

New missile attacks in Pakistan ... House members target sexual assault ... Airmen restore Japanese airport ... Taliban 'facilitators' targeted ... Libya conference opens

 Listen

By CHARLES HOSKINSON | 04/13/11 6:02 AM EDT

BREAKING - DERA ISMAIL KHAN, Pakistan (AP) - Pakistani intelligence officials say two U.S. missile strikes have killed at least six people near the Afghan border. The two officials said Wednesday's strikes, which came minutes apart, hit a vehicle and a motorcycle in a forested area of South Waziristan.

THE ATTACKS ARE THE FIRST since a March 17 strike angered tribal leaders in North Waziristan, who accused the United States of killing civilians, and they come at a time of increasing tension between the two countries.

AMID FEAR OF A BREAK IN RELATIONS, the CIA has agreed to reveal more about its operatives and activities in Pakistan and also will coordinate drone strikes more closely with Pakistani officials. <http://wapo.st/fx56G2>

PAKISTAN'S COOPERATION IS IMPORTANT in the fight against Islamist extremism in Afghanistan, and it's also believed to be where top al-Qaeda leaders are hiding. Officials from both countries acknowledge they need each other, but the relationship has often been an uneasy one.

HAPPY WEDNESDAY AND WELCOME TO MORNING DEFENSE. Please send feedback and tips to choskinson@politico.com, and follow us on Twitter [@morningdefense](https://twitter.com/morningdefense) for updates between briefings.

CORRECTION - In the e-mail version of Tuesday's briefing we misspelled the name of Sgt. Maj. Micheal P. Barrett, soon to be sergeant major of the Marine Corps. We regret the error.

** A message from Northrop Grumman: In March 2011 over 100 Global Hawk sorties were operated worldwide; providing critical intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance for various types of missions. **

A PAIR OF HOUSE MEMBERS WILL INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TODAY to combat sexual assault in the military. GOP Rep. Mike Turner of Ohio and Democrat Niki Tsongas of Massachusetts will hold a news conference on the bill at 11 a.m. in Rayburn 2216.

A group of 17 current and former service members sued in February, claiming DOD has allowed a culture in which sexual assaults are ignored, mishandled or condoned.

DOD OFFICIALS HAVE MADE THE ISSUE A PRIORITY, and have had some

success: A report released last month showed that 4.4 percent of women on active duty and 0.9 percent of men had reported unwanted sexual conduct in 2010, versus 6.8 percent of women and 1.8 percent of men in 2006.

But officials acknowledge more progress must be made. Mabus said Monday that the number of sexual assaults is “just way too high ... This is unacceptable.” With the first 18 women submariners due to report to their boats soon, he said the Navy would keep pushing to correct the problem.

THE SENDAI AIRPORT IN JAPAN reopened today after having been devastated by last month’s quake and tsunami. It was restored to operation by a team of U.S. airmen who did their job, then left -- a symbol of how the U.S. relief effort has been handled carefully so as not to upstage its Japanese hosts, the New York Times reports. <http://nyti.ms/fLalUF>

JUST IN, FROM @AP - Afghan police say suicide bomber killed 10 during tribal elders meeting in Kunar province.

AFGHAN AND COALITION FORCES conducted a raid in Kabul that netted a cache of arms and ammunition belonging to a dealer suspected of supplying large quantities of arms and ammunition to the Taliban, ISAF said.

ISAF also confirmed its forces had killed a senior Taliban official Tuesday in northern Faryab province. Mullah Alem, the former head of the Taliban commission for the province, was blamed for throwing a grenade that killed three children and wounded several others during the raid.

THE COALITION HAS STEPPED UP ITS ATTACKS IN RECENT WEEKS against insurgents suspected of financing and coordinating attacks, as well as those who make IEDs and teach others to use them. A DOD spokesman tells Morning Defense that better intelligence is helping play a role in finding the targets.

IN WASHINGTON, an Army contractor pleaded guilty Tuesday to assault in the Nov. 25 stabbing of another individual in Kandahar. Sean T. Brehm, 44, of Cape Town, South Africa, was prosecuted under the Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act, which allows crimes committed by DOD contractors abroad to be prosecuted in U.S. courts.

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LIBYA begins today in Qatar amid complaints by France and Britain that NATO isn’t doing enough to help the rebels. <http://bit.ly/hLUqWz>

The rebels have come with a wish list of military equipment they need and the hope of getting international sanctions lifted on the parts of the country they control.

The conference is the latest effort to solve what has become a stalemate between the Libyan government and the rebels, who have been unable to gain ground despite a NATO bombing campaign targeting the Qadhafi regime.

Attending is former intelligence chief and Foreign Minister Moussa Koussa, until recently a top Qadhafi confidant, who has called for peace talks.

MEANWHILE, Sen. John Kerry tells us not to stress over Libya, since Egypt's a bigger problem. <http://politi.co/fv9kmx>

LIBYA OPS UPDATE - NATO air forces conducted 158 sorties on Monday, of which 59 were strike sorties. That brings the total to 1879 sorties and 772 strike sorties since March 31.

Key targets included four tanks destroyed near Zintan, and an ammunition storage site destroyed in the vicinity of Sukhan, south of Sirte.

Thirty vessels were hailed and none boarded Monday in arms embargo enforcement. Since March 31, 270 vessels have been hailed and six boarded.

WHO'S WHERE WHEN - Gates hosts an honor cordon for Latvian Defense Minister Artis Pabriks at 10 a.m. McHugh is visiting Fort Belvoir. Amos is at Camp Lejeune, N.C., for a military families event with first lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden. Donley and Schwartz both have meetings in the building.

Mabus is traveling to Hong Kong and Roughead is traveling overseas

Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Ashton Carter testifies before HAC about DOD acquisitions at 10 a.m. in Capitol H-140.

** A message from Northrop Grumman: The unmanned Global Hawk flies up to 36 hours at 60,000 feet. It can go into the most hostile of territories and climates to get the most critical data. With more than 54,000 flight hours logged for customers ranging from the U.S. Air Force, Navy, and NASA; Global Hawk has truly gone global in providing a valuable, versatile, and necessary surveillance resource. **

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