**Malala to return to Pakistan despite threats**

**Last updated: 25 October 2012**

*Father of 15-year-old girl shot by Taliban gunman rules out asylum as he arrives in the UK to see his daughter.*

The father of a 15-year-old Pakistani activist girl who was [shot and wounded](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2012/10/20121099274132414.html) by a Taliban gunman has vowed she will return home after finishing medical treatment in Britain despite new insurgent threats against her.

Ziauddin Yousufzai made the comments as he arrived in the United Kingdom to see her daughter Malala who is being treated in a Birmingham hospital.

Malala, shot for advocating girls' education in her native Swat Valley, was [airlifted to Britain on October 15](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2012/10/201210154053383925.html) for specialist treatment from the Pakistani city of Rawalpindi where she was being treated but remained in critical condition.

Yousufzai's comments were recorded by Pakistani state television and it was the first time he had spoken publicly since the shooting.

"I first laughed at it because all of our sacrifices, my personal [sacrifices], or this attack on my daughter, cannot have such a cheap purpose that we would go to some other country and live the rest of our life there," Yousafzai said, speaking in Urdu.

Since she was shot on October 9, Malala has become a hero both at home and internationally, although her work in speaking out against Taliban atrocities has long been respected and known beyond her home town.

**Blog for BBC**

At the age of 11, Malala began writing a blog under a pseudonym for the BBC about life under the Taliban in Swat. After the military ousted Taliban fighters in 2009, she began publicly speaking out about the need for girls' education.

She appeared frequently in the media and was given one of the country's highest civilian honours for her bravery.

A Taliban gunman shot her in the neck and head as she was on a school bus on her way home from school in Swat's city of Mingora. Two other girls were injured in the attack.

The Taliban have vowed to kill her, raising questions about whether it would be safe for her to return but her father dispelled reports the family might seek asylum abroad.

The Taliban said they targeted Malala because she promotes "Western thinking", and have vowed to finish the job in the future.

Malala's father spoke alongside Interior Minister Rehman Malik at the minister's Islamabad office. Malik promised that the government would protect Malala and her family when they return.

Malik said Malala had asked her father to bring some of her school books with him on his way to Britain.

"Even while sitting there she is taking care of her schooling," said Malik.

**Responding to treatment**

Malala has started talking and has spoken to her parents by phone, the interior minister said.

The teenage activist is being treated at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham in central England, which has a major trauma centre specialising in treating severe gunshot wounds, major head injuries and road accident victims.

It is also home to the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, the primary receiving unit for military casualties returning from overseas.

The medical team treating Malala said in a statement on Thursday that she was comfortable and continued to respond well to treatment.

Last Friday, the hospital released the first photographs of Malala since the shooting showing her lying in her hospital bed and said she was able to stand with help and write.

http://m.aljazeera.com/story/20121025183022333570