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Fourth Drone Strike of the Week as Tensions with Pakistan Rise

By Jason Ditz

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At least [five people were killed today and three others injured](#) when a US drone fired a pair of missiles at a home in North Waziristan's Tappi village. The casualties were described as "suspected militants" by intelligence officials, though they were all locals to the region.



The attack was the fourth of the week, all of them in the area around the North Waziristan town of Miramshah. Previous attacks included a [Sunday strike which killed a schoolteacher and a nine year old boy](#), and a pair of Wednesday hits on a mud hut, the second of which killed several members of the rescue team that arrived after the first.

Pakistani officials have expressed increasing consternation with the growing number of civilian casualties in the strikes, with [President Zardari warning that it was undermining support for the war effort](#) that the US has demanded Pakistan start in those regions. Prime Minister Yousef Raza Gilani added that [US policies on this and other issues were threatening bilateral ties](#).

Despite the growing complaints and increasing questions about the policy's effectiveness, [a delegation of US senators to the region praised the strikes and vowed that they would continue](#). If the strikes continue at the frenzied pace so far throughout 2010, the issue will likely become a much bigger one.

[Reports from Pakistani security officials say that of the 708 people killed in 2009 drone strikes](#), only a handful were key militant leaders and the [vast, vast majority were innocent civilians](#).