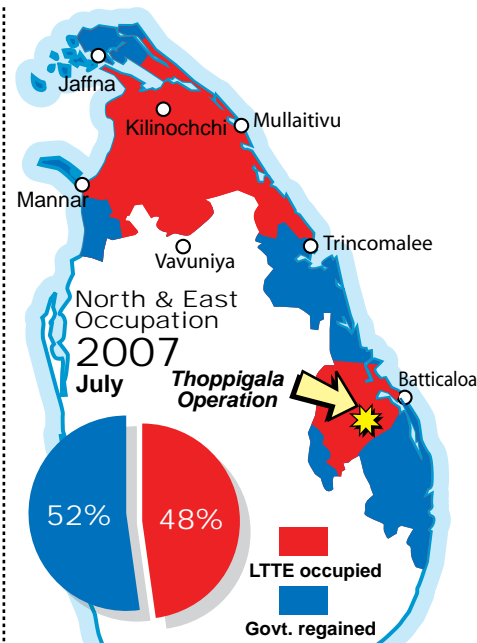


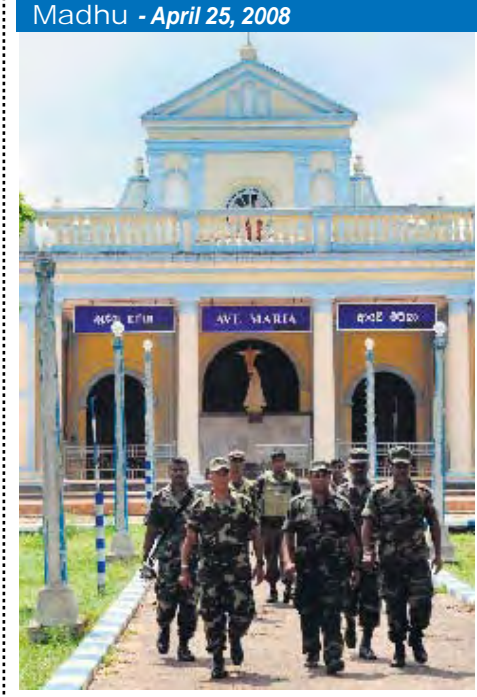
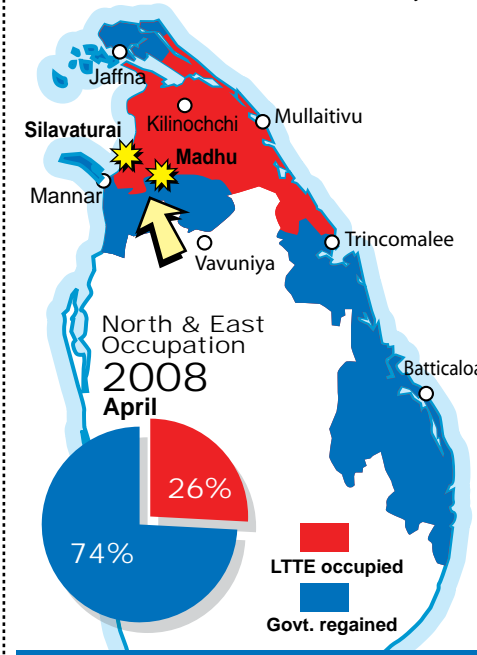
A BATTLE REMEMBERED

It has been two years since the end of 30-year Eelam war that ripped the social fabric of the country into shards. The final battle that was launched to rescue Mavil Aru in July 2006 ended in May 2009 with the killing of LTTE Supremo Velupillai Prabhakaran in Vellamullivaikkal. During that period, the security forces fought many daring battles, undergoing untold hardships, to rescue the land areas and civilians held captive by the LTTE. Today, we take a look back on that final battle in a bid to understand the magnitude of the strength and bravery of the security forces as they demolished a terrorist group, regarded by some as the most fierce and dangerous in the world.



Silavathurai - September 2, 2007
Silavathurai is a coastal location that served as a supply point for the LTTE in the Mannar area. The SL Army announces a major operation to oust LTTE from the region, and on September 2, 2007 it announces the capture of the Sea Tiger base in Silavathurai and Arrippu areas. SL Army Commander, Lt. Gen. Sarath Fonseka claims it as a significant victory for the military as the LTTE used the base to smuggle in arms and ammunition from Tamil Nadu.

