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Troops capture Puthukuduyiruppu

Rafik JALALDEEN

Security Forces poised to liberate the Vanni and besieged civilians captured the LTTE's last stronghold and strategic town Puthukuduyiruppu in Mullaitivu yesterday morning following intense battles that claimed the lives of scores of LTTE cadres.

Task Forces and troops in their last phase of the Vanni battle making steady progress gained another victory by capturing the LTTE's last bastion Puthukuduyiruppu town.

Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said troops of the 53 and 58 divisions stormed from north and south of Puthukuduyiruppu and took total control of the Puthukudiyiruppu junction early morning.

Troops attached to the 58 division advancing from the northern region and the troops of the 53 division entering from the southern end of the A-35 Paranthan-Mullaitivu road joined each other after entering the Puthukuduyiruppu town center and took over the entire Puthukuduyiruppu junction area.

As troops neared the LTTE's last stronghold, the Tigers offered resistance to advancing troops. A fierce battle raged throughout the day and the LTTE suffered heavy casualties and lost control of the Puthukuduyiruppu town,"Brigadier Nanayakkara told the Daily News.

He said troops were marching forward to the East of Puthukuduyiruppu to liberate the Puthukudiyiruppu East. "Troops captured the entire Puthukuduyiruppu town after a week's prolonged fighting," he added.

The 12th Gajaba Regiment (GR) under the command of the 58 division, 1 GR and 4 Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment (VIR) under the command of the 53 division launched intense offensives to capture the Puthukuduyiruppu junction. Scores of LTTE cadres were killed and many wounded in the heavy fighting. The Tigers fled the area facing heavy defeat. The Security Forces are engaged in clearing operations, the Brigadier said.

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