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Another LTTE earth bund captured

Ranil Wijayapala

The 58 Division engaged in their mission to rescue the remaining civilians trapped inside the No Fire Zone achieved yet another victory yesterday capturing the Tiger earth bund in Rettavaikkal to the south of Valayamadam using only light weapons military officials told the Daily News yesterday.

This was the first military victory achieved by the troops after the Government decided to end combat operations using heavy calibre guns, combat aircraft and aerial weapons which could cause civilian casualties.

Troops attached to the 58 Division under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva took up the challenge of capturing this heavily fortified earth bund constructed across the narrow stretch of the No Fire Zone dividing the No Fire Zone, following a surprise night move whilst the LTTE was using all forms of heavy weapons against the ground troops.

"Our troops managed to capture this earth bund which was one of the tactically important locations for the LTTE to defend their hideouts in the southern part of the No Fire Zone where LTTE leaders are believed to be hiding through their military tactics and manoeuvres, using small arms," a senior military official added.

The infantry troops attached to the 58 Division also foiled numerous counter attacks which came in the form of explosive laden vehicles, sea borne attacks and armoured tanks to recapture the earth bund which was 10 to 12 feet in height and 700 meters in length defending the southern part of the No Fire Zone where Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran is believed to be hiding.

"Our gallant soldiers also averted a major disaster after destroying an explosive laden vehicle which was driven towards the earth bund after it was captured by the troops, firing few rounds of Rocket Propelled Grenades towards the lorry before it reached the earth bund," the official added.

Troops also suffered casualties but managed to avoid a major disaster by destroying the explosive laden vehicle, before it reached the earth bund.

The 58 Division troops have reached closer to the junction which links the Puthumathalan Mullaitivu road to the Paranthan Mullaitivu A-35 road.

The 53 Division under the command of Major General Kamal Gunaratne also advanced towards the No Fire Zone from the East of Puthukudiyiruppu.

The 58 Division troops continue their advance towards the southern part of the No Fire Zone in Kariyamullivaikkal and Vellamullivaikkal to rescue an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 civilians trapped inside the No Fire Zone.

Security Forces since April 20 have rescued more than 112,000 civilians trapped in the No Fire Zone.



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