Trinco and Colombo ports were targets

The LTTE terrorist group had a master plan to surround the entire Eastern coast, capture the Trincomalee port and take Jaffna after defeating the Armed Forces, but the national intelligence services and the Navy intelligence grasped the terrorist plan to preempt the plan, to make the victory of the Armed Forces over the terrorist group.
For it was well-known that the terrorist Sea Tiger leader Soosai had predicted that the Eelam War IV will be fought on the seas, Navy Commander Admiral Vasantha Karannagoda said over an interview with the ITN channel.

He said the political leadership of President Mahinda Rajapaksa that did not yield to international pressure to go for talks with the LTTE when the Armed Forces started humanitarian operation was a key factor, more than any other as in previous occasions when the Armed Forces were winning like in the Vadamarachchy operation led by Gen Denzil Kobbekaduwa, other leaders gave into external pressures and stopped the operations.

He said the second part of the LTTE plan was to attack the Port of Colombo using suicide Sea Tiger cadres so that the entire economy would be ruined and ships would stop calling over at Colombo. Therefore the Navy used the most modern naval and signal equipment in and around the port and opened several Navy camps from Negombo to Panadura to keep all terrorist craft or Sea Tigers out of the entire area.

Had the terrorists succeeded the deciding battle would have been on the sea. The key to the problem was that the Navy had been able to destroy 11 LTTE ships that attempted to smuggle in arms, notably artillery and mortars among others but once the ships were destroyed, some of them on international waters, their fire power declined after 2005 and by 2007-2008 they could not land a single shipment of arms and the terrorists started retreating from all fronts. The Sri Lanka Army therefore had a clear advantage over the LTTE from that period. Though their artillery and mortar attacks did not stop they decreased gradually and by the beginning of 2009 their attacks were only a few as they could not smuggle weapons with the strong Navy presence in the seas. Admiral Karannagoda said in the interview.

He said all three Armed Forces cooperated and acted in unison to defeat the LTTE and he was very grateful to the Navy personnel as well as other members of the Armed Forces who had sacrificed with conviction to defeat the terrorists and the public had stood by the Forces even when they had to make many sacrifices to help the war effort.

By Wijitha NAKKAWITA