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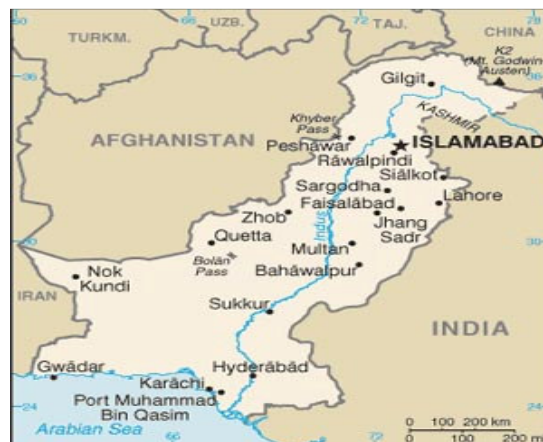
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Thousands of NATO Trucks Backed Up at Pakistan Port

By John Glaser

January 26, 2012

Thousands of abandoned trucks are backed up at the port of Karachi in Pakistan two months after Islamabad closed the supply routes NATO has used to send supplies to troops in Afghanistan.



Pakistan closed the supply routes in November after U.S. warplanes bombed two Pakistani outposts and killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. They have given no indication of when it will reopen, and supplying NATO troops via northern routes costs the U.S. six times as much money – \$104 million per month – than the Pakistan routes cost.

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Workers and truck drivers were stranded at the port waiting for the routes to reopen, but now they've left. "They had no more money in the end so they left one helper with their vehicle for security and care, and went back to their families," said Mohammad Saleh Afridi, vice chairman of the All Pakistan Oil Tankers Association.

Afridi said more than a thousand trucks are stranded in Karachi. In addition, there are about 5,000 containers and military vehicles, which some say are subject to potential looting or attack. Previously, rockets have been fired at the trucks and containers in order to prevent them from ever getting to supply occupation forces in Afghanistan.