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Pentagon Wants to Keep Report on Afghan Child Sex Abuse Classified

Earlier this month, a Pentagon inspector general reported that several troops had been told to "ignore" any signs of Afghan security forces sexually abusing children, though the

report insisted this was not a "formal

guidance" from the Pentagon leadership.

A far more specific report from the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), however, will not see the light of day at all if the Pentagon has anything to say about it,



with the military leadership saying it needs to remain classified.

Senate officials, who requested the SIGAR inquiry in the first place, noted that the military was very opposed to having a second inquiry going separate from the internal inspector general probe. That's unsurprising, as the Pentagon tends to be unhappy with SIGAR's vocal criticism of the military's misdeeds.

Pentagon officials are defending the decision to classify the SIGAR report, but offering no excuse for doing so, rather insisting that they want the focus to be on the much tamer report from two weeks ago.

Child sex abuse has been a recurring problem in the Afghan military since the 2001 US occupation began. US officials are loathe to see the Afghan military's abuses too highly publicized, and this is seen as a continuation of that effort to cover up their crimes.