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Afghan Militants Invade Pakistan's Bajaur Agency, Kidnap Villagers

By [Jason Ditz](#)

July 12, 2012

An estimated 100 militants from an unknown faction crossed the border from Afghanistan into Pakistan today, attacking the tiny Bajaur Agency and [kidnapping](#) scores of villagers, before engaging in major battles with military and pro-govt militias.

The attacks occurred primarily in the border village of Kitkot, and officials say that most of the residents managed to flee before the militants got there. Pakistani helicopter gunships [attacked](#) the area, and reported 17 militants killed, along with four militia members.

Exactly how many people are still being held by the militants is unknown, but the army claimed it had recovered a large number of the hostages, believed to number in the hundreds when the raid first happened.

A number of factions have been operating out of Afghanistan's Kunar Province and the surrounding area in recent months, attacking Bajaur and the neighboring Swat Valley. The Pakistani government has regularly complained to NATO about the groups operating with impunity in Afghanistan, while the US has complained to Pakistan about militants crossing further west, in the Waziristan Agencies, into Helmand Province.