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Saturday, 02 May 2009

NEWS BAR » >ce further south: Another earth bund captured ... Business: Sri Lanka can

- HOME
- DAILYNEWS ONLINE
- News
- Editorial
- Business
- Features
- Political
- Security
- Sport
- World
- Letters
- Obituaries

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TROOPS ADVANCE FURTHER SOUTH:

## Another earth bund captured

TWO HUGE EXPLOSIONS IN NFZ:

Ranil WIJAYAPALA

The advance of the troops towards the remaining areas under the control of the LTTE is set to be expedited with the 58 Division troops capturing another earth bund yesterday paving the way for the 53 Division advancing along the A-35 road to join with the 58 Division and advance further southwards in the No Fire Zone, military officials told the Daily News yesterday.

Troops of the 58 Division captured this heavily fortified earth bund which had been constructed obstructing the troop advance along the A-35 road as they reached towards the Pooneryn- Paranthan A-35 road leaving only five km land strip under LTTE control as of yesterday, military officials added.

As troops advanced further southward to capture the remaining areas under LTTE control, two more huge explosions believed to be accidental explosions of two suicide vehicles which were being prepared to be sent towards the advancing troops, were observed by the ground troops in the early hours of yesterday.

"The two explosions took place closer to the areas where thousands of civilians were living and the explosion continued for more than two hours at one instance," the officials added.

The military officials added that at least few dozens of civilians would have been killed and injured due to these explosions as it took place deeper inside the No Fire Zone in Vellamullivaikkal.

The LTTE on Wednesday made seven suicide attempts using human bombs and explosive laden vehicles and motorbikes to recapture the earth bund which was captured by the 58 Division troops on Tuesday.

"The LTTE is violating the basic human rights of the civilians trapped inside the No Fire Zone by making attempts to send suicide vehicles to stop the troop advance towards the southern part of the No Fire Zone," the official added.

The ground troops also foiled a major attempt by the LTTE to launch a sea borne attack on the ground troops operating in the Rettavaikkal area with the support of the Sri Lanka Navy and the Air Force.

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