



## April 20 airpower summary: Tankers fuel the fleet

4/21/2009 - **SOUTHWEST ASIA (AFNS)** -- Coalition airpower integrated with coalition ground forces in Iraq and International Security Assistance Force troops in Afghanistan during operations April 20, according to Combined Air and Space Operations Center officials here.

In Afghanistan, an Air Force B-1B Lancer bomber destroyed an anti-Afghan fighting position in a building near Oruzgan. The weapon, a guided bomb unit-38, was set to a tightly constrained fusing configuration to restrict damage to surrounding structures.

In Lashkar Gah, a pair of Air Force A-10 Thunderbolt IIs engaged an enemy truck armed with an anti-aircraft machine gun. The A-10s used their 30mm Avenger cannons to destroy the truck and the machine gun. Also in the area, a Navy F/A-18C Hornet flew a show of force and launched flares to deter enemy suicide bombers after a source warned coalition forces of enemy preparations.

Near Asadabad, a B-1B dropped a GBU-38 and -31 to destroy an anti-Afghan position containing a recoilless rifle position. An Air Force F-15E Strike Eagle also provided overwatch in the area.

An F-15E and an A-10 flew shows of force to deter enemy actions during two operations in the Kabul area. The F-15E performed its maneuver after a coalition air-assault unit began taking small-arms fire. The A-10 executed a show of force just outside a coalition forward base that had been engaged by enemy gunmen. Anti-Afghan personnel ceased fire and withdrew after the shows of force.

In the Kandahar area, a coalition aircraft executed a show of force after a friendly helicopter made an emergency landing. The aircraft provided aerial overwatch as the crew evacuated and helped secure the landing site until a recovery team reached the area.

A coalition aircraft performed shows of force and launched flares to deter enemy attackers after a coalition mounted patrol had a vehicle disabled by enemy fire. Enemy forces had been firing at the patrol with rocket-propelled grenade launchers and assault rifles but were deterred by the arrival of the aircraft.

A-10s conducted shows of force and launched flares to deter enemy aggression near coalition forward bases near Bagram and Asadabad. The additional air presence served to discourage hostile actions and prevented enemy forces from interfering with local security operations.

Joint terminal attack controllers assigned to coalition units verified the success of these missions.

In total, 84 close-air-support missions were flown in support of ISAF and Afghan security forces, reconstruction activities and route patrols.

Twenty Air Force intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft flew missions as part of operations in Afghanistan. In addition, two coalition aircraft performed tactical reconnaissance.

In Iraq, coalition aircraft flew 26 close-air-support missions for Operation Iraqi Freedom. These missions integrated and synchronized with coalition ground forces, protected key infrastructure, provided overwatch for reconstruction activities, and helped to deter and disrupt hostile activities.

Twenty-six Air Force and Navy ISR aircraft flew missions as part of operations in Iraq. In addition, three coalition and Navy aircraft performed tactical reconnaissance.

Air Force C-130 Hercules aircraft and C-17 Globemaster IIIs provided intra-theater heavy airlift, helping to sustain operations throughout Afghanistan, Iraq and the Horn of Africa.



KC-135 Stratotankers, like the one shown here refueling F-16 Fighting Falcons, off-loaded approximately 3.3 million pounds of fuel while refueling 252 coalition aircraft April 19. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Jerry Fleshman)

Approximately 150 airlift sorties were flown, 450 tons of cargo were delivered and about 2,900 passengers were transported. Airlift included approximately 71,700 tons of aerial resupply dropped over Afghanistan.

Coalition C-130 crews flew as part of operations in Afghanistan or Iraq.

On April 19, Air Force aerial refueling crews flew 46 sorties and off-loaded approximately 3.3 million pounds of fuel to 252 receiving aircraft.

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## Coalition Forces Destroy Anti-aircraft Weapons System in Helmand

[U.S. Forces Afghanistan](#)



Courtesy Story  
Date: 04.21.2009  
Posted: 04.21.2009 05:34

KABUL, Afghanistan – A coalition forces precision strike destroyed an anti-aircraft weapons system in the Nad Ali district, Helmand province, in the early morning hours April 21.

Coalition forces learned through villagers that militants in the area had obtained a ZPU-1 anti-aircraft gun and were staging it on the back of a pick-up truck for use against friendly forces' helicopters.

Coalition forces located the ZPU-1, which was loaded and ready for use. After ensuring there were no non-combatants in the area, the coalition forces destroyed the weapons system with a precision strike.

In recent months, militants in the area have unsuccessfully attempted to use surface-to-air fire against coalition aircraft.

No coalition force or non-combatant casualties were reported as a result of the precision strike.

"The destruction of this anti-aircraft weapon without a doubt saved the lives of Afghan and coalition forces," said a coalition forces spokesman.

