaitivu Divisional Secretary's office. The soldier driving back the vehicle after dropping Maj. Fernando was killed in the suicide attack.

The infiltrators were to launch an attack from within the Mullaitivu Defence Line, to pave the way for more Tigers to break into town, while the Black Tigers and the Sea Tigers too would enter the town from the lagoon and sea. It was revealed that the LTTE had infiltrated their battle hardened veterans for the task, armed with thermo baric weapons, claymore mines, suicide jackets, weapons, and operation plans up to Medawachchiya.

The SF have received information that the LTTE's plan was to recapture Mullaitivu on Monday (23) and celebrate the victory in Norway the following day (24).

In a terrible turn of fate, the LTTE came under artillery fire this week, from their own 130mm artillery guns, which fell into SF hands two weeks ago. The heavy guns had been smuggled in amidst innumerable hardships, to take a heavy toll on the Army, but instead, they were turned against the Tigers themselves.

#### **Weapons hauls**

The 5th Vijayaba Regiment, under Lt. Col. Kalpa Sanjeeva, of 53 Division, recovered the two artillery guns valued over Rs 80 million. They were found buried in Puthkudiyiruppu area. The two weapons were re-assembled and used to attack the LTTE on Thursday (26), after the Army Chief personally inspected them.

"Be ready to be hit with your own weapons", the soldiers sent messages in Tamil over the LTTE's radio wave band. "It will be tastier with your own ones," said the soldiers with sarcasm. In earlier times, it was the Tigers who often made such sarcastic comments against soldiers, when they were at their peak.

Task Force IV under Lt. Col. Randula Hatnagoda of 64-2 Brigade, this week recovered a submarine and the largest ever cache of arms, in the history of the Eelam War, from Puthkudiyiruppu jungles .

The weapons, greased, oiled and hidden in a container, were recovered by 14 SR under Maj. Wasantha Hewage.

The haul of arms included 51 81mm mortar barrels with 103 accessories, 95 60mm mortar barrels with 131 accessories, four 120 mm mortar barrels, four 81mm mortar launchers, 61 tripods of automatic weapons, two barrels of five zero weapons, 68 barrels of MPMG and GPMG weapons, 920 LMG drums, anti-missile gun, 318 T-56 magazines, 1112 FNC magazines and 258 Uzi magazines.

14 SR recovered the submarine, about 17 feet in length and 2 ½ feet in width, capable of carrying two persons, from a boat manufactory in Puthkudiyiruppu, south on Thursday.

**Infrastructure, assets overrun**

Meanwhile, 64-1 Brigade under Lt. Col. Indrajith Bandara that demolished the LTTE's earth barricade in the south of Puthkudiyiruppu, recovered two bulldozers, claymore mines and a RPG launcher.

By Friday, 64-1 Brigade that overran its assigned area, linked up with the troops of 58 Division and Task Force VIII

Meanwhile, 18 GW captured a chemical factory where the LTTE is suspected to have produced chemical weapons. Sulfuric acid, sodium carbonate, urea, and several other raw materials used in the manufacture of chemicals were recovered. The quantities recovered included three container loads of urea.

In addition, a massive stock of candles, from which the Tigers obtained wax to seal the anti-personnel mines, were dug up by the SF. The candles too were in three containers. The candle stocks had been obtained by the LTTE from two candle manufacturers at Gunanada Mawatha, Colombo 13 and Kelaniya.

A bomb factory where the LTTE manufactured explosives using liquid chemicals, was captured from another camp. A formula for processing the chemicals written in English, was also recovered.

Meanwhile, troops of 64-1 Brigade also stumbled upon a bomb factory and a 40-ft-long Sea Tiger attack craft. A large number of lathe machines, worth millions of rupees, were among other items found in the factory.

**Tiger leaders' luxury abode**

A house with a tunnel, reportedly used by LTTE leader Prabhakaran was captured by 18 GW. The 50-ft-long tunnel was reinforced with a 3 ½ ft thick reinforced concrete slab on top and covered with barrels, earth and concrete lamp posts. It was camouflaged with fishing nets and pieces of jungle uniforms of the LTTE cadres, to look like a jungle patch.

The tunnel was complete with a staircase with doors leading from the main entrance of the house. The SF suspect that the tunnel was used to take cover during air strikes.

9 GW captured a luxury house complete with facilities, including a swimming pool, in the Pudukudiyiruppu area. It is believed that it would have been an abode of the LTTE leaders. Captured Tigers had earlier revealed that Wannu received advance information when jet aircraft and Beachcraft of the Air Force took off from Katunayake, enabling the LTTE leaders to take evasive measures.

53 Division under Brig. Prasanna de Silva is carrying on operations from Chalai. The terrorists are doing their best to halt the drive.

**Ordnance recovered**

During the week, 7 GR of 55 Division under Col. Mahinda Weerasuriya, recovered a haul of explosives and bombs found buried. It included seven claymore mines, 150 Bangalore Torpedoes used by the LTTE to destroy minefields, 120 anti-tank warheads, two goblet-shaped bombs that explode when shaken and 20 of their circuits, 34 kgm of TNT explosives, 24 slabs of C4 explosives, each weighing 750 gm, and hand grenades manufactured by them that explodes in five seconds.

Soldiers of 58 Division were entering Puthkudiyiruppu town from the North and West.

After capturing Ampalawanpokkanai, they pulled down a three-kilometer-long earth barricade and captured another village called Thewapuram. 9 GW under Lt. Col. Lal Chandrasiri and 10 Infantry Regiment under Maj. Samantha Wickremasena were approaching a camp complex of Pottu amman's. For the first time, the LTTE intelligence leader had called through his "Eight Two" radio call sign and ordered machine guns on Wednesday and Thursday. He wanted the weapons removed from the Sea Tiger craft. On Friday (27), he again asked for men for construction works in Iranapalai area.

The SF carrying out operations in the area pulled down a 2 ½-kilometer-long earth barricade and recovered a bulldozer.

7 SR of 58 Division under Lt. Col. Kithsiri Liyanage, captured a camp complex where suicide jackets were made. They recovered a stock of suicide jackets, sewing machines and explosives from one of the camps.

Maps of several towns, including Bandarawela, Kandy, Ja-Ela, Wattala and Kataragama were found in the camp. SF are of the opinion that the LTTE used the maps to plan suicide attacks.

58 Division recovered a stock of footwear and clothes of the Tigers, from a warehouse in the camp complex, and several 50-60 ft.-long attack craft as well.



