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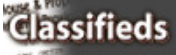
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## Troops consolidating near Waddawakal causeway

Rafik Jalaldeen

Security Forces poised to rescue the remaining trapped civilians, entered the currently demarcated No Fire Zone (NFZ) yesterday morning while troops of the 59 division which had advanced 300m are now consolidating their position around the Waddawakal causeway.

Addressing the media yesterday at the MCNS, Military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara said LTTE cadres confined within five sq km in the new NFZ, are making desperate attempts to hold their position with all means and power they possess. He said 6 SLLI and 12 SLLI infantrymen of the 59 division after crossing the LTTE constructed earth bund and ditch North of the Waddawakal causeway yesterday morning advanced further 300m.

"Advancing troops of the 59 division inflicting heavy damages to the LTTE cadres are now consolidating their position at the newly established defence line in Sarwathottam located south of the previous NFZ," he added.

Meanwhile, troops of the 58 division moving from the north have entered the new NFZ countering LTTE attacks. "Three LTTE suicide bombers hiding inside underground bunkers have blown themselves as advancing 58 division troops closed-in on them".

In a subsequent search operation, troops recovered 25 bodies of Tiger cadres, 20 T56 assault rifles and other warlike items," Brigadier Nanayakkara said.

He said over 188,500 civilians fleeing from LTTE captivity in Mullaitivu sought protection with the Security Forces. "Around 90 civilians have reached troops of the 58 and 59 division today," he added.

He noted that three child soldiers who surrendered to troops on Sunday have been handed over to the police. Five other LTTE cadres had surrendered to troops on Monday. Two were child soldiers.

Responding to a question whether LTTE leader Velupillai Prabakaran is still in the NFZ, Brigadier Nanayakkara said according to information the LTTE leader, his second in command and other leaders are still in the NFZ. "They are making desperate attempts to flee from the area," he said.

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