

# *U.S. Drone Strike Kills Five in Northern Pakistan*

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Islamabad, September 2 (RHC)-- Another U.S. assassination drone strike in Pakistan's tribal region has claimed the lives of at least five people, Pakistani security officials say. "A militant compound was targeted by firing two missiles killing five militants," an unidentified senior Pakistani security official told AFP on Tuesday, adding that the identities of the victims could not be ascertained immediately.

The attack was carried out in the Lawra Mandi area of Datta Khel in the North Waziristan tribal region bordering Afghanistan, where the Pakistani army is fighting Taliban militants.

Following the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan back in 2001, Taliban militants were forced to cross the porous border into Pakistan, but now, most of their factions are active on both sides of the common border.

The U.S. regularly employs drones for air raids and spying missions in Pakistan's tribal belt near the Afghan border, claiming the targets of the drone attacks are anti-US militants. People on the ground, however, dispute the claim, saying civilians have mostly been the victims of such attacks over the past few years.

The aerial attacks, initiated by former U.S. President George W. Bush in 2004, have been escalated under President Barack Obama, who has defended the use of the controversial drones as "self-defense." The United Nations and several human rights organizations have identified the U.S. as the world's number-one user of "targeted killings," largely due to its drone attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

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