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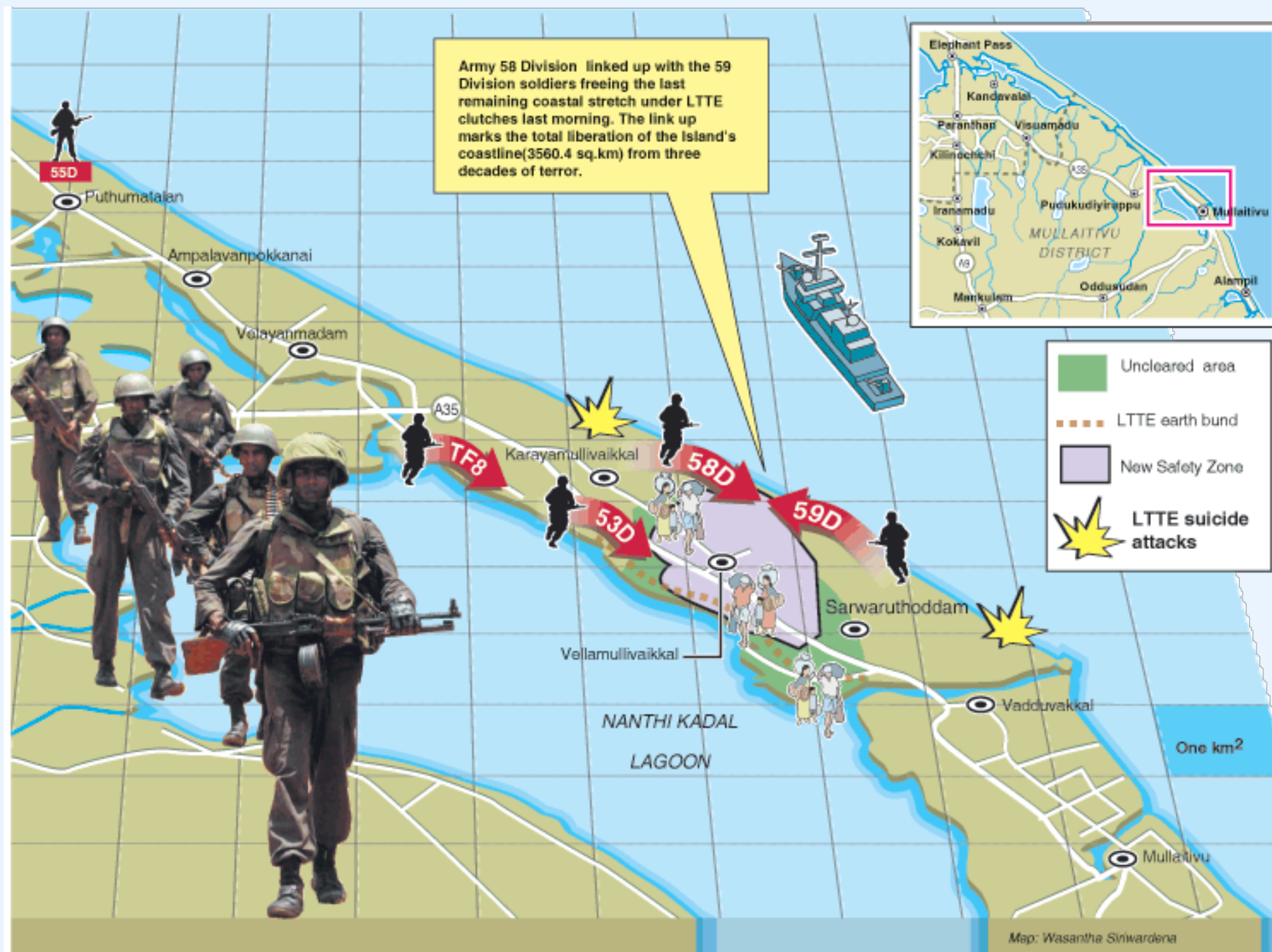
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## SECURITY FORCES POISED FOR VICTORY

By Tissa Ravindra Perera

It became clear by Friday that, it was only a matter of time, before the decisive final Wannu battle would be over.

Despite being on an official visit to China, Army Chief Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka, at frequent intervals, took time off his tight schedule, to monitor the latest developments on the battlefield, while issuing necessary instructions to ensure success of all ongoing operations. In fact, the entire humanitarian operation was making headway under his direct supervision.

The capture of the Tigers' highly fortified defense line ringing the Nandikadal lagoon, that separated Vadduwakkal and Mullaitivu from the 'No Fire' Zone (NFZ), by 59 Division under Brig. Prasanna de Silva and backed by Special Forces, saw a total of 3,309 IDPs leaving the NFZ.

Meanwhile, the 11th Infantry Regiment (SLLI) under 58 Division led by Brig. Shavendra Silva, had, by Friday (15), marched about 600 metres ahead, taking the shoreline where the ship Farah was found. Troops of Gemunu Watch (GW) and Vijayaba Regiment were, meanwhile, forging ahead in a parallel movement, to close in on the enemy for the final assault.

By Friday, troops of 58 the and 59 Divisions found that, they had only another kilometre stretch of the Mullaitivu coastline to completely seal Tiger access to the area by sea.

The Tigers' loss of sway over the coastal belt, also saw them being cornered into a small rectangular area in the Vellamullivaikkal NFZ.

While these operations were on, troops of 53 Division were fast advancing, liberating many civilians in their stride. One of the objectives of 53 Division's operation was to liberate hundreds of civilians held captive by the LTTE in this area, and to enable them flee towards Nandikadal lagoon situated west of A 35 road.

Closing in on the enemy from other fronts also were troops from 6 Gajaba Regiment (GR), 1 GR, and 5 GW.

By Friday afternoon, Tiger leaders confined to a three square kilometre area in the NFZ, were compelled to hole up in underground bunkers and hideouts. This marked a massive exodus of trapped civilians from the NFZ into the safety of the troops.

Aerial pictures taken by Air Force surveillance craft showed a sea of heads moving towards the troops dug in around the NFZ. The civilians had been so determined to make their getaway that, they had defied the indiscriminate firing by Tiger cadres, aimed at stopping this mass flight to freedom.

Army Intelligence, meanwhile, received reports that, the desperate Tiger leaders, 'supremo' Prabhakaran, Pottu Amman and Susai while holed up in the NFZ, had held secret council to take a hard decision on their last ditch stand.

Intercepts of Tiger tele-messages revealed that the Tiger hierarchy had issued instructions to destroy Tiger intelligence documents and to blow up their arsenals.

On May 14, two loud explosions were heard from the area where the Tigers were holed up and a series of explosions from the same area were heard the following day too.

A total of 2,849 civilians had sought refuge from 58 Division and 324 from 59 Division, on May 13. Military Intelligence had identified 262 as hardcore Tigers, from among the 3,309 civilians surrendered to 59 Division the previous day.

It was later confirmed that, there were over 60 Tiger cadres among those who surrendered to 58 Division. Meanwhile, three Black Tiger women who had mingled with the fleeing IDPs, had given up their mission and surrendered to the Army.

The Navy captured a boat on the high seas off Mullaitivu with the wife, daughter and son of Tiger leader Soosai, and several others on board.

Among the others on the boat were Soosai's brother's wife, her son and some family members of LTTE Intelligence Unit member Suda.

These fugitives are now being interrogated by Navy officials.

The Navy had, by this time, thrown up a security ring covering the sea off Mullaitivu, while the infantry Units had reduced the Tiger presence along the Mullaitivu coast to a kilometre'

### **Loudest explosion**

It was on May 12, that the three Army Divisions began the final thrust on the Tiger leaders and their badly battered and demoralised cadres reduced to a few hundreds, now cornered into a small piece of territory.

The 58 Division and the 53 Division under Maj. Gen. Kamal Gunaratne, had advanced to Vellamullawaikkal, north of the NFZ. By May 11, these two Units had entered the NFZ. Meanwhile, troops of 59 Division, having crossed the mouth of the Nandikadal lagoon in Mullaitivu, advanced into Tiger-held territory, smashing their Forward Defense Line (FDL). (Separate story on this operation will appear)

### **45 Tiger bodies**

During the following clearing operations, bodies of 45 Tiger cadres and a large haul of arms and ammunition were found.

On May 12, the Tigers blew up six houses stacked with explosives, by remote control, as troops of 58 Division were tactically advancing through open terrain.

The 58 Division made further inroads into the Tiger territory reinforced by 58-1 Brigade under Lt. Col. Deshapriya Gunawardena, 58-2 Brigade under Lt. Col. Sanjaya Wanigasinghe, and 58-3 Brigade under Lt. Col. Ramesh Fernando. Deputy Commander of 58 Division Col. Suraj, was among the military leaders who successfully led the infantrymen.

### **Multi barrel weapons recovered**

During operations conducted by 9 and 12 GW, under Lt. Col. Lionel Chandrasiri, and 11 SLLI, under Col. Kithsiri Ekanayake, on May 12, recovered 30 Tiger bodies and a large number of firearms.

During fierce fighting, 9 GW had recovered two multi-barrel rocket launchers. Single-barrel and multi-barrel weapons and motors were among the other weapons recovered. This was the first time a multi-barrel weapon was found, since the Thoppigala battle, and the Tigers had used this weapon continuously, to stop the advancing forces.

Meanwhile, troops of 58 Division under Maj. Kumar Peiris, discovered a Tiger graveyard, where over 1,000 Tigers lie buried. They also found a high speed water scooter used by the Sea Tigers. The 53 Division advanced west of the A 35 road. This division had liberated over 160 civilians on May 14. Several infantry units belonging to the airborne fighter brigade commanded by Lt. Col. Tilak Hangilipola, supported by Col. G.V. Ravipriya, marched ahead of the troops of 53 Division.

The 5 VR under Lt. Col. Kalpa Sanjeewa, 6 GR, 5 GW and 1 GR under Lt. Col. Mohan Ratnayake, also reinforced this flank.

Meanwhile, 68-2 Brigade under Lt. Col. Subhash Wekikala, belonging to Task Force VIII, had thrown up a security ring around the Nandikadal lagoon, to prevent possible flight by Tiger leaders through the lagoon.

