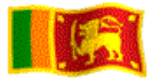


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Troops foil Tiger's final attempt

Ranil Wijayapala

Troops operating in the western edge of the Nanthikadal lagoon yesterday foiled what was described by the troops as the final attempt by the LTTE to escape towards the jungles in Mullaitivu and Puthukudiyiruppu South killing more than 80 Tiger cadres who tried to breach the Security Forces' defences in the early hours of yesterday.

"More than 80 well trained Tiger cadres were killed and their bodies were recovered collected from the Nanthikadal lagoon as troops foiled the Tigers' attempt to breach the Security Forces defence around 2.30 am yesterday," military officials in Mullaitivu told the Daily News.

The attempt to breach the Security Forces' defences came after launching four Tiger boats into the Nanthikadal lagoon from the Safe Zone whilst hundreds of other cadres crossed the lagoon to reach the Western edge of the lagoon.

Troops attached to the 19 Sri Lanka Light Infantry Regiment under the command of the 5 Vijayabahu Infantry Regiment took the brunt of the attack killing scores of Tiger cadres and destroying boats heading towards the Security Forces' defences.

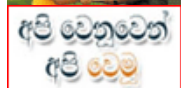
The 5 VIR battalion under the command of Lt. Colonel Kalpa Sanjeeva collected 40 Tiger bodies including that of nine female Tiger cadres whilst 19 SLLI battalion under the command of Lt. Colonel Ravindra Perera collected more than 30 bodies of Tiger cadres.

Acting Brigade Commander of the 592 Brigade Lt. Colonel Senaka Wijesuriya and 682 Brigade Commander Lt. Colonel Subashana Welikala commanded the infantry troops to foil this attempt by the LTTE.

According to intelligence sources, Tiger leader Soosai and Jeyam had briefed the Tiger cadres before they launched the attack and their aim was to open a path towards the Mullaitivu jungles for their leaders to escape from the safe zone.

"If they succeeded in their bid they would have escaped to the jungle patches in Mullaitivu once troops advanced into the last terrain of the LTTE," military officials added.

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