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US Drops Largest Non-Nuke Bomb in Afghanistan

By Jason Ditz
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For the first time ever, the United States has used the GBU-43 Massive Ordinance Air Blast (MOAB) bomb, a 21,000 lb conventional bomb, in a non-test environment in Afghanistan's Nangarhar Province. Officials say they are still assessing what the attack did.

The MOAB, which officials also call the "Mother of All Bombs," is the largest conventional (non-nuclear) bomb in the US arsenal. Dropped in the Achin District, it was said to have been dropped on a system of caves and tunnels that are used by ISIS forces.



Whether that's going to be effective or not remains to

be seen, as the MOAB is not designed to penetrate underground positions. It is as yet unclear why they decided to use the MOAB in this case instead of something more commonly used.

The White House largely refused comment on the attack, with Sean Spicer confirming the attack and saying it was meant to deny ISIS “operating space.” They referred all questions on the matter to the Defense Department, however.

The attack comes just days after a US green beret was killed in this area of Afghanistan, and may be seen as the US trying to launch a high-profile retaliation. The proximity of villages to the huge explosion, however, raises concerns that civilians could be in danger from such a recklessly large blast, though CNN insisted the area was “remote” and probably didn’t have any people there. Fox News, by contrast, reported on nearby villages in the targeted area.