GR troops of 53 Division, during their operations, captured two anti-aircraft (pedal) guns mounted on cabs.

### **Aircraft parts recovered**

Troops recovered parts of aircraft of the Tiger Air Wing, along with some accessories, at Thevapuram on May 13. This vital discovery was made by troops of the 2nd Artillery Unit under Lt. Col. Pradeep Perera. This Unit is functioning under the 57-2 Brigade of 57 Division under Maj. Gen. Jagath Dias. The 5-72 Brigade is commanded by Lt. Col. Senarath Bandara and his second in command is Col. Mahinda Weerasuriya .

An engine with rotating blades manufactured in Germany, Four-cylinder engines and signalling equipment were among the other equipment found. A cassette containing footage of landmark events of the Tiger Air Wing's history, was among other finds. Some parts of aircraft had been imported from USA and Canada.

Among the documents found was the Tiger plan of their last air raid on Colombo and Katunayake. There was also a map showing the Hingurakgoda Air Force camp. An interesting scene from the video tape recovered, is the one showing Prabhakaran unsuccessfully trying to light the traditional oil lamp five times, to inaugurate the Tiger Air Wing, as if that served as a bad omen.

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## HOUSE-TO-HOUSE FIGHTING DELAYS FINAL VICTORY

Intense fighting erupted in Pudukudyiruppu this week, with troops forced to fight house to house, in order to clear the last Tiger stronghold.

53 Division under Maj. Gen. Kamal Gunaratne, Task Force VIII under Col. G.V. Ravipriya, and 58 Division under Brig. Shavendra Silva, are engaged in the final battle to liberate Pudukudyiruppu. Meanwhile, 55 Division under Brig. Prasanna de Silva, that proceeded from Chalai, broke into Pudumathalan North after intense fighting.

Only 21 sq. km. area is left to battle by Friday. The Security Forces (SF) had only 39 sq. km. area, including the 18 sq. km. neutral 'Safe Zone' for civilians, that needs to be brought under their sway. The SF, by Tuesday (3), captured Pudukudyiruppu junction, in the only town still under the LTTE.

### Troops advance slowly but surely

The three Army groups entered the town on Tuesday morning, amid heavy resistance. 53 Division and Task Force VIII were advancing on the town south of A-35 route. 58 Division is advancing from the North of A-35.

After three days of intense fighting, troops of 12 Gajaba Regiment (GR) and the 1 GR of 53 Division and Task Force VIII, linked up in the heart of town on Tuesday morning (3). Bravo Company under Capt. Sampath Ranatunga and Charlie Company under Lt. Gamini Bandara of 12 GR under Maj. Saliya Amunugama, entered the town around 9 a.m.

Troops of 1 GR under Lt. Col. Sarath Aluvihara, entered the town centre from south of Pudukudyiruppu. The advancing troops met with heavy resistance from the enemy. 1 GR of the 68-1 Brigade under Lt. Col. Lalanthi Gamage, and 4 GR under Maj. Rohitha Aluvihara, proceeded from the South of Pudukudyiruppu. The two regiments recovered bodies of seven terrorists and 10 weapons on Wednesday (4).

Meanwhile, troops of 68-2 Brigade under Lt. Col. Subhashana Welikala, liberated a semi-open area west of Nandikadal lagoon, through a strategic attack on Thursday (5),- and advanced about 3 km.

It was revealed that, the bodies of the LTTE cadres killed during confrontations in Pudukudyiruppu town, were found buried there itself. Hundreds of such bodies were recovered from shallow graves by the advancing SF.

The SF fighting in the urban areas of Pudukudyiruppu, had advanced about 4 km in 10 days and had only 4 km more to pass, to complete the capture of the difficult built-up area. If not for the civilian shield, the area could have been captured within hours through devastating artillery and multi-barrel fire. At present, only identified LTTE targets are engaged by the troops in these areas.

Troops backed by armour and RPG fire, are taking on Tigers holed up in reinforced concrete bunkers and fortified houses. The 5th Armoured Corp under Lt. Col. Nihal Samarakoon, has been engaging enemy targets day and night.

### LTTE leaders' families held hostage

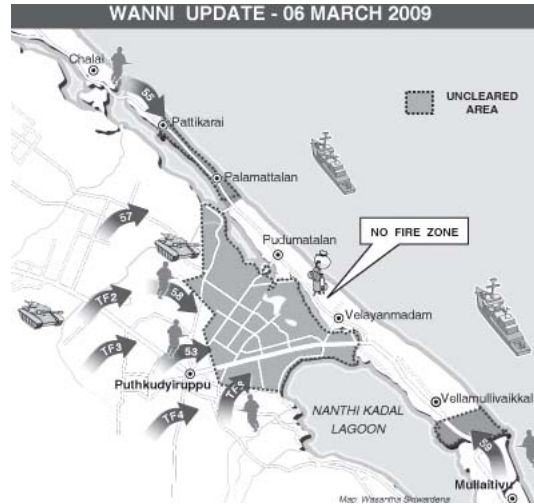
With certain defeat facing them, intercepted LTTE messages reveal that the LTTE leaders are under intense mental strain, by the ongoing battle.

"I am prepared to do anything. Please send those of my family to a government controlled area," was the plea of a junior LTTE leader to his superior, overheard by the SF.

It has been established that the LTTE leadership has taken hostage family members of Tiger leaders deployed to fight in the Wannai battlefield.

In another intercepted Tiger radio communication, LTTE military leader Lawrence was heard shouting at his juniors in abusive language, ordering them to go after civilians fleeing by sea and kill them. However, 180 civilian who fled from Pudumathalan area by sea, arrived at Chundikulam, Kaddaikadu and Vetthilaikerni, and surrendered to the SF this week.

## Military Matters



**Human shields**

Meanwhile 58 and 55 Divisions foiled the LTTE's plan to send a group of cadres posing as civilians, to break into the military forward defence line in the Pudumatalan area, as they got a wind of the Tiger plot on Wednesday night(4). Judging from enemy movements, Military intelligence had warned that the LTTE was preparing for an attack.

In the early hours of the following day (5), the SF saw a large crowd moving towards the southern boundary of Chalai, where 58 and 55 Divisions meet. When it was established that a group of Tigers mingled with civilians, were coming for an attack, the SF fired several rounds of artillery in their path and not at the crowd, to avoid civilian casualties.

As expected, the civilians fled for their dear lives, while the terrorists captured eight bunkers in the area, where the 55 and 58 Divisions met. This included seven bunkers of the 11th Artillery Regiment under Lt. Col. Pradeep Perera of 58 division and another of the 8 Vijayaba Regiment under 55 Division.

Echo Company under Maj. Shah Hameed of the 2nd Commando Regiment attached to 58 Division under Lt. Col. Jayantha Balasuriya and Fox Company under Capt. Nadira Vidanapathirana joined in the confrontation.

The SF that re-captured the bunkers, recovered 44 bodies of LTTE cadres of the Radha Regiment, one of its foremost units, and a large cache of arms including 101 T-56 rifles, a T-81 weapon, seven light machine guns, three 60mm mortar launchers and a stock of food, during the search operations that followed.

Capt. Vidanapathirana was injured during the confrontations.

The 12th Gemunu Watch recovered nine bodies, and 55 Division three bodies, along with six weapons and three communication sets.

On information that Lawrance had been trapped in the military controlled area, during these clashes, the SF launched continuous search operations on Friday (6) to track him down.

**Hit-and-run tactics**

Meanwhile four specially trained groups of Tigers who had infiltrated Chalai area by boat, were killed by the SF. They had shot dead a soldier of 5 GR guarding the beach, with a pistol before escaping. A woman suicide bomber blasted herself, killing another soldier, during subsequent search operations to track them down.

Three commandos of a four man team that was trying to track them down, were killed during the search operation. However, the surviving Corporal gunned down the three remaining terrorists.

The infiltrator team, which included two women cadres, were in possession of RPG launchers and 16 RPG shells, claymore mines, pistols, T-56 rifles, a stock of food adequate for several months, including chocolates and personal items

The SF suspect that the plan of the terrorist group may have been to make their way through Chundikulam sanctuary and ambush military convoys on the Veththilayakarni-Mullaithivu, Vettilaikerni-Aiyakatchchi and Vishvamadu-Pranthan roads, and the entry points on the A-9 highway. The group carried maps indicating all roads up to Pooneryn, and water resources in Chundikulam.

