

PICTURED: The final photos of Marine, 23, evacuating Afghans before she was killed in ISIS-K suicide blast: All 13 slain US troops are identified as father says Biden's Kabul withdrawal is a 'turkey shoot'

Killed were Navy corpsman Max Soviak, Army Staff Sergeant Ryan Knauss, and Marines Hunter Lopez, Rylee McCollum, David Lee Espinoza, Kareem Nikoui, Jared Schmitz, Daegan Page, Taylor Hoover, Humberto Sanchez, Johanny Rosario, Dylan Merola and Nicole Gee

Days before her death, Gee was pictured escorting evacuees and holding an Afghan baby

Father of another Marine killed in airport bombing speaks out in anger over perceived planning failures

US Central Command retaliated on Friday with a drone strike against ISIS-K leader in Nangahar province

By Keith Griffith and Jennifer Smith For Dailymail.com

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All 13 US troops slain by an ISIS-K suicide bomb attack in Kabul on Thursday have been identified, with the haunting final images of one female Marine showing her escorting evacuees days before her death.

Killed were Navy corpsman Max Soviak, Army Staff Sergeant Ryan Knauss, and Marines Hunter Lopez, Rylee McCollum, David Lee Espinoza, Kareem Nikoui, Jared Schmitz, Daegan Page, Taylor Hoover, Humberto Sanchez, Johanny Rosario, Dylan Merola and Nicole Gee.

Just days before her death at an overcrowded airport checkpoint, Marine Sergeant Gee was photographed escorting a line of evacuees as they filed into the cargo hold of a C-17 Globemaster to escape Afghanistan. Other photos show Gee holding an Afghan baby.

The father of another Marine killed in the bomb attack on Kabul airport on Thursday is slamming the chaotic evacuation attempt that made them sitting ducks for ISIS-K.

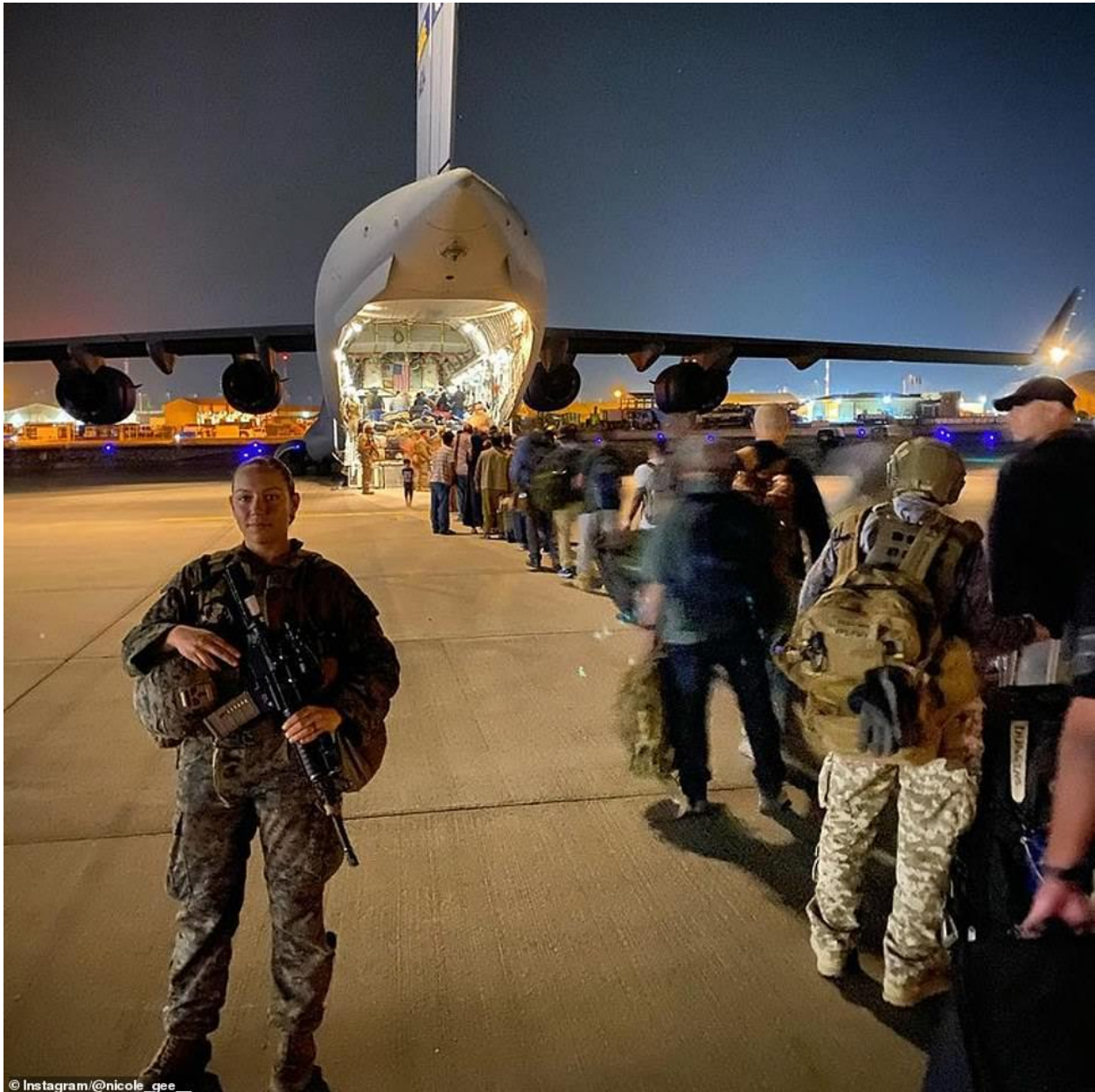
Nikoui's father Steve told **Fox News** on Friday night that he was angry at the conditions the Marines were working in, calling the situation at Hamid Karzai International Airport a 'turkey shoot'.

