

<p>Since December 6th the United States has carried out six unmanned airstrikes:

December 10th: Four 'militants' were killed in an airstrike against a vehicle and compound in the village of Khadar Khel, Datta Khel, North Waziristan. No senior al Qaida or Taliban operatives were thought to be amongst the casualties.

December 14th: Two missiles were fired at a vehicle travelling through the village of Spalga, Miramshah, North Waziristan. Four 'militants' were killed in the attack.

December 16th: The United States carried out their first unmanned airstrike outside of North Waziristan since late September. Unmanned aircraft fired missiles at a vehicle travelling in the Tirah Valley, Khyber. Seven 'militants' believed to be from Swat and South Waziristan were reportedly killed in the attack. The airstrike was only the second undertaken within the Khyber region since the US began its unmanned campaign in 2004.

December 17th: The Khyber region remained the focus of US airstrikes for the second day running. Three separate strikes reportedly resulted in the deaths of 54 'militants'. Fifteen were reported killed in an attack on a compound in the village of Shandana in the Tirah Valley; seven were killed in an airstrike on a similar building in the village of Nakai, Malik Deen Khel. According to reports, 32 members of the Lashkar-e-Islam were killed in an attack on a compound in the village Speen Drang, Tirah Valley. As with all recent attacks no senior al Qaida or Taliban operatives were amongst the casualties.

According to the Long War Journal the recent relocation of the unmanned campaign to the Khyber region may represent a shift in US strategy. The Khyber ♦ and in particular the Tirah Valley ♦ has become a hub of Taliban and al Qaida activity. This came in response to Pakistani military operations in South Waziristan in late 2009.</p>