Intelligence has revealed that the LTTE, which is not in a position to launch any major attacks, has mobilised small terror teams with special training, to carry out widespread hit-and-run attacks, as in the 1980s. Special Forces and Commando teams, along with Infantry units, have been deployed to track down one such group.

**Tiger NGO employee**

SF recovered several documents to establish that a terrorist named Velupillai Jayaratnam of Sellapuram, Mullaithivu, who was killed in a recent confrontation with the Sinha Regiment in Mullaithivu, had been a team leader of an international NGO called "Swiss Foundation for Mine Action". One of the documents was a leave chit signed by the Manager of the NGO's office at Amman Kovil Road, Thothikkal, Vavuniya, Rosan Christy.

The NGO had issued him an identity card bearing No. 068 and the approval of leave included a request for permission for him to enter an LTTE held area.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lanka Air Force confirmed that Kroner, an Intelligence Wing LTTE leader, who planned attacks in Colombo was killed in an air strike.

**Arms haul**

A haul of arms of the LTTE, including four heavy weapons, buried in the Sugandipuram jungles, was recovered this week by the 8th Light Infantry Regiment under Lt. Col. Ipsitha Dissanayaka of the 57-2 Brigade headed by Col. Senerath Bandara.

It included three 130mm artillery guns, a 122mm artillery gun, pieces of four dismantled weapons, 16 boat engines and many other equipment. It was for the first time that the SF recovered a large haul of heavy weapons belonging to the LTTE. Troops of Alpha Company under Capt. Pethum Chandrasiri of the Eighth Infantry Regiment (IR) recovered these weapons.

The 7 IR under Maj. Mihindu Perera of the same Brigade coming under 57 Division headed by Major Gen. Jagath Dias, recovered the two largest bombs ever recovered by the SF. The bombs, 9ft in length and 5ft in width, had been manufactured by the LTTE. It is yet to be established whether these bombs were meant for aerial bombing or Sea Tiger attacks.

**Promotions**

Meanwhile, Maj. Gen. G.A Chandrasiri assumed duties on Tuesday as Chief of Staff of the Sri Lanka Army (SLA). He rendered a unique service as the SF Commander in Jaffna, by defending the Jaffna peninsula during a crucial time from Dec.5, 2005, till recently, and virtually wiped out terrorism in the area.

For the first time in the history of the SLA, his services were extended beyond 55 years of age, in view of his efficiency, by Army Chief Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka, for a further period of one year, in order to retain his valuable services.

Meanwhile, another three senior Brigadiers were promoted as Major Generals on the recommendation of the Army

Commander by order No. MSB/A/6/1(Prom) (142) dated March 2 and signed by Military Secretary Brig. G.S. Padumadasa.

Brig. Kamal Gunaratne, who commanded combat Divisions from the very inception of the Wannu operations, as the Commander of 53 Division, Brig. Nanadana Udawatta who was the Commander of 59 Division, during the drive from Weli Oya to Mullaitivu, and Brig. Mano Perera who commanded the Armoured Brigade, during the crucial Muhamalai battle in 2006, and is now the Western Province Operations Commander, were promoted as Major Generals. Brig. Perera also served earlier as the Commander of 52 Division and as Brigade Commander of 55-3 Brigade.

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### Military Matters



Fleeing civilians in dinghies rescued by the Navy

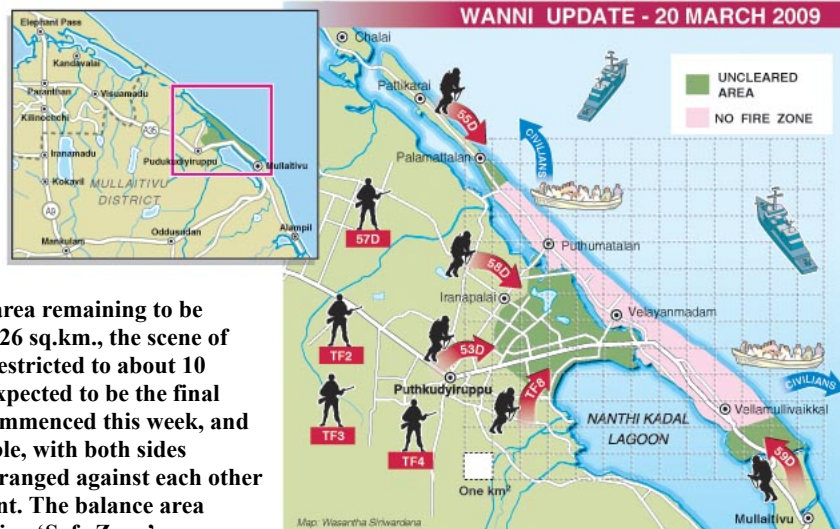


The small underwater vehicle designed for one person captured by the troops of 7 SLSR in an abandoned Sea Tiger base located in Puthukkudduyiruppu East



Sri Lankan Army soldiers operating in the south of Chalai

## GRAND FINALE OF BATTLES?



Though the total area remaining to be liberated is about 26 sq.km., the scene of actual combat is restricted to about 10 sq.km., which is expected to be the final showdown that commenced this week, and the most formidable, with both sides concentrated and ranged against each other in this narrow front. The balance area makes up the civilian 'Safe Zone' Captive civilians turn on the Tigers

**in this narrow front. The balance area makes up the civilian 'Safe Zone' Captive civilians turn on the Tigers**

In another development this week, clashes between the LTTE and the civilians entrapped within the LTTE controlled area, escalated.

In one incident, terrorists attempting to abduct some children, were reportedly hacked to death by the parents. Civilians who had lost patience, hurled petrol bombs at the LTTE political office and the LTTE police station in Puttumattalan on March 17.

A clash between the LTTE police that attempted to abduct a young woman, and the civilians, ended up in four vehicles and two motorcycles of the LTTE being set on fire, and the OIC of the LTTE police being assaulted. A civilian who fled from the LTTE controlled area, revealed that a group of armed LTTE cadres rushed to the scene and brought the situation under control, after shooting dead four civilians in public.

He revealed that clashes between hardcore terrorists in the martyred families and ordinary civilians, were increasing. A woman who opposed the LTTE, was shot in the mouth and killed. In other instances, the LTTE gave chase and shot at boatloads of fleeing civilians in the deep sea and removed the boat engines.

Meanwhile, a group of civilians carrying the body of an infant killed, when their boat came under LTTE gunfire, staged a protest on March 17, and demanded that, the ICRC officials, who arrived there by sea to distribute food to the civilians in the 'No Fire' zone, take them to safety.

The civilians who fled from the 'No Fire' zone said that the ICRC representative promised to take up the issue with the Government and left. However, this particular ICRC official had not taken any step to inform authorities of this request. Human shield terrorised

The fleeing civilians accused the LTTE of plundering food stocks distributed by the ICRC, and requested the Defence

establishment to suspend the shipments. They said that the majority of the civilians, who opposed the LTTE, were given only salt kanji and the children green leaf kanji.

Intelligence was received that the LTTE, which is using civilians as a protective shield, had forcibly recruited more than 1,000 cadres. The training of the latest batch of conscripts reached its fifth day on Friday.

With the intention of dragging the war till April, the LTTE has launched a massive propaganda campaign calling on civilians to join the final battle. They have been reduced to using the equipment of the Voice of Tiger clandestine broadcasting service, to launch this propaganda blitz from a van. Their strategy appears to be to continue the war till April, hoping for an Indian intervention, in view of India's general election due next month.

It was revealed that the LTTE is erecting an earth barricade and bunkers around the 'No Fire' zone, to prevent civilians from fleeing the area, because, without civilians all would be lost for them.

On March 18, the LTTE imposed a curfew from 4.00 pm to 6 am the following day to launch a search operation in the 'No Fire' zone to track down their deserters and those who oppose the LTTE. Meanwhile, it was confirmed that, the Vattuwal area in the 'No Fire' zone has been reserved for families of prominent LTTE leaders' and made a 'forbidden' zone for other civilians.

#### **Tiger infiltration**

In another development, the LTTE's plan to infiltrate the liberated areas with its cadres in military uniforms, to launch attacks, came to light. A suicide cadre in army uniform, attempting to infiltrate the security forces lines, was detected by a soldier of the Special Forces and shot dead on the way. He was sporting the insignia and knapsack of a Special Forces soldier, who went missing during a military operation in Weli Oya area, four years ago.

