

Shortly before midnight on 5 June, 1944, Allied light bombers opened the assault. Their attacks in very great strength continued until dawn.

Between 0630 and 0730 hours this morning, two Naval Task Forces, commanded by Rear-Admiral Sir Philip Vian, K.B.E., D.S.O., flying his flag in H.M.S. Scylla (Captain T. M. Brownrigg, C.B.E., R.N.), and Rear-Admiral Alan Goodrich Kirk, U.S.N., in U.S.S. Augusta (Captain E. H. Jones, U.S.N.) launched their assault forces at enemy beaches. The naval forces which had previously assembled under the overall command of Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay, made their departure in fresh weather and were joined during the night by bombarding forces which had previously left northern waters.

Channels had to be swept through the large enemy minefields. This operation was completed shortly before dawn and, while minesweeping flotillas continued to sweep towards the enemy coast, the entire naval force followed down swept channels behind them towards their objectives.

Shortly before the assault, three enemy torpedo boats with armed trawlers in company attempted to interfere with the operation and were promptly driven off. One enemy trawler was sunk and another severely damaged.

The assault forces moved towards the beaches under cover of heavy bombardment from destroyers and other support craft, while heavier ships engaged enemy batteries which had already been subjected to bombardment from the air. Some of these were silenced. Allied forces continued to engage other batteries.

Landings were effected under cover of the air and naval bombardments and airborne landings involving troop carrying aircraft and gliders carrying large forces of troops were also made successfully at a number of points. Reports of operations so far show that our forces succeeded in their initial landings. Fighting continues.

Allied heavy, medium, light, and fighter bombers continued the air bombardment in very great strength throughout the day with attacks on gun emplacements, defensive works, and communications. Continuous fighter cover was maintained over the beaches and for some distance inland and over naval operations in the Channel. Our night fighters played an equally important role in protecting shipping and troop carrier forces and in intruder operations. Allied reconnaissance aircraft maintained continuous watch by day and night over shipping and ground forces. Our aircraft met with little enemy fighter opposition or anti-aircraft gunfire. Naval casualties were regarded as being very light, especially when the magnitude of the operation is taken into account.