

LTTE was solely responsible for Rajiv's death. (1993, July 16). *Daily News*.

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MADRAS July 15 (PTI) - The special investigation team, (SIT), that probed the murder of Rajiv Gandhi today said its investigation had proved that it was Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam that was responsible for the ex premier's assassination, on May 21,

Denying the charges of the defence lawyers that SIT had not investigated the role of other Sri Lankan groups and CIA, the prosecution lawyer, Mr. P. Rajamanickam told the trial court judge that SIT had thoroughly gone into the involvement of other groups and found that LTTE's involvement in the assassination was beyond any doubt.

He said SIT began seriously considering the LTTE's involvement only after Nalini and Murugan confirmed its role during interrogation soon after their arrest. The media speculations about LTTE involvement nor the groups denial never closed SIT's mind and it conducted a thorough scientific investigation into the case.

Mr. Rajamanickam who began his reply to the defence lawyers arguments on the discharge petitions said that after looking into all available clues at the assassination site, it was found that two bodies, a male and female, remained to be identified. They were later identified as that of Haribabu, freelance photographer and Dhanu who activated an RDX device hidden in her vest.

Winding up his arguments on the discharge petitions, the counsel, Mr. N. Chandrasekharan, said according to witness accounts of loaders at Kodiakarai in Vedaranyam coast, who had seen belt bomb assassin Dhanu and others disembarking from a boat, Sivarasan had told them the boat would arrive and was later seen signalling the boat to berth. This falsified prosecution's theory that Sivarasan had come along with the other eight members of the squad to kill Rajiv, he said.

This also falsified the theory that the LTTE leader, Pottu Amman, and Akhila had seen off Sivarasn and others before they left for Tamil Nadu, he said.

If witness accounts were to be believed the confessional statement by his client Shankar alias Koneswaran that he

and Sivarasan were part of the squad which arrived on Apr 30 should not be treated as evidence, he said. He reiterated his argument that the two had come to India to kill EPRLF leader, Varadaraja Perumal. If Shankar was to be charged it should be for trying to kill Mr. Perumal, he said.

Mr. Chandrasekharan also argued for the discharge of Robert Payas, his brother-in-law Jayakumar and Jayakumar's wife Shanti.

While Shanti, a poor housewife who did nothing but accompany Dhanu and Subha for shopping, could be discharged straight away, Payas and Jayakumar could be charged for individual unlawful acts but not conspiracy to kill, he said.

Payas, in whose house Sivarasan and others regularly met and received phone calls, spoke of Sivarasan and another LTTE leader Kanthan as dangerous persons on dangerous work. But he never specified in the confessional statement that he knew exactly about their intention to kill Rajiv, he argued.

Quoting witness accounts, the counsel said though Payas carried a letter from Sivarasan to another LTTE cadre, Chokkan, to the Vedaranyam coast around the time of the assassination, he was not aware of the letter's contents.

He said Payas came to India with his family to try and go to Germany and was busy arranging for his visa. Around the time of the assassination he was on a site-seeing tour of Madras city along with his friends from abroad. The witness' accounts testified to this, he said.