In a similar manner, forces on Wednesday detected and arrested the driver of LTTE Intelligence Chief Pottu Amman. The LTTE cadre, who mingled with the civilians surrendering to the forces, was arrested by the 58 Division. When a LTTE stronghold in the south of Iranapalai, frequented by Pottu Amman, came under attack, he had decamped.

He disclosed that Prabhakaran and Pottu Amman still remained in an underground bunker in the area. He said that Pottu Amman's wife, Vatsala, an LTTE cadre from Batticaloa, and their six children had gone missing for about a month. Pottu Amman, who used four vehicles, including a white Land Cruiser, had three drivers. However, Pottu Amman who roamed about on a motorcycle, for fear of the Army's Deep Penetration Unit's attacks, uses a vehicle brought by Prabhakaran's personal security, when he needs to meet the leader.

Pottu Amman, who lives under tight security, had been in overall command of LTTE operations in Pudukudyirippu, Dharmapuram, and Kilinochchi areas, his driver has confessed.

#### **Army Chief upfront**

Army Chief Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka on Thursday visited the Wannu Brigade Headquarters and met senior military field commanders, including Security Forces Commander, Wannu, Maj. Gen. Jagath Jayasuriya.

He now intends to increase the troop strength to 70,000 soldiers from the current 50,000, to finish off the war expeditiously. Lt. Gen. Fonseka said that infantry troops who fought valiantly to overcome all enemy obstacles amid LTTE artillery and mortar fire, are responsible for the present military achievements, and that, the war might have come to an end much earlier, if the LTTE's artillery guns and mortar launchers had been interdicted before they reached the enemy.

#### **Battling forward**

Meanwhile, 55 Division, under Brig. Prasanna de Silva, that proceeded from the south of Putumathalan, breached two forward defence lines (FDL) in Pattikarai area also this week.

The 1st Light Infantry regiment (CLI) under Lt. Col. Chandana Ranweera of 55-3 Brigade commanded by Col. Mahinda Weerasuriya, achieved this objective.

By March 16, after two days of intense fighting, the soldiers who pulled down the enemy FDL, which was 80ft in length and 5ft in height, advanced to a distance of about 350 metres. Intercepted LTTE communications confirmed that 15 LTTE cadres, including its leader in charge of mortar attacks, 'Lt.Col.' Ramesh, were killed and 27 others injured in the battle.

A Sea Tiger leader, 'Lt. Col.' Sathya, and 15 other cadres were killed and 24 injured in an attack launched by 55 Division on the previous day (March 15.) In this operation, 1 CLI, with the help of the Air Force, destroyed six bunkers in the LTTE FDL.

Security forces, who breached the LTTE defence line on March 16, faced yet another challenge. General Officer Commanding (GOC) 55 Division and his deputy Brig. Nissanka Ranawana, Col. Mahinda Weerasuriya and other field commanders planned the operation. Their target was a stronger defence line about 500 metres interior of the first defence line.

1 CLI was to break into the Defence Line, while 7 Vijeyaba Regiment under Lt. Col. Deepal Pusella, provided protection from the direction of the lagoon and 4 Gemunu Watch (GW) from the direction of the beach. Alfa and Delta Companies of 1 CLI were entrusted with the task of overrunning the Defence Line.

Bravo and Charlie Companies were ordered to carry out trenching from the direction of the lagoon and the beach, and open a path.

By Thursday morning, the First Infantry troops as pre-planned overran the LTTE's second defence line in a tactical maneuver.

Intense fighting that erupted at about 10.30 a.m., continued till 6 p.m., with the security forces finally capturing the entire area. The tanks of the Mechanised Infantry under Maj. Udaya Herath provided support fire.

It was a hard battle in view of the advantage the LTTE held here, in being able to attack the forces from three directions: the sea, the lagoon and land.

Four LTTE cadres, including woman Sea Tiger leader 'Lt. Col.' Sindu, were bagged by the Army snipers in this operation,

bringing the total number of Tiger cadres killed by Army snipers during the previous 48 hours to 12. Military Intelligence believes that LTTE's 'Lt. Col.' Arunan Master, identified by his call sign Charlie Alpha, who commanded enemy cadres in the area, was also either killed or injured in the attack.

The 58 Division under Brig. Shavendra Silva, liberated a six kilometre stretch of road from Putumatalan in the 'No Fire' zone, to Pudukudyirippu junction, by Thursday. The last stretch of 300 metres on this road was liberated by the 8 Gajaba Regiment (GR). They recovered the bodies of 11 LTTE cadres, after the battle for the last stretch. With this, the soldiers were able to speed up the capture of the entirety of Pudukudyirippu. It also provided the opportunity to open a supply route and to deploy battle tanks. The road was liberated by the 9 GW, 10 GR, and 8 GR.

The 11 CLI under Lt. Col. Kithsiri Ekanayaka, advanced from Putumatalan and captured the main road to Pudukudyirippu, after a 12-hour battle on March 16. Security forces recovered eight 'Baba' mortar launchers and a 12ft long 'Pandithar' 1550 rocket shell, during the search operation that followed

#### **Fire from 'No Fire'**

Meanwhile, the LTTE launched 22 artillery rounds on the security forces, with the 152mm and 122mm artillery guns installed in the 'No Fire' zone. Nine soldiers were killed and 35 injured in the artillery attack. Although the security forces have identified the locations of the artillery guns, they are not permitted to attack them due to the international outcry. However, the LTTE, favoured by foreign countries and international organisations, is at liberty to fire from the 'No Fire' zone. The security forces are not allowed to retaliate despite suffering casualties.

#### **Relentless advance**

Meanwhile, 20 GR under Lt Col Kumar Peiris, captured Iranapalai junction, where LTTE intelligence leader Pottu Amman's underground housing complex and several LTTE camps were located. 20 GR entered the Roman Catholic Tamil Mixed School amid intense fighting on March 17. The LTTE plane, shot down by the F-7 combat aircraft of the Air Force on September 9, 2008, crashed into this school yard.

Within an hour of the capture of Iranapalai junction, the security forces came under attack by a group of about 100 LTTE cadres, but it was repulsed. A wave of about six attacks continued till Wednesday (18), but to no avail. Intercepted LTTE messages revealed that 26 cadres were killed and 41 others injured in these counterattacks to dislodge the forces. The GR was able to advance about 900 metres in two days.

#### **Tiger 'dens' captured**

"Every house in Iranapalai is evidently an abode of a Black Tiger family. Photos of Prabhakaran and the Sea Tigers killed in action have been hung on the walls of every house. There are indications that the LTTE's underground warehouses are here," a senior military officer said.

The Ponnambalam hospital in Pudukudyirippu was captured by the 9 GW under Lt. Col Lal Chandrasiri of 58 division. The LTTE vehicles that came to recapture the hospital, came under attack by the Fifth Armoured Corp under Lt. Col. Nihal Samarakoon.

Separate rooms, complete with all facilities, had been reserved for the LTTE leaders, including Balraj. It was a hospital for the LTTE leaders. Head of the LTTE Economic Development Division, Karikalan's wife called Kama Aunty, was the director of the fully equipped hospital with operating theatres.

In a major find, 7 Sinha Regiment of 58 Division, recovered another submarine from a main Sea Tiger camp in the Iranapalai area. A senior military officer in the operational area said the submarine in the shape of a whale, was about 20ft long and that it had been used.

#### **Pushing forward**

The 581 Brigade under Col. Deshapriya Gunawardene and 582 Brigade under Col. Sanjaya Wanigasinghe, were involved in the operations, while the 583 Brigade under Lt. Col. Ramesh Fernando was manning the defence lines. The search operation to track down the LTTE infiltrators in government controlled areas, were continuing after recent behind-the-lines attacks

Task Force 8 under Col. G.V. Ravipriya and 53 Division under Maj. Gen Kamal Gunaratne were engaged in operations from the direction of Pudukudyirippu south along the A-35 Pranthan-Mullaitivu main road towards north.

The 682 Brigade under Lt. Col. Subhashana Welikala broke down a 900 metre earth barrier on Wednesday and advanced about 700 metres into LTTE territory. Bravo Company under Capt. Krishantha of 18 GW and Delta Company under Lt. Kumara broke down the earth barricade. The operation that commenced at 3 a.m. lasted till 8 a.m. LTTE leaders Theepan and Pulashti launched continual counter-attacks to deter the advancing forces, but to no avail. It was revealed that the Pulashti group later went missing.