'I'm a carpenter; I've never served. But even I could see that that was a dangerous situation,' he said. 'From what I saw of the airport that they were in it looked like a turkey shoot.'

'It was just so chaotic and not planned out,' the grieving father said of the evacuation, which funneled thousands of Afghans seeking to leave the country to screening checkpoints manned by US troops.

Meanwhile, US Central Command confirmed late on Friday that a drone strike had eliminated the suspected architect of the airport attack, an ISIS-K member in Nangahar province.

The strike killed one individual, and spokesman Navy Capt. William Urban said they knew of no civilian casualties.



© Instagram/@nicole_gee
Marine Sgt. Nicole Gee, 23, is seen four days before she was killed, escorting Afghans on to a plane in Kabul



Gee, 23, (left and right) of Roseville, California was among those killed in the attack on Thursday in Kabul



Marine Kareem Nikoui, pictured with his mother, was killed on Thursday. His father said he blames Biden for abandoning them in Kabul, and slammed the 'chaotic' situation at the Kabul airport



© GoFundMe

Lance Corporal Dylan Merola of Rancho Cucamonga, California was also among the fatalities

A graphic from a Fox News broadcast. On the left, two men are shown in separate video frames; the man on the right is Steve Nikoui, wearing a red and white striped shirt. The central text reads "Honoring Norco Resident LANCE CORPORAL KAREEM NIKOUI" in white on a red background. Below the name is the City of Norco logo and "CITY OF NORCO HOBSETOWN USA". On the right is a circular portrait of Lance Corporal Kareem Nikoui in Marine uniform. At the bottom, a white banner with a red border contains the text "U.S. MARINE KAREEM NIKOUI WAS ONE OF THE 13 AMERICANS KILLED IN THE KABUL AIRPORT ATTACK" and "TUCKER CARLSON TONIGHT". The Fox News Channel logo is in the bottom left corner.

© Fox News

Steve Nikoui, father of Kareem Nikoui, appeared on Fox News on Friday night and fought back tears as he told of the moment the Marines came to notify him his son died in the attack



US Central Command confirmed late on Friday that a drone strike had eliminated the suspected architect of the airport attack, an ISIS-K member in Nangarhar province

As the families and friends of the troops slain in Thursday's bombing learn of their loved ones' fates, many are speaking out in frustration over the perceived planning and leadership failures leading up to their deaths.

