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## Army enters vacated areas of NFZ; save thousands of civilian lives under terror clutches

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Sri Lanka Army 58 Division soldiers this morning (Apr 21) entered into those areas of Puthumanthalam and Amapalavanpokkanai in the No Fire Zone [NFZ], where they had rescued over 31,000 civilians yesterday (Apr 20). According to the sources, troops rescued nearly 3000 civilians early this morning and walked into the vacated areas. Now, troops have established their positions across the NFZ from Puthumathalan to the beachhead, said the sources. The manoeuvre has saved lives of several thousands of civilians trapped in the area extending from Puthumathalan North to the northern border of the NFZ, the sources added. Aerial observation yesterday revealed that a small group of terrorists had been firing indiscriminately at a group consisting of several thousands of civilians attempting to cross over to the cleared areas through the northern borders of the NFZ. Troops of 55 Division manning their defences about one kilometre short of the northern border, yesterday received 5863 of these civilians who had managed to escape the terrorist grip. "The civilians said they were fired upon by the terrorist as they crossed over to the cleared area. They brought 3 bodies with them along with several dozens of others having gunshot injuries. They said that they had to leave behind many others gunned down by the terrorists", the defence.lk special correspondent at Chalai said. "These civilians curse not only the LTTE but also those who support the outfit. All they request from the soldiers is to beat the Tigers soon and to rescue their kith and kin still held hostage by the terrorists", he added. Meanwhile, defence sources in the 58 Division area said that 17 civilians were killed and 373 others including 11 children were injured yesterday as the terrorist attacked the civilians with three suicide bomb blasts and machine gunfire. The injured were rushed to the nearest hospitals while some of them under serious conditions were airlifted. Rescue mission is continuing. Courtesy: defence.lk