

Troops storm key LTTE training camp. (1993, June 28). *The Island*.

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THE ISLAND

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## At least 20 Tigers killed

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Our Polonnaruwa Corr.

Troops backed by artillery and air support stormed a major training camp of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) located in a sprawling island of the Mahaweli river, along the border linking Trincomalee, Polonnaruwa and Batticaloa yesterday killing at least twenty 'Tigers' and injuring scores of others, security officials said.

The huge camp in the dense jungles surrounding the island was over-run by the security forces in the dawn raid, these officials disclosed.

Two soldiers were killed and five others injured in the assault. The LTTE base identified as 'Angodawillu' had been operating as a key training centre in guerilla tactics. It had also provided arms training to scores of LTTE recruits brought from Trincomalee and Batticaloa through jungle routes, military sources revealed.

The two dead soldiers have been identified as Privates Bala Banda and W. G. Tillekeratne. The five injured army personnel were airlifted to the Polonnaruwa base hospital. The condition of two of them is reported to be critical.

Two detachments of troops had entered the jungles from Kallar in Trincomalee and moved towards

their target under covers of darkness. The LTTE camp had been earlier marked for destruction but previous attempts to smash it had to be abandoned due to certain tactical problems. But with the launching of 'Operation Muhudusulang' and the capture of a wide section of Batticaloa north, troops were able to penetrate the dense wilds and storm the LTTE base, military sources said.

Troops had stormed the Tiger camp at crack of dawn. Artillery helicopter gunships and Sia Marchetti fighter planes had pounded the LTTE camp which was under assault by ground troops, these sources said.

The LTTE had initially offered resistance but as troops opened up with heavy weapons they had backed out. Some terrified cadres had jumped into the river as their escape routes had been blocked. A large stock of arms had been found in the wrecked LTTE base, security officials said.

The number of 'Tigers' killed could be much higher as troops are still 'clearing' the camp. They had also come across buried mines which had been planted at strategic points to prevent unauthorised entry, these sources said.

The LTTE camp is now in the hands of the security forces, these sources claimed.