The LTTE attempted to retain the strategically important area by using maximum gunfire to prevent 682 Brigade that was advancing along the A-35 highway, from capturing their last supply route. During the battle, the security forces came under artillery fire from the 'No Fire' zone. Sea Tiger leader Soosai was heard over intercepted LTTE communications, ordering artillery fire to halt 682 Brigade's drive.

#### **Appointments / Promotions**

Addition of new Divisions to the Army and change of Command took place last week. Col. Nugera, who earned a reputation in the battlefield during the Eelam War, was appointed as the new Commander of the Commando Regiment. Defence Coordinator- Army Headquarters, Brig. Asoka Amunugama was appointed Head of the Minneriya Infantry Training School. Brig. Maitree Dias was appointed Defence Coordinator and Col. Shantha Dissanayake was appointed Security Advisor- Sri Lankan Embassy in China.

Col. Dhammika Jayasundare was appointed to the new 594 Brigade, Lt. Col. Jaliya Senaratne to the 595 Brigade, Lt. Col. Kirithi Gunasoma to the 633 Brigade, Lt. Col. P.K.A. Pilapitiya to the 573 Brigade and Col. D.K. Jayatilake to the 574 Brigade.

Meanwhile, 52 Lieutenant Colonels were promoted Colonels by Military Secretary Brig. G.S. Padumadasa on March 17.

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## Army plans 'No Fire Zone' capture

By Tissa Ravindra Perera

The attempt to capture the eastern side of the last Tiger fortress at Puthukudyirippu, turned into bitter fighting this week. This battle could also decide the fate of the LTTE.

The heavy fighting erupted as troops of 58 Division linked up with those of Task Force VIII coming under 53 Division at Pachchapulmudai Junction, on Wednesday (1). With this link up, the Tigers who had been relentlessly battling for weeks, without letting up, to hold on to the last sector of Puthukudyirippu, got surrounded in the same area, most unexpectedly.

The Tiger frontline fighters were so busy fighting that, they did not realise that they were trapped, till a few hours later. The historic final battle to rescue the civilians in the 'No Fire' zone (NFZ) from the LTTE, will commence after the Tigers are relieved of this last piece of territory.

It is likely to get into the history books as the biggest effort to release hostages. Five Divisions are set to surround the NFZ to free the civilians held hostage. How they will accomplish this task is a mystery, but it is learnt that the forces are weighing several options.

The exact number of civilians held by the Tigers in the NFZ, is still not known. Two Tamil civilians working for the UN in the uncleared area, reached Army positions early this week. They had placed the number of civilians in the zone around 150,000. Since they were considered strong supporters of the LTTE, the security forces are reluctant to accept such figures as accurate.

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Although the UN has claimed that these two were the last of the UN employees in the uncleared area, there are intelligence reports that, there is another holding a satellite-phone of the world body in the area.

LTTE, the security forces are reluctant to accept such figures as accurate.

Meanwhile, there is confirmation that, during fighting in the past few weeks, a large number of leadership rank Tigers were either killed or wounded in battle.

### **Attempt to take Prabha's wounded son to Malaysia for treatment**

During the battle that ensued when a group of rebels who broke through the defence line of the 11 Artillery Regiment of 58 Division on March 05, were detected, Charles Anthony, Prabhakaran's son, was among the cadres injured in the fierce assault on their positions.

The incident occurred while this particular group was trying to reach the NFZ, along with Swarnam and Lawrence, who too were injured in the firefight.

Intelligence reports have confirmed that Charles Anthony had been hit on the shoulder and the back area. At first, although reports said that Swarnam had died, later it was revealed that one of his legs had been amputated. Some fleeing Tiger cadres have told the military that the other leg too will have to go, and it is due to this, the LTTE was trying to send Swarnam and Charles Anthony to Malaysia by sea, for treatment.

Lawrence, although suffering from minor injuries, is reported to be directing operations via walky-talkies. The forces had heard him giving instructions to another field commander, to continue fighting, as he was unable to come to the front.

### **Pottu Amman, Kapil Amman have close shave**

Pottu Amman and his deputy Kapil Amman, were slightly injured, during an air assault on their command centre in the Puthukudyirrippu area. This was revealed this week by cadres who had worked under Kapil Amman, when they surrendered to the Army. The duo had managed to escape with minor injuries, due to the command centre being situated in a fortified building with an underground bunker. The number one and two of Tiger Intelligence had been treated at a place in Iranapalai, and taken to the NFZ, according to these fleeing cadres.

A senior Tiger intelligence cadre, who surrendered to the Army, has also revealed that Ratnam Master, who was appointed head of Tiger Military Intelligence and the Radha Regiment that provides security to Prabakaran, had been killed in another air raid. In recent days, it was revealed that, a special Tiger strike force is being trained under Ratnam Master, inside the NFZ. Ratnam Master had been put in charge of Tiger Intelligence, after a series of operations launched in the south by Pottu Amman failed, and many Tiger leaders were killed by the Army's deep penetration teams.

More than 25 Tigers, who served Tossi intelligence service under Pottu Amman and his deputy Kapil Amman, escaped from the LTTE, along with fleeing civilians, and surrendered to the security forces this week

Last weekend, on one day alone, 82 hard core LTTEs escaped with civilians and surrendered to the Army. During this period, at least 10 Tigers holding the rank of 'Lt Col.', are among those who surrendered to the Army. Fleeing cadres have revealed that a majority of those sent to Colombo on suicide missions, are disguised as Muslims.

Tiger military commander Theepan's family surrenders

Tiger military commander Theepan's elder sister and family members have surrendered to the security forces, having escaped from the LTTE grip. Theepan was once in charge of the northern battlefront and its artillery unit. His younger brother was a member of the Charles Anthony Regiment and was killed in action. Three elder brothers are living in Canada.

Hundreds of children, entrusted by their parents to the priest of the Valayarmadam church, to prevent them from being abducted by the LTTE, had been allegedly handed over by this clergyman to the Tigers. Some of these parents, who have since escaped from the LTTE clutches, have complained to the Army, that they had handed over to the priest about 600 children, and the clergyman, in turn, had handed over 550 of them to the LTTE.

The Director of Military Intelligence confirmed the deaths of the leader of the Charles Anthony brigade, Gopith alias 'Kobith' and its special leader Amuthab, in Puthukudyirrippu, in clashes with security forces this

week. In addition, head of the LTTE Technical Division, Kirupakaran was also killed this week. With these reversals, Tiger plans to attack in the south and on Army positions, have been crippled a great deal.

### **STF kills Tiger unit that terrorised South**

Thirteen Tiger cadres, including its explosives expert in the East, "Paramanadan Master", who terrorised the Panama and Yala areas in the South, were killed by the Special Task Force (STF) on Friday around 9.45 am, at a place called Hakurusiybalawa in the Panama area, and recovered their weapons. The STF killed this group during a special operation in the area. Among those killed were two women LTTEers. Security forces have established that they belonged to the Eastern Tiger leader Ram's group, but it is not known whether Ram was among those killed.

The Tiger team staged daring operations in the deep South, especially, in close proximity to the hometown of President Rajapaksa. Search operations begun by special STF teams on Thursday, resulted in this major hit the following morning.

Commander- Commando Regiment, Col. Ralph Nugera was holding fort this week for Maj. Gen. Jagath Dias as Commander of 57 Division.

Two groups of Tigers, who managed to penetrate the defence line at two separate places, and were attempting to stage attacks behind Army lines, were killed by the troops. In one place, seven members of the LTTE's Kutti Sri mortar regiment were killed and their arms recovered along with a satellite phone.

Another group had been spotted inside Army lines in the Piramanthalkulam area. They had with them 30 "Haiti Combat" uniforms, a satellite phone and a large stock of arms. It is believed their aim was to disguise as officers and soldiers and launch assaults from within Army held areas.

The final battle in the Puthukudyirippu is now on under Maj. Gen. Kamal Gunaratna, commanding 53 Division, Brig. Shavendra Silva commanding 58 Division and Col. G.V. Ravipriya commanding Task Force VIII.

After the fall of all supply routes from the NFZ to Puthukudyirippu into Army hands, the Tigers have converted a footpath from the NFZ across the lagoon, as their new supply route.

