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Afghan Officials: Body of US Torture Video Victim Found Near Base

By Jason Ditz

5/21/2013

The complaints about Afghan-American torturer Zakaria Kandahari took an ugly turn for the worse today, as Afghan officials announced that the victim in a torture video showing Kandahari was discovered just 200 yards outside of the US military base at which he was stationed.

The victim, a Wardak Province civilian named Sayid Mohammad, had disappeared into the custody of US Special Forces before the video emerged last week showing Kandahari torturing him. The US denied the video showed US troops, but Kandahari was heard taking instructions from an unseen man with an American accent.

Mohammad's fate was a mystery until laborers digging a ditch just outside of the base at which Kandahari was said to be stationed uncovered a "military-style black body bag," with most of Mohammad's corpse inside. Both feet were missing, and still unaccounted for.

The grim story is part of the ongoing fight among Wardak residents to see US special forces removed from the region, and follows the similar disappearance of Mohammad Qassim, another local whose body was found at a trash pit outside the base after his own "detention."

Residents of Wardak's Nerkh District, the home of the base, report that special forces soldiers riding ATVs regularly raided their villages, detaining seemingly random people who were usually never heard from again. The US has dismissed the allegations, saying NATO

investigated and found the US soldiers “blameless.” They have refused demands to leave the district.