Welioya - February 4, 2008
The military of Sri Lanka captures a main LTTE supply base known as "Munnagam base" after three days of fighting on May 29, 2008. The base located 6 km north of Welioya FDL and 15 km south of Mullaitivu city centre, also the base consisting of underground bunker system with domestic facilities. The Sri Lankan Army moves into the Kilinochchi District for the first time in 11 years.



Madhu - April 25, 2008
The LTTE sets up positions in front of the Madhu sacred shrine. The Sri Lankan military gains control of the Madhu Shrine area from April 25, 2008. The Sri Lankan Army completes repairs to the Madhu Shrine at a cost of about Rs. 1.5 million allocated from the Army budget and hands it over to the Bishop.

Adampan - May 9, 2008
The Sri Lankan military captures a small town of Adampan in Mannar during the morning of May 9, 2008 which makes a gateway for them to enter the north-eastern part of Mannar. The strategic town of Periyamadu and Palampiddi area which is inside the Madhu sanctuary are located in this region, also believed to be LTTE has well fortified bunker lines there.

Vellankulam - August 2, 2008
On August 2, 2008 the Sri Lankan Army captures the town of Vellankulam, the last bastion of Tigers in the Mannar District. This marks the liberation of the entire Mannar District by the Army which takes eight months.



ENTERING WANNI

A new fighting division unit, created for the 57 Division Wannu operations by the Army Commander begins operations in March 2007 from west of Omathai advancing towards Thampanai, Periyathampanai and Willathikulam. Fourth Sinha Regiment (SR) and Ninth Gajaba Regiment (GR) join the first phase of the battle for Wannu.

With Maj. Gen. Jagath Dias assuming command of 57 Division, the Bravo Company of the Fourth SR captures forward security ring of LTTE at Pokkaraiwanni on September 25, 2007. This is the first occasion a Tiger forward defence ring had been taken.

The Forces breaching Tiger earth bunds, clearing thick jungles and moving over some steep terrains took Thampanai, Periyathampanai, Villathikulam and Mullikulam areas.

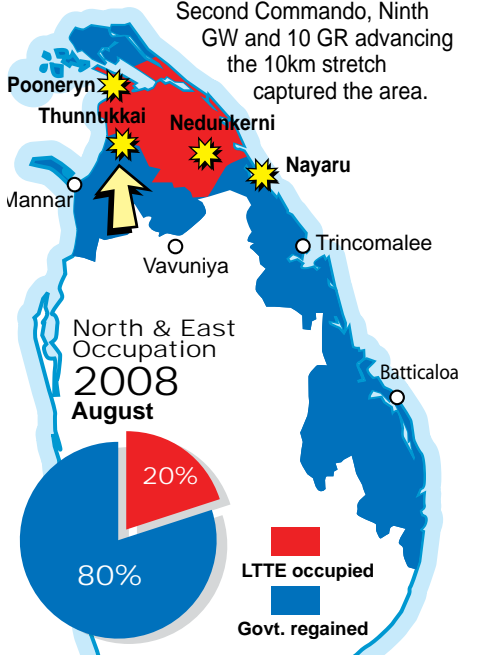


Nagarkovil - July 27, 2008

While operations are on in Wannu, the northern front too erupts in battle. The 55 and 53 Divisions completely overrun the Tiger first defence line from Killilali to Nagarkovil. The 55 Division under Brig. Prasanna de Silva and 53 under Brig. Kamal Guneratne (later promoted Maj. Gen.), are involved in launching the massive assault on July 27, 2008. The Infantry and Mechanised Infantry Regiment (MIR) break through the LTTE bunkers and set fire to their forward line before returning.

Iluppukadawai - August 2, 2008

On July 31, 2008 the 58 Division troops reach the boarder of the Killinochchi District and 57 Division captures the Vellankulam-Thunnukai road. Troops of 58 Division who overran Vedithalaitivu captures the main Tiger camp at Iluppukadawai 10 km North of that point on August 2, 2008. Troops of the Second Commando, Ninth GW and 10 GR advancing the 10km stretch captured the area.



