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## Military choppers join search for Utah climbers missing on Pakistan mountain

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Remote region >> Pair was scaling Choktoi Glacier in Pakistan.

The Pakistani military has agreed to deploy two helicopters to search for two Utah climbers missing in the Karakorum on a planned first ascent up a mountain known as Ogre 2 on the Choktoi Glacier in Pakistan's remote north.

The helicopters will take advantage of a break in the stormy weather Saturday to scan the mountain for Kyle Dempster and Scott Adamson, according to Jonathan Thesenga of Black Diamond Equipment, the Utah gear maker that sponsors the climbers. The mountain has been clouded in for the past 10 days, making it all but impossible to inspect the mountain by air.

"We do have a good weather window that begins in a few hours and will potentially last through the weekend," Thesenga said Friday.

Dempster, 33, among the world's top alpinists, and Adamson, 34, departed base camp Aug. 21 on their second attempt of a new ascent up the north face of the 22,900-foot Ogre 2, with a planned return in five days. They were last seen the next day, when their cook spotted their headlamps about halfway up the face, according to Black Diamond's Facebook page, where Thesenga is posting updates. The next day a storm moved in.

"We owe a huge amount of gratitude to the Pakistan government for scrambling all of their available assets and their commitment

to finding Scott and Kyle," Thesenga wrote Friday.

The region where the climbers are missing is extremely rugged and inaccessible, and this window may provide the best hope of finding the men, who are eight days overdue.

Pakistani officials at that country's Swiss embassy helped connect the climbers' supporters with the appropriate military channels in Pakistan to line up the helicopters.

"There was a series of very complicated discussions with a lot of people involved in the U.S. and Pakistan. It's beyond complicated that we have gotten to where we have gotten," Thesenga said.

**Global Rescue, a Boston-based travel-safety agency, has also made a helicopter available.** These choppers are not capable of conducting search operations in poor visibility, so their usefulness in the search will last only as long as the break in the weather holds.

The two climbers have proven themselves capable of self-rescue in past mishaps, one on this same climb last year. That time, an anchor failed not far from the peak's summit, sending Adamson tumbling at least 100 feet. Adamson broke his leg in the fall, but the men managed to get off the face safely on their own, despite a second anchor failure and perilous joint fall.