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Sunday, 15 March 2009

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Army captures Tigers' hospital

Shanika SRIYANANDA

Troops of the 58 Division engaged in the Tigers from the Puthukkudiyirippu have captured a well-equipped Ponambalam Private Hospital, where LTTE's senior most leaders seek medical treatment.

Brig. Shavendra Silva, GOC of the 58 Division said that a separate ward had been allocated for Balaraj, the senior LTTE leader who died of a heart attack. The hospital was also one of their major communication hubs in Puthukkudiyirippu area.

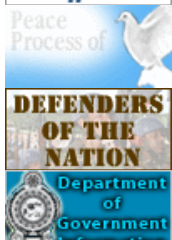
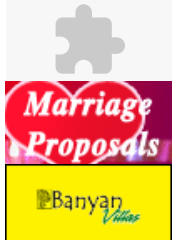
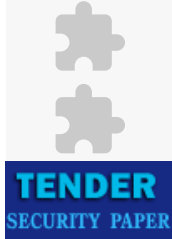
"The hospital with sophisticated medical equipment and well stocked with drugs was fully tiled, has a satellite tower and the time of capture the communication equipment was on", he said.

According to Brig. Silva the LTTE cadres had been ordered by the leaders not to abandon the hospital under any circumstances, but the troops were able to capture the area after intense fighting.

Meanwhile, over 150 civilians have reached the 58 Division by yesterday evening. Brig. Silva said that as troops were now only 400 to 500 metres away from the Puthumathalan, the safe zone for the civilians, and the displaced people have started crossing the LTTE control areas.

According to sources, the Tigers have now ordered three from each family to join the outfit, with no age limitation at least. The fleeing civilians have revealed that the LTTE terrorists have intensified their forcible recruitment and the civilians are given a crash training course at Wellamullei in Waikkal.

Facing a severe dearth of manpower, the Tigers have trained forcibly recruited elderly civilians as how to throw hand grenades at the troops to stop them from advancing on their FDLs.



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