

● Heavy casualties among Tigers

Navy bombards LTTE bases

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THE LTTE is believed to have suffered heavy casualties during Naval bombardment of their bases along the Nayaru seaboard south of Mullaitivu on Wednesday and Thursday.

According to Navy sources in Colombo, Naval craft from Trincomalee had been sent to intercept a group of Tigers who had abducted eight fishermen off Kokilai, south of Mullaitivu on Wednesday morning.

The Tigers, who arrived in a speedboat at the fishing grounds had taken prisoner eight fishermen from two *vallams*, and were returning to their bases when other fishermen had informed the Army

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camp at Kokilai of the incident.

The Army had informed the Navy and Naval craft which attempted to intercept the Tiger boats had come under heavy fire from rebel bases on shore close to Nayaru.

The Naval craft had returned fire and engaged the enemy Wednesday evening and yesterday morning during which the Tigers had fired small arms, mortars and heavy machine guns at the Navy

boats.

While the sailors suffered no casualties, it is believed that the rebels had suffered heavily due to the accurate Naval fire co-ordinated by Air Force spotter aircraft.

A rebel boat was hit and damaged during the incident, Navy sources said.

The fate of the abducted fishermen who are from Negombo, was not known at the time of going to press. Security officials say that the rebels would have removed the 3.5 ton *vallams* in order to either transport their cadres from the Mullaitivu area south to Batticaloa or to use them in attacks against the Navy.