

## **A BRIEF RECORD OF THE OPERATIONAL HISTORY OF THE GEMUNU WATCH REGIMENT**

This is a brief account of the heroic deeds of the warriors of the Gemunu Watch Regiment in combat.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Bn The Gemunu Watch was raised in Diyatalawa on 7<sup>th</sup> December 1962. Its initial deployment of the entire Battalion under the command of its founder and first Commanding Officer Lt. Col. (late Brig) J.F. Halangode was in the Mannar sector on TAFII (Task Force Anti-Illicit Immigration) duties in early 1963. The 2<sup>nd</sup> (vol) Bn The Gemunu Watch in Galle and the 3<sup>rd</sup> (vol) Bn The Gemunu Watch in Matara were also deployed on TAFII duties and have performed exceptionally well in operational duties both in Jaffna and Mannar sectors.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Bn The Gemunu Watch was the first unit to be deployed in the 1971 insurgency in Wellawaya, whilst its volunteer counter-parts lead the Counter- Insurgency operations in Galle and Matara respectively.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Bn The Gemunu Watch was part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade group that led the way during 'Op Liberation' in 1987 in Vadamarachchi in the Jaffna peninsular.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Bn The Gemunu Watch fought heroically in June 1990 in the defence of its camps in the Batticaloa district which were under siege for over 8 days amidst the surrender of over 670 policemen who were brutally killed in cold blood by the LTTE.

The 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Bns of The Gemunu Watch assisted the two Brigades that launched the first amphibious 'Balavegaya I' operation to rescue the besieged troops at Elephant pass in July 1991.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Bn The Gemunu Watch was in the thick of the fighting in Weli-oya in July 1995 where more than 350 LTTE cadres were killed in one night's battle during their abortive attempt to overrun the Weli-oya settlement in the North- East of Sri Lanka.

In October 1995 'Op Riviresa' was launched to liberate the Jaffna peninsular where the 7<sup>th</sup> Bn The Gemunu Watch was instrumental in leading the way in the capture of Jaffna Fort, Chavakachcheri, Point Pedro and VVT. They were ably supported by other Bns of the Sri Lanka Army including 1GW, 5GW, 6GW, 8GW and 9GW who were also involved in the Riviresa operation with units of the SLN and SLAF. In late 1996 "Op Sathjaya" was launched to liberate Paranthan and Killinochchi where 6GW, 7GW and 9GW were actively involved.

In May 1997 'Op Jayasikuru' was launched to open the land route to the Jaffna peninsular and in its 18 months duration 1GW, 4GW, 5GW, 8GW and 11 GW Bns with other units of the Sri Lanka Army participated in the operation.

6GW, 7GW, 8GW and 9GW Bns were also involved in the recent humanitarian operations in the East commencing with the re-capture of the Mavil-aru anicut and the liberation of Sampur and Vakarai and the capture of the Thoppigala stronghold of the LTTE, thus liberating the East from the LTTE from August 2006 to July 2007.

The Gemunu Watch Regiment has now grown to 09 regular and 04 volunteer Battalions and has done proud by protecting its motherland. It continues to serve with honour and distinction and have kept to its regimental motto "Tarry Not Forward". The regiment has lost 2547 heroes who have made the supreme sacrifice of their lives in the defence of Sri Lanka during the past 45

years. We will always remember them for their dedicated service to our motherland and Regiment. Those who serve and are due to serve in the Gemunu Watch Regiment could be proud of their record in combat and continue to uphold the rich traditions of the Regiment.

As we approach the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn The Gemunu Watch we record with pride our achievements in combat and honour the sacrifice and dedication of our comrades in arms. We also wish to invite all those Gemunu Watch Ex-Servicemen to join the GWESRA in their retirement to continue our camaraderie and fellow-ship until we fade away.

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President GWESRA – 2007