McCollum's wrestling coach and a close family friend told DailyMail.com that 'heads should roll' over the debacle.

Ben Arlotta said he is furious at the Biden administration and blames the White House for putting soldiers in an unnecessarily dangerous position.

'It's a junk show, an absolute junk show. Not just for Rylee but for every serviceman and woman over there. They were put in a very terrible spot. In my opinion this entire circumstance has been mismanaged from every level,' he told DailyMail.com.

'The only thing I can hope for is that accountability isn't forgotten. Because for the 13 men who were killed yesterday, heads need to roll for the way things have gone.

Nikoui's father Steve told [The Daily Beast](#) on Friday: 'They sent my son over there as a paper pusher and then had the Taliban outside providing security. I blame my own military leaders... Biden turned his back on him. That's it.'

Schmitz's father, meanwhile, said: 'Be afraid of our leadership or lack thereof. Pray every day for the soldiers that are putting their lives at risk, doing what they love which is protecting all of us.'

White House Secretary Jen Psaki did not mince words when asked on Friday about Biden's pledge to track down the terrorists responsible for the deadly attack, saying that the president 'does not want them to live on the earth any more.'

Her remarks came a day after Biden vowed that 'we will hunt you down and make you pay.'

Soviak's sister said in an Instagram post: 'He was a f***** medic. There to help people and now he is gone and my family will never be the same.'

Soviak, believed to be in his early 20s, was named by his high school in Ohio. McCollum was named by his high school in Wyoming while Espinoza, 20, was named by the local police department in Laredo, Texas, where he was born. McCollum was expecting his first child with his wife. He was deployed to Afghanistan in April.

Nikoui's father added that he was relieved when his son signed up as a Marine when Trump was in office because he 'really believed this guy didn't want to send people into harm's way.'



© Naval Amphibious Force/Task Force 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade

Marine Sgt. Johanny Rosario of Lawrence, Massachusetts was among those killed in Thursday's attack



© Facebook

Marine Hunter Lopez, from Coachella Valley, California, was the son of a captain and a deputy with the Riverside County Sheriff's Office



Humberto Sanchez of Indiana was killed in Thursday's attack on Kabul airport



Navy medic Max Soviak (left) and Marine Rylee McCollum (right) were both killed in the ISIS blast at Kabul airport



Jared Schmitz (left) and David Lee Espinoza, 20 (right)



Marine Staff Sgt. Taylor Hoover, 31, from Utah, was among the 13 U.S. military personnel killed in the attack on Thursday



Cpl. Daegan William-Tyler Page, a Marine from Omaha, Nebraska, was killed in an attack by ISIS-K at Kabul airport on Thursday

Ryan Knauss, 23, from Tennessee, was among the U.S. military personnel named on Friday as having died in the attack.

Knauss' family and friends said he attended Gibbs High School in Corryton, Tennessee.

He joined the military shortly after graduation, according to [10News](#).

His stepmother told the site he loved to laugh, help his wife Alena in her garden, and enjoyed working with his hands to build things.

He had just finished Psychological Operations training and was hoping to serve in Washington, D.C.

Evelena Knauss, his paternal grandmother, told The Daily Beast: 'We were led to think that it was 12 Marines and one Navy, and we knew our grandson was in the Army.'

'So we were praying for the families of the Marines, not knowing our grandson was one of the ones who lost his life.

'You just don't think it will be yours, I'm sure that you've heard that before.'

Knauss joined the Army right out of high school, and had already served one nine-month tour in Afghanistan, his grandmother explained.

'And then he was deployed back on this mission,' she said.

'He had just completed a course of psychological operations... Making quite impressive steps in the military. Very bright and very committed. Driven... Young.

'It's been a very sad day for us. It shouldn't have had to happen this way.'



Ryan Knauss, from Tennessee, was among the 13 U.S. service members who died in Thursday's explosion in Kabul



Knauss was hoping to work in Washington DC after his deployment in Afghanistan



© Facebook

Marine Staff Sgt. Taylor Hoover was among the 13 U.S. military members killed in Thursday's explosion



Hoover is pictured with his mother, Kelly Barnett. Friends and family paid tribute to the Marine, describing him as a ray of light



Hoover (center) is pictured at work with fellow soldiers. He was killed in a suicide bombing on Thursday at Kabul airport



Jeremy Soto

3h · 🌐



My handsome nephew, Staff Seargent Taylor Hoover. Taylor spent his entire adult life as a Marine, serving. Doing the hard things that most of us can't do. He is a hero.

