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NAVY FOILS LTTE ATTEMPTS TO BREACH DEFENCES:

## 17 LTTE boats destroyed, over hundred cadres killed

Rafik Jalaldeen

17 LTTE boats were destroyed including several suicide boats and over 100 sea Tiger cadres were killed in the seas off Mullaitivu by naval troops during the last few weeks, said Navy spokesman Commander Mahesh Karunaratne.

Addressing the media yesterday at the MCNS, Commander Karunaratne said the Navy foiled several attempts of the sea Tiger cadres to break the naval defence lines and destroyed 17 LTTE boats and captured two suicide boats.

"Most of the destroyed boats were on suicide missions. Over 100 sea Tigers were killed during the sea battles that erupted in the seas off Mullaitivu during the last few weeks," he added.

The LTTE cadres are making desperate attempts to break the highly fortified Naval defence lines following orders from their high ranking commanders.

He noted that the LTTE have increased suicide attacks to break the naval blockade, however the naval troops tactically foiled their efforts. "We are facing difficulty to differentiate fleeing civilians and the LTTE cadres posing as civilians. However, the naval troops moving recognise the LTTE cadres and civilians," Commander Karunaratne added.

"The LTTE leadership was aware that the naval defence lines were strengthened, even though the LTTE cadres were ordered to try and destroy the naval blockades to find out any available opportunity. Therefore, the LTTE cadres are deploying small boats packed with at least 50kg of C4 explosives. The Navy is ready to face any eventuality," Commander Karunaratne told the Daily News.

He said the Navy have rescued over 20,000 civilians fleeing from the LTTE clutches.

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