On March 16, the 11 Sri Lanka Light Infantry Regiment under Lt. Col. Kithsiri Ekanayaka, intercepted all roads leading to Puthukudyirippu from Pudumattalan, and closed all supply routes. Thereafter, the LTTE had developed the footpath, as their new supply route to Puthukudyirippu. The closing of this last route from Ampalawanpokkanai in the NFZ to Pachchapulmudai Junction, also became the responsibility of the 11 Infantry Regiment.

The open area in front of this route had been made into a security ring of about 600 metres by the Tigers, to be used as a firing range to halt any troop movement. Fierce fighting erupted when the Army tried entering this area on March 31, with six soldiers killed and 10 wounded.

### **Change of attack plan**

Commander of 58 Division, Brig. Silva, with the commander of 58-1 Brigade Col. Deshapriya Gunawardena, immediately changed the attack plan. With the change of tactics, the 11 Infantry Regiment, which was only about 120 metres from the Tiger security ring, dispatched small squads with claymore bombs weighing about 12 kilos, each moving forward on all fours and fixed them in 12 spots along the security ring. By 12.00 midnight, having completed their mission, they were back in their FDLs.

Around 2:20 am on Wednesday, the Tigers, who were without any sleep, and on the watch in their defence ring, were blown to bits within seconds, and the defence ring reduced to rubble.

Lt. Harsha Jinasoma who commanded Delta Company and Charley Company commanded by Lt. Halwatura advanced through the ring as it was destroyed by the claymore blasts. The fierce fighting that erupted between the two sides, with the destruction of the enemy security ring, continued till 5:00 p.m.

All efforts of the Tigers to hold on to the route and the junction, were thwarted by the Army's firepower. The 11 Infantry Regiment was also after the strategically important junction, and did not let go. Lt. Col. Kalpa Sanjeeva leading 5 Vijeyaba Regiment of 68-1 Brigade under Lt. Col. Lalantha Gamage, advanced South to North of that territory.

The 11 Infantry that advanced under heavy Tiger fire, found an armour-plated boat. It resembled a Dvora fast attack craft of the Navy. It was, however, without its armaments, which had been stripped by the fleeing

Tigers. The length of the boat was about 20 feet. This was the first time an armour-plated boat of this nature had been found. Soldiers also recovered the bodies of 15 Tiger cadres, one of whom was believed to be that of a leader, close to which body was found an M-16 assault rifle and a jacket containing a pistol.

Under the direct leadership of Lt. Gen Sarath Fonseka, the Army managed to corner the Tigers into a pocket the shape of a bay. The Army Chief monitored the battle closely until Wednesday night and ordered the strengthening of areas likely to be hit by enemy retaliatory strikes. He also personally supervised the strengthening of a second security ring.

After cornering the Tigers into a pocket, the Army Chief wasted no time in inducting the Special Forces and Commandos into the region as reinforcements.

After securing the second ring in this manner, troops under the direct supervision of Brig. Shavendra Silva, were deployed on search and destroy missions to get at the trapped Tigers.

9 Gemunu Watch under Lt. Col. Lal Chandrasiri, penetrated a defensive bund of the Tigers, amidst heavy fighting. 8 Gajaba Regiment (GR), under Lt. Col. Chandana Wickramasinghe, 14 GR, under Maj. Janaka Pallekumbura, 20 GR, under Maj. Kumara Peiris and the 11 Infantry troops, following a battle on Thursday, found 31 bodies of Tiger cadres, 50 T-56 guns, 1 GPS machine, 2 RPG's, 1 M-16 gun, 2 radio communicating sets and 1 MPMG.

About 50 Tigers were seen trying to save a heavy 122mm artillery piece stuck in the area.

In the whole battle, the firepower of the Fifth Armoured Regiment under Lt. Col. Nihal Samarakoon, was a great asset to the infantry. "The Army is surrounding and hammering us, we cannot face the fire," Tiger battlefield commanders were heard telling Banu, their commanding officer, over the radio.



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## Biggest hostage rescue in military history

By Tissa Ravindra Perera

Brave soldiers of the country turned a new leaf in the military history of the world, by becoming the first force to undertake the release of the largest number of hostages.

These brave soldiers were able to subdue the enemy almost completely, while safeguarding the civilians.

The soldiers were able to conquer the forward defence line of the enemy by the dawn of April 20, and by April 24 some 104,868 civilians escaped from the Tigers to cleared areas seeking government protection.

Several LTTE leaders, along with other rebels, gave up their fight and also came along with the civilians seeking the protection of the government. Former media spokesman of the LTTE, Daya Master, and interpreter George were among those who crossed over.

In addition, there were about 15 others who were considered as Lieutenant Colonels within the outfit. Within two days, 700 hardcore senior members had also crossed over. Meanwhile, four doctors of the LTTE medical wing, with more than 10 years of experience within the outfit, also escaped to a government held area.

All these took place at a crucial period, when various countries, including the USA, were pressurising the Government for a pause in the ongoing operations and enter into another deceptive ceasefire. Today, the country is able to enjoy these victories because President Mahinda Rajapaksa as Commander in Chief and Gotabhaya Rajapaksa Defence Secretary extended their fullest support to the Army Commander to carry out the ongoing humanitarian operation, till they get the last Tiger, without giving into the international pressure.

Army Commander Lt. General Sarath Fonseka after finalising plans to rescue the civilian hostages, called 58 Division under Brig. Shavendra Silva, Special Forces Regiment under Col. Athula Koddipili and Commando Regiment under Col. Ralph Nugera, to carryout the final battle.

Wanni Commander Maj. Gen. Jagath Jayasuriya coordinated the entire operation. 58-1 Brigade under Col. Deshapriya Goonewardana had 9 Gemunu Watch (GW) under Lt. Col. Lal Chandrasiri, 10 & 11 SLLI under Lt. Col. Samantha Wickramasena and Lt. Col. Kithsiri Ekanayaka respectively, 8 Gajaba Regiment under Lt. Col. Vajira Welagedera and 7 Sinha Regiment under Lt. Col. Kithsiri Layanage were to go forward with the 1st Special Forces Battalion under Maj. Mahinda Ranasinghe and 2nd Commando Regiment (CR) under Maj. Shyamal Silva, as planned.

The Tigers had erected an earth bund in the lagoon area covering a 12-km stretch of the 'No Fire Zone' (NFZ), to keep the Army from entering it. They had also erected bunkers equipped with heavy artillery every 50 meters, to prevent security forces (SF) from crossing the lagoon. However, by that time 58 Division had deployed forces 100 meters near the lagoon.

### Surveillance and simulations

Small squads from 2 CR, Special Forces and SLLI were deployed to carry out initial surveillance in Puttumatalan and Ampalavanpokkanai areas to liberate the NFZ. The overall objective was to penetrate the LTTE's defence line and rescue the civilians held captive.

Initial observation was carried out on the area where large numbers of civilians were gathered in the NFZ. Soldiers stationed neck-high in the lagoon, identified enemy targets in the NFZ.

It was decided to send the CR into the Puthumathalan area, where highest number of civilians was gathered in the NFZ, since they had special training in rescuing hostages.

Meanwhile, it was planned to enter the Special Forces from the Ampalavanpokkanai area and the GW from an area in between. After the initial surveillance, a sketch of the earth bund was created and practised upon, prior to the attack.

It was confirmed that strong security points along the earth bund in addition to the bunkers, had been set up every 50 metres.



L/Corporal Ramanayaka of the 2 CR, along with his four-man team, was neck-high in the lagoon doing round-the-clock surveillance to spy on Tiger movements. Meanwhile, other troops made good use of the earth bunds captured in the Pudukudiyirippu area, to practise upon.

The 9 GW to the right of 2 CR and 11 SLLI to the right of GW and the Special Forces from the side of Ampalavanpokkanai, were preparing to advance.

Troops were ready to move forward at the auspicious time of 11.00 p.m., as planned. However, in order to address the needs of a battlefield, small teams were positioned in advance at identified points close to the earth bund. The order to move came at 2 a.m.

Troops of the Special Forces also made surveillance while being neck-high in the lagoon, in the Ampalavanpokkanai area. In addition to 1 Special Force troops, the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) of 3 Special Force was also deployed in surveillance.

