

Hunted by Malaysia in five countries

Fugitive Tiger held at KIA

By Keerthi Mendis and K. Piyasoma

An LTTE arms expert and reported leader of the naval unit of the Tiger 'Sunbird' organisation, was arrested by the CID at Katunayake airport yesterday.

Known as Kumaraswamy Sri Kanthan of Adampan, Mannar, he had earlier escaped from the custody of Malaysian police when the LTTE's chartered arms ship, the 'Sunbird', was nabbed on the Malaysian shore two years ago.

Subsequently Interpol and the airports of five Asian countries were alerted for his arrest.

The suspect, said to be an ammunitions expert and authority on LTTE arms shipments, maritime routes and naval operations, had once trained the Sea Tiger unit.

He had also served on

the arms ship involved in Kittu's suicide.

Security authorities say the suspect's visit to Sri Lanka this time may have been to patch up LTTE leader Prabakaran's rift with his deputy Mahendrarajah, alias Mahattaya, and to arrange another arms shipment to the LTTE in the North.

He had an accomplice with him on this visit who apparently escaped at the airport.

Police yesterday immediately notified their Malaysian counterparts about this wanted terrorist's arrest.

He is being detained in a high security cell,

awaiting instructions from the Malaysian authorities.