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## As details of massacre emerge, Afghan man who lost 11 relatives says: ‘We want justice’

By Richard Leiby and Sayed Salahuddin

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KABUL — The U.S. military’s [decision to formally charge](#) Army Staff Sgt. [Robert Bales](#) in the killing of 17 Afghan villagers on Friday did nothing to dampen the anger of Mohammed Wazir, who lost 11 family members — including his mother, wife, four daughters and two sons — in the rampage.

Wazir, 35, said he did not believe that a military trial in the United States could ever bring justice.

“This is not acceptable for us,” Wazir, said in an interview Friday from the Afghan town of Spin Boldak. “We want him to be tried in Afghanistan, in our presence.”

A farmer and trader, Wazir lived in a mud home in Najeeban, one of the two tiny villages in the Panjwai district of Kandahar province that [Bales allegedly targeted](#) during the early morning hours of March 11. Also shot and killed in Wazir’s home were his brother, his brother’s wife and their child, according to Wazir and other villagers.

At the time of the attack, Wazir was in Spin Boldak, about 85 miles south, with his 4-year-old son, Habib Shah. Habib is now his only surviving child.

One other person was killed in Najeeban, according to accounts provided by locals. But that person's name was not readily available.

Four others apparently were killed in Alokozo, a neighboring village of 20 homes. Samisami-Ullah, a 30-year-old farmer, identified those victims as his mother, uncle and two cousins. Three others in his family were wounded, he said, along with three from his neighbors' families. Five of the six wounded were transported to a U.S. military hospital, where three victims remain.

One girl, superficially wounded, was treated at a local hospital, villagers said.

To date, the U.S. military has not contacted any witnesses or those who lost relatives, said Wazir, provincial officials and others who have talked to the massacre victims' families. "None of them have come to investigate, or to talk to us, or seen the village," Wazir said angrily. "We want justice."

Two others from the Panjwai district said they could vouch for Wazir's account of the staggering death toll in his family.

"I saw the scene; 11 people were killed in one house, in different locations, and then brought in one room and were burnt," said Fazl Mohammad, deputy head of the Panjwai district council. "I saw blood, flesh and brains."

Jan Agha, a farmer who along with Mohammad was one of the first to arrive at the shooting sites and talk to witnesses, said Wazir "lost all of his family, apart from his son who was with him during the killings."

It remained unclear in Afghanistan why a 17th murder charge was added when the tally of dead from the beginning has been given as 16. U.S. military authorities on Thursday said the toll has since risen to 17, but did not explain the discrepancy. More information was expected late Friday.

Lt. Col. Jimmie Cummings, a U.S. military spokesman in Kabul, said none of the five people wounded in the shootings has died. He also ruled out the possibility that one of the slain women was pregnant.

According to villagers, neither NATO nor U.S. forces have yet offered any compensation for the civilian deaths. As is practice when civilians are killed either by coalition or insurgent forces, President Hamid Karzai has paid families in Panjwai about \$2,000 for each victim.

Wazir confirmed that he had received that sum for each of the 11 in his family who died, but said he did not consider the money compensation for human loss. He said it was a charitable payment to cover burial expenses and other immediate needs.

Survivors contend that the killings had to be the work of more than one soldier, a claim supported by Karzai after he met last week with relatives of those killed.

Samisami-Ullah said that wounded relatives told him, “There were 10 soldiers in our neighborhood alone.”

But U.S. officials say only Bales was involved.

The persistent witness reports that 15 to 20 other soldiers were seen in the area could stem from confusion in the aftermath of the shooting, when troops reportedly were dispatched to the scene from the nearby military base.

Villagers said flares illuminated the landscape, and they saw helicopters overhead.