



Uploaded to VFC Website

▶▶▶ February 2013 ◀◀◀

This Document has been provided to you courtesy of Veterans-For-Change!

Feel free to pass to any veteran who might be able to use this information!

For thousands more files like this and hundreds of links to useful information, and hundreds of "Frequently Asked Questions, please go to:

[Veterans-For-Change](http://www.veteransforchange.org)

*Veterans-For-Change is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Corporation
Tax ID #27-3820181*

If Veteran's don't help Veteran's, who will?

We appreciate all donations to continue to provide information and services to Veterans and their families.

https://www.paypal.com/cgi-bin/webscr?cmd=_s-xclick&hosted_button_id=WGT2M5UTB9A78

Note:

VFC is not liable for source information in this document, it is merely provided as a courtesy to our members.



Operation Pickaxe-Handle

Operation Lastay Kulang or **Pickaxe Handle** was a British-led [NATO](#) offensive in the southern Helmand province of [Afghanistan](#). (The name of the operation is [Pashto](#) for "pickaxe-handle".) Lastay Kulang began on May 30 and ended on June 14, 2007, with 2000 [ISAF](#) and [Afghan National Army](#) troops taking part. The mission was a direct follow-up of [Operation Achilles](#) that ended on the same day.

At around 4:00 local time on May 30, 2007, ISAF and ANSF personnel advanced towards the village of Kajaki Sofle, ten kilometres south-west of the town of [Kajaki](#), to remove a Taliban force whose presence threatened the security and stability of the Lower [Sangin Valley](#). During the night, elements of the American [82nd Airborne Division](#) mounted an aerial assault on a Taliban compound. One of the [Chinook](#) helicopters taking part in the raid was apparently hit by an [RPG](#) round and crashed, killing five Americans, a Briton and a Canadian on board. ^[4]

By June 2, NATO claimed to have surrounded several pockets of Taliban fighters. ^[5]

The Royal Engineers have also started several reconstruction projects in the area, such as digging irrigation ditches, to try to win over local support.

On June 5, a gun battle and air strikes killed an estimated two dozen Taliban fighters in Southern Afghanistan, the U.S.-led coalition and Afghan government reported.

Upwards of 80 Taliban fighters may have drowned in two separate incidents in early June, when the makeshift boats they were travelling on sank as they attempted to cross the Helmand River. The sinkings were witnessed by NATO helicopters. ^[6]

A British soldier was killed in a firefight at a Taliban compound to the north east of [Gereshk](#) on June 6. ^[7]

Another NATO soldier was killed in the south of the country that same day.

On June 8, a battle and air strikes in southern Afghanistan left 30 suspected Taliban dead or wounded, the Ministry of Defense reported.

Outcome

The outcome of "Lastay Kulang" is disputed. NATO spokespersons claimed the operation was a success, having cleared Sangin and Gereshk of Taliban and securing the [Kajaki District](#). A new governor has been installed in Sangin and [Shuras](#) (councils) of tribal elders have been organised to hear their concerns. Conversely, the Taliban claim that they still control much of Kajaki, and some of the Sangin districts. These claims are confirmed by the local residents, who complain that the Taliban returned as soon as NATO and ANA troops had left, and that the security situation has not improved at all. ^[8]

See also

British forces casualties in Afghanistan since 2001

[International Security Assistance Force](#)

[War in Afghanistan \(2001–present\)](#)

References

1. ^ "Our forgotten war". <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/.+2007-06-03>.
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2007/06/02/wafg02.xml&page=2>. Retrieved 2007-06-27.
2. ^ Harding, Thomas (2007-06-06). "Afghanistan approaching 'all-out war'". www.telegraph.co.uk/.
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2007/06/05/wafghan105.xml&CMP=ILC-mostviewedbox>. Retrieved 2008-11-20.
3. ^ Harding, Thomas (2007-06-06). "Afghanistan approaching 'all-out war'". www.telegraph.co.uk/.
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2007/06/05/wafghan105.xml&CMP=ILC-mostviewedbox>. Retrieved 2007-06-27.
4. ^ "UK-led operation helps ISAF take control in northern Helmand (VIDEO)". <http://www.mod.uk/.+2007-06-31>.
<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceNews/MilitaryOperations/UkledOperationHelpsIsafTakeControlInNorthernHelmandvideo.htm>. Retrieved 2007-06-27.
5. ^ "Taliban feel the pressure in northern Helmand". <http://www.mod.uk/.+2007-06-02>.
<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceNews/MilitaryOperations/TalibanFeelThePressureInNorthernHelmand.htm>. Retrieved 2007-06-27.
6. ^ Knight, Sam (and agencies) (2007-06-05). "Osama sent me a letter, says Taleban fighter".
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/>. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article1888046.ece>. Retrieved 2007-06-27.
7. ^ "British soldier killed in Afghanistan on Wednesday". <http://www.mod.uk/.+2007-06-06>.
<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceNews/MilitaryOperations/BritishSoldierKilledInAfghanistanOnWednesday6June2007.htm>. Retrieved 2007-06-27.
8. ^ "Helmand Residents Question NATO Success Claims". <http://www.iwpr.net/> ([IWPR](http://www.iwpr.net/)). 2007-06-19.
http://www.iwpr.net/?p=arr&s=f&o=336415&apc_state=henh. Retrieved 2007-06-27.