There were instances when small teams of soldiers deployed near the earth bund to spy on terrorist movements, climbed onto the bund, undetected by the LTTE.

Small teams of the Special Force managed to capture the bund amidst heavy attacks from the enemy. Although the Tigers used heavy weaponry and artillery, the SF were tactful when retaliating against the enemy, since their main objective was to prevent civilian casualties, in their pursuit to enter this area. They faced the biggest Tiger resistance here in this battle.

Alpha Company under Capt. Ajith Gamage, Foxtrot Company under Capt. Subasinghe and Juliet Company under Capt. Premachandra, advanced 800 metres of their assigned area, destroying all bunkers set up by the rebels.

There were about five strong points at Pokkanai junction. All of them were attacked and the bund captured by 2.15 a.m. on April 20. The battle lasted about four hours.

No sooner the bund was taken, the civilians started their trek. It was similar to opening the sluice gates of a lake. Two suicide LTTE cadres who came along with the civilians, blew themselves up, in a bid to stop the civilians, killing 17 of them.

#### **Mavil Aru hero's supreme sacrifice at the NFZ**

The Tigers fired continuously at the civilians fleeing the NFZ. Capt. Ajith Gamage who went forward to rescue civilians, after capturing the bund, was gunned down by a rebel sniper. This hero, Major (posthumously) Ajith Gamage, himself one of the best snipers of the Army, became the first officer to lay down his life in the hostage release.

Capt. Ajith Gamage was involved in the opening of the sluice gates at Mavil Aru. He gave leadership in getting them opened in the same way he gave leadership to the largest ever hostage release operation in history.

For his efforts at Mavil Aru, he was awarded the Weera Wickrama medallion. He was then acting OIC of Alpha Company. In this battle also he continued fighting without informing his superiors of his injuries from artillery shrapnel earlier.

He was again awarded the Weera Wickrama Vibushana Medal for bravery as CO of Alpha Company during the Sampur operation, where he crossed a dangerous waterway.

In the battle for Vakara, he crossed Madurankenikullam to take 150 Tiger lives, which won the battle and won him the Weera Wickrama Vibushana again.

Bravery in battle and exemplary leadership inspired others in battle to come forward and get him out of difficulty. This move took the lives of four other brave soldiers of the Special Forces.

Delta Company of 2 CR under Capt. Chaminda Samarasinghe, stood 800 metres north of Puttumatalan, while Alpha Company under Capt. Sanjeeva Navaratne was parallel to the Puttumatalan-Iranapalai route and the open area below it, and 9 GW joined them below that.

Meanwhile, 9 GW had been in surveillance of Tiger activity and the bund for five days, while sitting neck deep in the lagoon.

Sixteen eight-man groups were deployed by GW for this operation. Troops were lined up along the lagoon to advance with the aid of ropes, to attend to the injured and to carry them on their shoulders across the lagoon, when necessary.

#### **Deliverance**

Delta Company under Capt. Sampath Illangakoon, Charley Company under 2nd Lt. Rasika Jayantha, Bravo Company under Capt. Sanjaya Ranasinghe and Alpha Company under 2nd Lt. Wasala were deployed to 9 GW.

The 16 squads under this group attacked the Tiger defence line simultaneously and gained control of all the bunkers following a fierce battle.

The brave Officer, 2nd Lt. W.D. Jayathilake sacrificed his life in this battle while carrying out an ambush on a Tiger bunker. Five days earlier, he had climbed the Tiger bund on the very first day of a surveillance operation, telling his superior officer that, "It was no big task to get on top of the bund."

Another five soldiers sacrificed their lives along with Lt. Jayathilake, while 26 were injured. Meanwhile, 11 SLLI, in their attempt to gain entry into the NFZ from Pokkanai, had built a temporary bridge with Padda boats. They had also built separate six-foot Padda boats to operate with the aid of ropes, using heated three-inch PVC pipes with glue inside to make them waterproof. These were used to transport goods to the battle area and bring injured soldiers from there. Those were even used to take arms to the battle area across the lagoon, without getting them wet.

This Battalion lost three of its brave soldiers in the battle alongside 1 Special Force to gain the Tiger bund.

As practised, 8 GR rushed troops to battle areas, while Alpha and Delta Companies of 2 CR carried out operations to capture the bund.

L/Cpl. Gunasekera during surveillance of the Tigers security ring, went inside the NFZ disguised as a Tamil civilian, and the information he thus obtained helped immensely in the final push to take the bund. He had information that the civilians would escape to Government controlled areas, if the bund was penetrated.

No sooner the bund was taken, 8 GR started announcing over loudspeakers that civilians could move towards the SF, since they had penetrated the earth bund. The civilians were directed to an area 100 metres over the Pudumatalan route, by troops waiting where the lagoon was shallow, to help those crossing.

When SF were advancing after overrunning Tiger bunkers, LTTE cadres were seen abandoning their weapons and joining those civilians marching into government held areas. In the first 24-hours 46,748 civilians came to 58 Division, 10,800 to 55 Division and 656 to 53 Division. Another 2,700 came to the Navy seeking their protection.

The President, after watching UAV relays of the exodus, and rebel attempts to stop civilians by blocking them with vehicles and shooting them, later showed these video tapes to foreign diplomats in the country. This helped largely to silence those foreign elements who raised their voices in support of the LTTE.

One last push

With civilians flowing into government held areas, operations were launched to capture the expanse of area from the earth bund to the coast.

Alpha Company of 2 CR, 7 SR, 9 GW, 1 Special Force and 11 SLLI who went targeting the Pudumathalan junction, were able to gain control of the area up to the coastal belt.

2 CR's Golf Company under Maj. Jaliya Dehideniya, were able to destroy a vehicle killing two Tiger leaders Kalendra and Vijith and another vehicle that came to blast the FDL of the Army.

Meanwhile, 9 GW destroyed a motorbike on a suicide mission from Pudumathalan North. On their way to the seashore, the Commandos captured a 12.7 weapon, a machine gun and an RPG. The NFZ got split in two, when the SLLI led by Commandos and Special forces enforced a defence line there.

Another memorable event that took place was 58 Division's advance from Mannar along the West coast to Pooneryn and from thereon to the East coast by moving through the interior. This, indeed, was a notable achievement by 58 Division.

The 58 Division planned to join up with 55 Division, by advancing towards North of Pudumathalan. The 2 CRs' Alpha and Bravo Companies, along with 7 SR started advancing at 4.00 a.m. on April 22. On their way, they attacked a main Sea Tiger camp and found vehicles and boats. While advancing, troops were able to confirm that terrorists had escaped by boat to the NFZ in the Vellamullawaikal area. Troops carried out Multi Barrel attacks on escaping rebels.

Meanwhile, 55 Division under Brig. Prasanna de Silva advanced and on the way, its 5 CR and 2 CR of 58 Division, came together around 8.30 a.m. on April 22.

Col. Rohan Palayangoda commanding 5 GW under 53 Division commanded by Maj. Gen. Kamal Guneratne and soldiers of 2 Special Forces commanded by Maj. Vipula Ihalage, after the battle, advanced from the lagoon towards the bund at Valayarmadam.

Heading for VP

Meanwhile, troops of the Air Mobile Brigade of 53 Division and 17 GW under Lt. Col. Kitsiri Kottewatte, belonging to Task Force VIII led by Col. G.V. Ravipriya, along with the troops of 4 Vijayaba Regiment (VR), were advancing along the A-35 route towards Wellamullawaikal, where LTTE leaders were tipped to be staying.

Tearing down the Tiger security rings, troops under Col. Lalantha Gamage commanding 681 Brigade too, were advancing, when 2nd Lt. A.D. Karunaratne of 4 VR and Lt. G.E. Guruge of 10 Artillery Regiment were killed by rebel fire from the NFZ.

The LTTE was making it difficult for the SF to advance to where the Tiger leaders were, by continuously attacking advancing troops with heavy weapons, including artillery.

Even Daya Master disclosed that Tiger leader Prabhakaran is inside the NFZ, in an area between Wellamullawaikal and the edge of Mulaitivu. This area has been surrounded from the South by 59 Division. Lt. Col. Subashana Welikala commander of 682 and his troops have laid a complete security ring across the lagoon from the West of Nanthikadal lagoon. 53 and 58 Divisions and troops of Special Force and Commando are coming down from Valayarmadam, and the destiny of the Tiger supremo will soon become evident.



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