

Victory and Collateral Damage: There are No Winners in War

1st ARTICLE

Paranthan LTTE garrison captured: Troops make headway at Wanni battles [03rd Lead]

"Paranthan junction and its surrounding areas are now under the total control of the security forces", latest reports from the Wanni battlefront read.



The Paranthan LTTE garrison has been captured by the Task Force - 1 troops today (Jan 01) early morning, following hours of bitter fighting ensued between troops and LTTE, military sources said. The fall of Paranthan marks the dominance of security forces at the township after a decade.

The battle for Paranthan began in the early hours on Tuesday (30) when the TF-1 armor, artillery and infantry battalions commenced launching a concerted assault on the garrison town while, Army forward domination elements took on the well fortified LTTE resistance positions during surprise maneuvers made behind enemy lines.

Troops have also cutoff the vital access routes towards Paranthan along the A-9 road from North and South, reportedly killing over 50 terrorists, while injuring twice as many numbers during the intense battles, military source said.

The Paranthan LTTE garrison is strategically located, approximately 4.5km North of Kilinochchi along the A-9 trunk route and on the southern sector of Elephant Pass, another LTTE foothold, according to ground troops.

Troops of the TF-1, commanded by Brigadier Shavendra Silva, entered the Paranthan built-up assisted with close combat air support of the SLAF jets and MI-24 helicopter gunships, Wednesday morning (Dec 31). LTTE resistances and counterattacks were outflanked by the intense military armour attacks and concentrated artillery and mortar fire, ground troops said. The fighting was fierce and prolonged for hours until terrorists were completely beaten by the determined soldiers, the sources added. LTTE fighting formations mainly from the Imran Pandiyan unit led by its 'Kilinochchi-in-charge', Velavan and Jerom had made successive attempts to gain lost ground only to be left with more casualties and damages, military sources said.

Unable to withstand the fury of the combined Army and Air force onslaught, LTTE terrorists withdrew from the town in total disarray. Having inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy, troops are now consolidating defences and advancing further east of the Paranthan junction, security sources added.

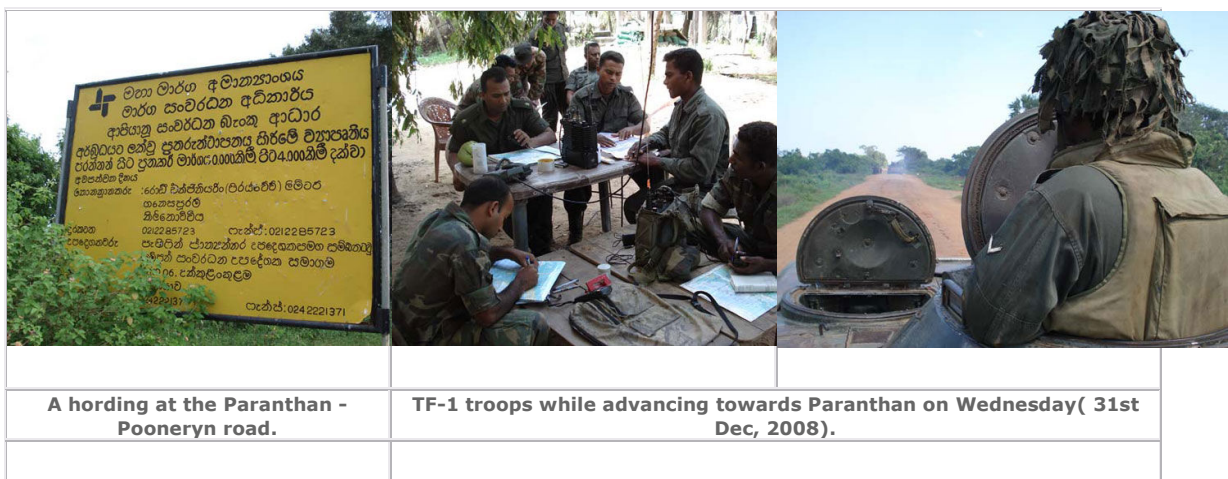
Fall of Paranthan would also open a gateway to the LTTE's remaining defences at Vaddakkachchi, and Puthukkudiyiruppu areas on the A-35 road (Paranthan-Mullaittivu), defence observers asserted. Muhamalai in the southern peninsular neck will also be untenable for the LTTE, the sources pointed out.

The fall of Paranthan, the well-fortified LTTE garrison has isolated the southern periphery of the Elephant Pass LTTE foothold and has also exposed the LTTE's main fortification at Kilinochchi, defence observers further said.

The chemical factory was the hallmark of Paranthan, providing direct and indirect income to many locals. In 1986 SLA positioned a small administrative base at Paranthan, which was linked to the main base at Kilinochchi. LTTE disrupted civil administration in the area in early 1990s.

SLA liberated it from the LTTE grip during the 'Sathjaya 1 & 2' military campaign conducted on Sep, 1996. However, troops had to make a tactical withdrawal in September 1998", Army sources said.

More information will follow.



<p>A hording at the Paranthan - Pooneryn road.</p>	<p>TF-1 troops while advancing towards Paranthan on Wednesday(31st Dec, 2008).</p>

2nd ARTICLE

5 Civillians Killed, 16 Wounded in Air Strikes, Hospital Reports Blood Shortage

[TamilNet, Wednesday, 31 December 2008, 04:26 GMT]

Sri Lanka Air Force (SLAF) bombers attacked a civilian settlement near Murugananda school in Murasumoaddai on Paranthan - Mullaitheevu Road killing two females of a family and a male on the spot. Another man, who was seriously wounded, succumbed to his injuries at the hospital. 16 civilians, including a couple, were wounded. The attack has targeted three civilian settlements in Murasumoaddai Wednesday around 8:00 a.m. The indiscriminate bombardment on fleeing civilians, Internally Displaced Person's huts, close to the ICRC Karaichchi branch office, a school, temple and agricultural lands aims at instilling fear at the minds of the civilians in Vanni, observers said.



A civilian volunteer bringing a seriously wounded mother

Meanwhile, a 29-year-old male, T. Sasikaran, was seriously injured when Sri Lanka Army (SLA) fired artillery shells targeting settlements in 2nd Mile Post. Mr. Sasikaran wounded in his head was rushed to hospital in unconscious state and is at the stage of coma, according to the latest update from the medical sources Wednesday night.

24-year-old Juda Margarat Aseervatham, 55-year-old Asservaatham Maryamma and Markandu Sivanandan were killed on the spot.

52-year-old Chandrabose and 37-year-old Kannan, two of the wounded who were admitted at Tharmapuram hospital, succumbed to their injuries at the Intensive Care Unit.

The wounded civilians in the first bombardment on three localities were identified as I. Nirmalan, 15, S. Ragulan, 21, Arumaitthurai Jesinald, 26, Ramachandran Kumanan, 30,

Selvarajah Kulendran, 33, K. Jeyasri, 38, Somasundaram Chandrakumar, 43, Annakkodi Chandramary, 45, Vellaichamy Annakkodi, 49, S. Balasundaram, 51, Palaniayappan Subramaniam, 52, Ranjithamalar, 58, and Saravana Bavananthan, 62.



An elderly civilian wounded in SLAF bombardment