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#### Special Operations Soldiers Honor Fallen Comrades With New Memorial

Soldiers from the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan unveiled a memorial dedicated to its fallen brethren killed in Operation Enduring Freedom during a ceremony at Camp Vance, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, April 9. 04.21.09, Courtesy Story

#### Second Anti-aircraft Gun Destroyed by Coalition Forces in Helmand

For a second time in less than 12 hours, coalition forces used a precision strike to successfully destroy an anti-aircraft weapon system in the Nadi Ali District of Helmand province today. 04.21.09, Courtesy Story

#### Unmanned Aircraft Crashes in Paktika Province

A Predator unmanned aerial vehicle crashed early this morning in a rural area near Orun District, Paktika province. The UAV, a medium-altitude, remotely-piloted aircraft, was on a routine mission when it went down. 04.21.09, Courtesy Story

#### Afghan, Coalition Forces Kill Four, Detain One in Kandahar

Afghan and coalition forces killed four adversaries and detained one suspect during an operation in Kandahar province overnight aimed at halting a Taliban leader associated with a suicide attack against Kandahar Airfield and a suicide attack in Maywand District that killed 11 Afghan citizens and two U.S. service members. 04.20.09, Courtesy Story

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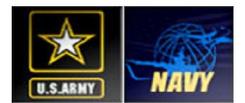
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## Second Anti-aircraft Gun Destroyed by Coalition Forces in Helmand

U.S. Forces Afghanistan  

Courtesy Story  
Date: 04.21.2009  
Posted: 04.21.2009 08:15

KABUL, Afghanistan – For a second time in less than 12 hours, coalition forces used a precision strike to successfully destroy an anti-aircraft weapon system in the Nadi Ali District of Helmand province today.

Coalition forces learned through villagers' reports that militants in Nadi Ali had obtained a ZPU-1 anti-aircraft gun and were staging it on the back of a pick-up truck for use against friendly forces' aircraft. The militants were seen firing the weapon in the vicinity of the local bazaar, endangering the lives of those nearby.

"Use of these weapons by militants in such a populated area shows their total disregard for innocent human lives," said a coalition spokesperson.

Coalition forces located and positively identified the ZPU-1, loaded and ready for use, mounted to the back of a pickup truck. After ensuring there were no non-combatants in the area, coalition forces used a precision strike to destroy the weapons system.

In recent months, militants in the area have unsuccessfully attempted to use surface-to-air fire against coalition aircraft.

No coalition force or non-combatant casualties were reported as a result of the precision strike.

"The destruction of these two dangerous weapons systems in such a short period of time is a giant step toward peace and stability in the area," said a coalition forces spokesman. "Coalition forces will not rest until the threats against the people of Afghanistan have been eliminated."

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## Coalition destroys anti-aircraft weapons, 8 Afghan rebels killed

Posted on : 2009-04-21 | Author : DPA

News Category : Asia

Kabul - US-led coalition forces destroyed two Taliban anti-aircraft weapons in southern Afghanistan, while two separate operations conducted by Afghan and international forces in the same region left eight militants dead, officials said Tuesday. Acting on intelligence information provided by local villagers, the coalition forces destroyed a ZPU-1 anti-aircraft weapon by "precision strike" in Nad Ali district of Helmand province on Tuesday morning, the US military said in a statement.

Less than 12 hours before, another ZPU-1 anti-aircraft weapon, which was mounted on the back of a pick-up truck and was ready for use against NATO aircraft, was destroyed in the same district of the province, a separate military statement said.

"The militants were seen firing the weapon in the vicinity of the local bazaar, endangering the lives of those nearby," it said, adding, "Use of these weapons by militants in such a populated area shows their total disregard for innocent human lives."

It is the first time that the coalition forces admitted that the militants, who are waging a seven-year-old insurgency in the country, have obtained anti-aircraft weapons.

Taliban militants claimed some two years ago that they had obtained anti-aircraft artillery and since then they have claimed to have downed dozens of NATO and coalition warplanes.

NATO and US-led coalition officials have only admitted a few times that their planes were targeted by rebels in the country, but said they were only using small arms fire or rocket propelled grenades in their attacks.

"In recent months, militants in the area have unsuccessfully attempted to use surface-to-air fire against coalition aircraft," the statement said, adding, "The destruction of these two dangerous weapons systems in such a short period of time is a giant step toward peace and stability in the area."

The statement did not say if there were any casualties on the Taliban side during the strikes.

Wary of sustaining casualties and lacking adequate forces on the ground, NATO forces rely heavily on the use of airpower, which sometimes results in the death of civilians.

Meanwhile, seven Taliban militants including a rebel commander were killed and one more militant was detained by joint Afghan and coalition forces in the southern province of Uruzgan on Tuesday, the Afghan interior ministry said in a statement.

The combined forces seized two machineguns during the operation that took





## Anti-aircraft gun found in Afghanistan

Published: April 21, 2009 at 11:39 AM

Coalition forces destroyed an anti-aircraft gun in southern Afghanistan Tuesday, officials said.

The strike came several days after the U.S. military warned that new intelligence indicated insurgents had heavy weaponry that potentially could shoot down U.S. and coalition forces' helicopters, CNN reported.

Villagers in Afghanistan's southern Helmand province told troops that insurgents got a ZPU-1 anti-aircraft gun and placed it on the back of a truck, a NATO statement said. When troops located the gun, they said it was armed and ready.

Insurgents have tried unsuccessfully to down coalition helicopters in the south with surface-to-air fire, CNN reported. Recent intelligence, however, pointed to the acquisition of heavier caliber weapons that potentially would have a better chance to be successful.

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