Taylor is one of the 13 fallen in Afghanistan. We are wounded. We are bruised. We are angry. We are crushed... but we remain faithful. I am reminded of a passage of scripture from Isaiah 53.

"But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed."

Isaiah 53:5 ESV

Thank you for your courage nephew. We love you always.

[Heather Barnett Soto](#)



🥺🥹👍 426

222 Comments 175 Shares

Taylor Hoover, from Utah, was also named among the 13.

His father, Darin Hoover, said he was a hero.

'Sooooo glad I got to see him before he left.' he said.

'I love you son!!! You're my hero!! Please check in on us once in a while. I'll try to make you proud!!!'

Hoover's uncle, Jeremy Soto, said he 'spent his entire adult life as a Marine, serving. Doing the hard things that most of us can't do.'

An aunt, Brittany Jones Barnett, said he was 'a joy to be around'.

'Always a smile. Always respectful. A joy to be around. He is adored beyond measure,' she wrote on Facebook.

'The world has lost a true light. Our hearts are broken.

'Shock, disbelief, horror, sadness, sorrow, anger and grief.'

And she paid tribute to his commitment to the cause.

'Thank you sweet boy for the ultimate sacrifice,' she said.

'For giving your life for us all. Fighting for freedom and giving absolutely everything you had. You will never ever be forgotten. We love you so much.'

Chad Bianco, the sheriff of Riverside County, California, identified 22-year-old Hunter Lopez as one of U.S. Marines killed in the suicide bombing.

Lopez was the son of Captain Herman Lopez and Deputy Alicia Lopez.

'I am unbelievably saddened and heartbroken for the Lopez family as they grieve over the loss of their American Hero,' Bianco wrote.

'Before joining the Marine Corp, Hunter proudly served in our Sheriff's Explorer Program.

'Our entire department is mourning this tragic loss.

'The Lopez family exemplifies the meaning of Service Above Self.'

According to a statement from the Riverside Sheriff's Association, Lopez was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines.

'Hunter, who was 22 years old at the time of his death, planned on becoming a Riverside County Sheriff's Deputy after returning from his current deployment,' read the statement.

A family friend of a Rylee McCollum told DailyMail.com that 'heads should roll' over the disastrous U.S. exit and that the young soldier's family is 'absolutely broken'.

Lance Corporal Rylee McCollum, 20, was one of the 13 servicemen killed by a bomb blast in the Afghan city Thursday.

The Wyoming-born Marine's wrestling coach and close family friend, Benjamin Arlotta, told DailyMail.com that even in diapers McCollum would stand watch on his porch with a toy rifle; first said he wanted to be a Marine aged eight; and signed up on his 18th birthday.

In a glowing eulogy to the young expectant father, whose new baby is due in three weeks, Arlotta described McCollum as a 'personal hero' and a 'fantastic brother, fantastic uncle, and a wonderful friend'.

'I was his wrestling coach since he was six. He was one of the best. A great kid, a great young man and an American patriot. He loved being a Marine,' Arlotta said.

'He was just a good man all around. We're all hurting pretty bad.

'It's impossible. I'm sitting here with the family right now – with his dad and two sisters, his brother-in-law and niece. They're shattered, they're absolutely broken. The entire community is.'

Arlotta, 37, said he is furious at the Biden administration and blames the White House for putting soldiers in an unnecessarily dangerous position.

'It's a junk show, an absolute junk show. Not just for Rylee but for every serviceman and woman over there. They were put in a very terrible spot. In my opinion this entire circumstance has been mismanaged from every level,' he told DailyMail.com.

'The only thing I can hope for is that accountability isn't forgotten. Because for the 13 men who were killed yesterday, heads need to roll for the way things have gone.

'We're just seeing the beginning of it. It's not over, it's only going to get worse. Everybody in the country needs to be praying for our servicemen and women right now. They have a scrap out in front of them.

