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Press TV

## March 11 carnage in Afghanistan revenge attack, analyst says

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A political analyst says the March 11 massacre of 16 civilians in Afghanistan's southern province of Kandahar was a "revenge attack" carried out by more than one US soldier, Press TV reports.

"Blaming one individual based on the time line, distance traveled, the acts that were perpetrated, is unrealistic ...it would have been impossible for a single individual unless they had stored a vehicle outside the base and had crawled under the wire to have done this," political commentator and senior editor of Veterans Today, Gordon Duff told Press TV in an interview on Sunday.

"So this was obviously a revenge attack. It was done by more than one person; that the military was covering up the nature of it, that we're pretty much accepting."

The comments were made in reference to US trooper, Staff Sergeant Robert Bales, who is accused of murdering 16 Afghan villagers in a predawn shooting of mostly women and children in the war-ravaged country.

Bales is the only American soldier charged over the killings. However, witnesses and an Afghan fact-finding mission have said that at least 20 troops were involved in the slaughter.

During US military court pre-trial hearings in Fort Lewis-McChord, near Seattle, Washington, late on Saturday, Afghan survivors and witnesses of the vicious attack testified via video links from Kandahar.

“The goal of the court is to find a scapegoat; try to contain it; try to make it look like one individual who is mentally unbalanced was involved and to avoid taking the responsibility for the fact that American soldiers... have become undisciplined, angry; many of them are suffering from post-traumatic stress,” Duff further said.

The hearing is scheduled to last until November 16 and if it results in a court-martial and Bales is found guilty, he could receive the death penalty.