

DOD ATTRIBUTES A 3-WEEK DELAY ON FORENSIC COLLECTION TO ABSENT VILLAGERS

The AP reports that over three weeks after the attack on two villages in Panjwai, DOD investigators have finally gotten around to collecting forensic material from the sites of the attack (h/t scribe)

Army criminal investigators visited the villages early this week to collect forensic evidence, two senior defense officials said Thursday. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because of prohibitions against talking about the ongoing investigation into the March 11 killings.

They've waited this long, DOD says, to avoid antagonizing angry villagers.

Investigators stayed away from the shooting sites for more than three weeks to avoid aggravating tensions with angry villagers.

Except that as Yalda Hakim's reporting made clear 9 days ago, the villages have been vacated. There are no villagers there to aggravate tensions with.

REPORTER (Translation): Where are all those people from the village now?

MAN (Translation): They went everywhere or to the city, after the incident. People are frightened.

Not surprisingly, both Bales' lawyer and General

Sher Mohammed Karimi believe this has tainted the crime scenes.

General Karimi told CBS News that he is now concerned the evidence at the crime scene has been compromised.

“People went there, walked around it saw their sights, so it is difficult to distinguish between the footmarks of the killer or the person involved, or other peoples who have walked the area,” Karimi said.

I'd say the compromised crime scene is a feature, not a bug, of the way DOD has been running this investigation.