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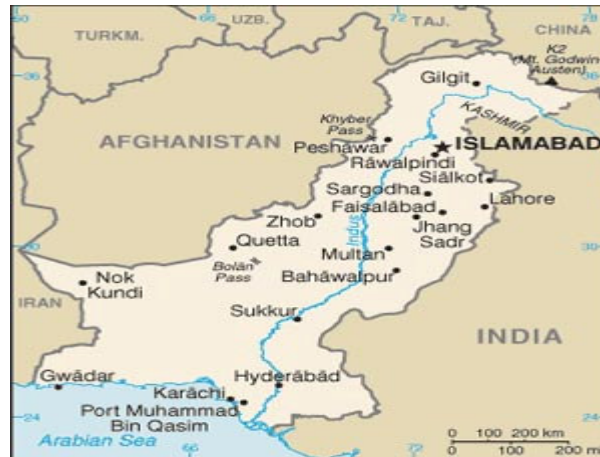
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Swat Valley Taliban Aims to Capitalize on Flooding

Posted By [Jason Ditz](#)

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With the Zardari government safely in the category of the major losers in the Pakistani flooding, a natural disaster of historical proportions, the Swat Valley Taliban, a minor player relegated to even more minor status after last year's offensive, is looking to mount a comeback.



[“This is the basic reason for militancy: anger at the government,” one Swati resident, Obaid ur-Rehman, told the Washington Post. “If we had a place to live, if we had food, if we had schools, there would be no militancy in Pakistan.”](#)

Their homes destroyed, locals reported the only aid they have seen from the government was a helicopter dropping food parcels to them. The food turned out to have rotten and was inedible, leading the residents to throw the food at the helicopter.

Though [Pakistan’s military has made some friends with rescue operations in the most heavily effected areas](#), the government’s aid has been sorely lacking, leaving Islamist factions one of the few groups on the ground providing meaningful support.

But even this aid is likely to be temporary, and in the long run the reality is that residents of the hardest hit areas could face years of rebuilding before even basic services are available again. In areas like Swat, torn by military offensives and lacking in services in the first place, the flood seems to have given the Swat Valley Taliban a recruiting tool that will be very difficult to overcome.