Moolankavil - August 12, 2008
The main administrative town of the Tigers Moolankavil is captured by troops of 58 Division after advancing 52 km smashing series of LTTE security rings. This is the second biggest administrative point in the Killinochchi District.

Nayar - August 21, 2008
Nayar lagoon in the east coast where plenty of Sea Tiger activity is taking place is captured by the troops of 59-1 Brigade. By this time the 59 Division had over run 102 kms. During this period it had also killed 1152 Tigers and recovered bodies of 69 of its victims. The 14 Wijayaba Regiment captures Jeevan base on August 16, 2008. This is a notable achievement as the Jeevan base is part of the famed One Four base complex of the LTTE.

The 11 Infantry of the 58 Division advances on Nachcikudah along the coast.

Thunnukai - August 13, 2008

The troops of 57 Division overrun another strategic point of the LTTE in the Wannu the Thunnukai Tiger Fortress after heavy fighting. Due to its strategic importance Tigers do their best to defend Thunnukai, Mallavi and Yogapuram, all situated west of Vavunikulam tank. Earlier on August 13 another Tiger strong point Kalvilan area is captured by 57 Division, nothing yet another significant victory.

WANNI OPERATION - 2008/09



The southern security ring of Akkarayankulam is breached by the 57 Division. They capture 600 metres of this important security ring and in the process, twenty soldiers pay with their lives while killing 150 Tiger cadres.

There being only nine kilometres from Akkarayankulam to Killinochchi, the Tigers mount waves of unsuccessful counter attacks to take back the town's southern security ring with the idea of turning the tide.

Mallavi - September 2, 2008

The 57-3 Brigade captures the second most important administrative town of the LTTE, Mallavi.

After the fall of Killinochchi during the Sathjaya operation, Tigers shift their administration of Banks and Courts to Mallavi. The town falls to the forces after a 22 year Tiger hold. The Task Force overrun Palamodai township on September 28, 2008 after a seven-day operation.

The Sea Tiger Headquarters in Nachcikudah is captured by 12 GR and Fifth Signals Corp, belonging to 58 Division, while Tenth GR liberates Jayapuram area.

Akkarayankulam - November 6, 2008

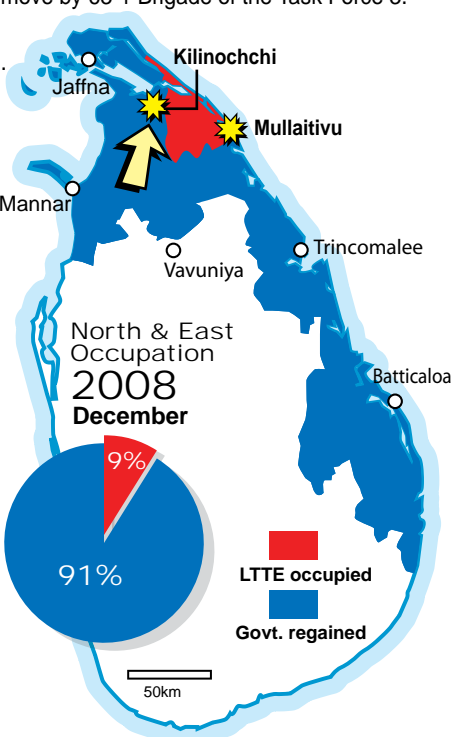
Akkarayankulam, an important village situated close to Killinochchi finally falls to advancing troops of 57-1 Brigade. Within a week from November 10, troops take over a 150 km area including Vallapadhu, Kiranchi, Palavi, Yakthuduwa and Ponthlai.

Pooneryn - November 14, 2008

In one of the most daring operations, advancing units of the 58 Division reach the town outskirts by 4.30am on November 15 and at 8.00am they capture Pooneryn. The capture is of great military importance and made it possible to reopen the Jaffna-Colombo supply route after 20 years.

Mankulam - November 16, 2008

Troops of the Task Force 3 liberate Mankulam by 2.00pm on November 16, 2008. The 59 Division infiltrates through the jungles of Nagacholai to take Kumalamunai Tiger bastion on the way to Mullaitivu. Olumadu is captured in a brilliant offensive move by 63-1 Brigade of the Task Force 3.



