

RELEASE IN FULL

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**From:** Abedin, Huma <AbedinH@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 15, 2012 11:04 AM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Fw: Pakistan Taliban leader possibly dead in US strike (AP)

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**From:** OpsNewsTicker  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 15, 2012 08:33 AM  
**To:** NEWS-Mahogany  
**Cc:** SES-O  
**Subject:** Pakistan Taliban leader possibly dead in US strike (AP)

ISLAMABAD - (AP) Pakistani intelligence officials say they have intercepted militant radio communications indicating the Pakistani Taliban's leader may have been killed in a recent U.S. drone strike in northwest Pakistan.

The officials said Thursday they overheard Taliban militants in around a half a dozen intercepts discussing whether their chief, Hakimullah Mehsud, was killed on Jan. 12 in the North Waziristan tribal area. Some militants confirmed Mehsud was dead, and one criticized others for talking about the issue over the radio.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to reporters.

Pakistani Taliban spokesman Asimullah Mehsud denied the group's leader was killed and said he was not in the area where the drone strike occurred.

*NewsTickers alert senior Department officials to breaking news. This item appears as it did in its original publication and does not contain analysis or commentary by Department sources.*