

## ISAF airstrike kills 10 Taliban fighters in Helmand

Zainullah Stanikzai - Sep 3, 2008 - 14:24

LASHKARGAH (PAN): Ten Taliban fighters have been killed in an airstrike by NATO-led forces in the lawless southern province of Helmand, a police officer said on Wednesday.

But residents of the restive Nad Ali district alleged all those killed in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) raid were civilians with no links to insurgents.

In an exclusive chat with Pajhwok Afghan News, the provincial police chief said ISAF and Afghan forces jointly conducted an operation in and around Sheen village of the district.

Brig. Gen. Muhammad Hussein Andiwai said the guerrillas were killed as the troops called in close air support during the offensive. The soldiers suffered no casualties, he added.

But a village elder poured scorn on the police chiefs claim regarding the killing of rebels. Seeking anonymity, he alleged the airstrike targetted a fruit orchard, killing 10 ordinary residents.

A rebel spokesman also rejected Andiwai's claim. Qari Yousaf Ahmadi said no fighter of the movement was killed in the raid, which came after Taliban had left the area.

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