Puliyankulam - December 4, 2008

Delivering a strategic blow to the Tigers, Special Forces 2 manages to liberate Kanagarayankulam and Puliyankulam, which is a significant milestone along the A9 highway, on December 4 and 5, 2008.

The final battle to enter Killinochchi Town is launched on December 10, 2008. Units 57 4 Brigade infiltrate the area from Akkarayan to Therumurukandi.

Special Forces 3 liberates Ampakamam Town on December 15, 2008.

Paranthan - January 1, 2009

The troops under the command of Brigadier Shavendra Silva start entering the Paranthan area on December 31, 2008 and start moving southward towards Killinochchi.

Kilinochchi - January 2, 2009

The town that was called by many as the *de facto* capital of Tamil Eelam falls to the hands of the troops of 57 Division under the command of Mj.Gen. Jagath Dias. Troops demolish the trench line surrounding Killinochchi from three directions and enter the town on January 2, 2009.

Elephant Pass - January 9, 2009

Following Killinochchi liberation, 55 Division under the command of Brigadier Prasanna Silva and 53 Division under Brigadier Kamal Gunaratne launch the battle to conquer Muhamalai FDL. They move 8 km southwards while liberating Palay, Soranpaththu, Ayyakachchi. On January 9, at 11:05 a.m. they enter Elephant Pass.

Meanwhile, 55 Division troops advance from Nagarkovil to Chundikulam, capturing 44 km area along the coast of the neck of the Peninsula. The Iranamadu airstrip, is captured by the 63 2 Brigade on January 14, 2009.

Mullaitivu - January 25, 2009

What had been the centre of Sea Tiger prowess for the last 13 years, Mullaitivu is finally liberated by the troops of 59 Division following an astonishing strike. For the first time in the history of the Eelam War, a submarine manufacturing plant is captured by the 63 1 Brigade troops.

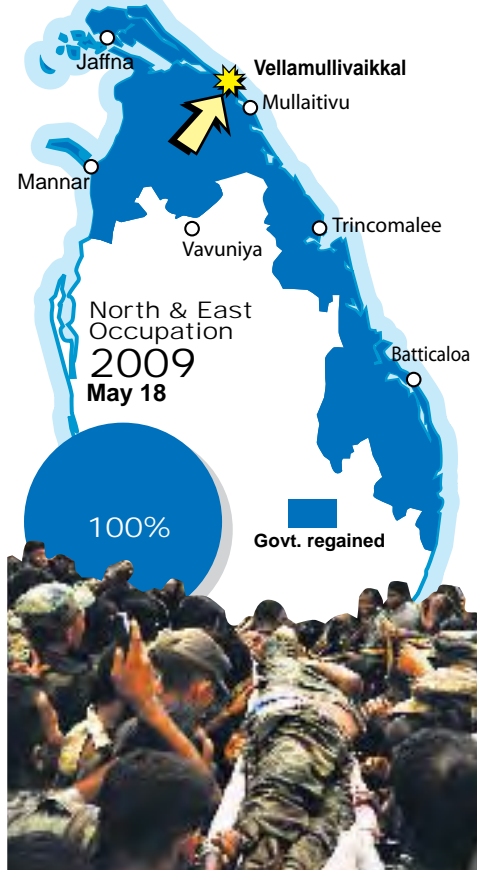
The 55 Division conquers a Sea Tiger base in Chalai after a battle on February 8, 2009.

Puthukkuduyirippu - April 5, 2009

Puthukkuduyirippu battle turns fierce towards the end of February and on April 5, 2009 the troops capture this last Tiger stronghold after weeks of endless fighting and sacrifice. During the battle, the troops of the 58 and 53 Divisions kill several leaders of the LTTE including Theepan, Gaddafi, Keerthi, Vidusha and Durga.

Vellamullivaikkal - May 18, 2009

Special forces kill the LTTE leader Velupillai Prabhakaran as he tries to stage a dramatic breakout from the army encirclement in Vellamullivaikkal.



The body of LTTE leader Prabhakaran

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