'Sadly those 13 Marines aren't going to be the last ones to perish because of these terrible decisions that were made.'

Recalling fond memories of the young Jackson Hole native, the wrestling coach told a heartwarming story of McCollum's determination.

'When he was 13 he came into the competition season 32lbs heavier than where he wanted to be,' Arlotta said.

'He told me he would lose it. We made a bet. I was going to quit chewing tobacco if he could get down there. That was September, by the time the state championship rolled around in January he had made weight.

'He entered the wrestling tournament at that weight and I quit chewing that day.

'He was first and foremost a man of his word. If he said he would do something, by goodness gracious he stood right in front of you until he did it.'

McCollum moved to California for training. His pregnant wife Jiannah 'Gigi' Crayton lives in the San Diego area.

The 20-year-old lance corporal wanted to be a soldier since childhood, first telling his parents he would join the Marines age eight.

'We were driving back from his first state wrestling tournament, I was riding with his family,' said Arlotta.

'We asked him what he wanted to be when he grew up, he said he wanted to be in the Marines.'

'He enlisted on his 18th birthday,' the coach added.

'When he actually enlisted his recruiter told him he could be anything, he could do any job. He swore up and down he wanted to be an infantryman.'

'If you know Rylee, you know you can't talk him out of a damn thing, so that's what he did.'

While still in diapers, McCollum would 'stand guard' with his toy rifle out on his parents' porch, his ex-coach said. And when it came to being ready to lay down his life for his country, he said the young soldier would not have flinched.

'He was first and foremost a Marine. When it came down to doing his duty he was ready to stand up for it, absolutely,' Arlotta told DailyMail.com.

McCollum's sister Cheyenne told DailyMail.com her brother had wanted to be a Marine since he was a toddler – and that his own baby is due in just three weeks.

He married Jiannah in the summer of 2020, and their first child is due in September.

'Rylee was an amazing man, with a passion for the Marines. He was a son, a brother, a husband and a father with a baby due in just three weeks,' said Cheyenne.

'He wanted to be a Marine his whole life and carried around his rifle in his diapers and cowboy boots.'

'He was determined to be in infantry and this was his first deployment.'

'Rylee was sent to Afghanistan when the evac began. Rylee was manning the check point when he suicide bomb went off.'

'Rylee wanted to be a history teacher and a wrestling coach when he finished serving his country.'

'He's a tough, kind, loving kid who made an impact on everyone he met. His joke and wit brought so much joy. To his friends and teammates and coaches, he was family.'

'Rylee will always be a hero not just for the ultimate sacrifice he made for our country but for the way he impacted every life around him for the better.'

'Making us stronger, kinder, teaching us to love deeper. We love you Rylee,' she said.

Regi Stone, whose son Eli enlisted around the same time as McCollum, described him as 'smart, strong and courageous' and said he drew comfort when the two hung out together.

'We always knew that Rylee had his back and my son his,' Stone told Reuters, adding that he got to know McCollum during visits for dinner at their house.

'He's a defender. He loved his country and wanted to make a difference.'

McCollum played football before graduating from Wyoming's Jackson Hole High School in 2019.

'Saying that I am grateful for Rylee's service to our country does not begin to encapsulate the grief and sadness I feel today as a mother and as an American,' State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jillian Balow said in a statement.

'My heart and prayers are with Rylee's family, friends, and the entire Jackson community.'

Jared Schmitz's father Mark rang a local Missouri radio station to pay tribute to his late son.

'He was not the type that liked to just sit around and get his four years done and walk away,' Mark Schmitz told KMOX.

'He wanted to be in a situation where he actually made a difference.'

Schmitz said his son had been stationed in Jordan before being called to Afghanistan two weeks before the attack.

The last publicly visible post on Jared Schmitz's Facebook page was a July 29 photograph of him at the archeological site of Petra, in Jordan.

A friend commented that he hoped Schmitz was staying safe, to which Schmitz replied: 'always my guy'.

David Lee Espinoza was a 20-year-old U.S. Marine from Rio Grande, Texas.

His mother, Elizabeth Holguin, told DailyMail.com on Friday: 'He was a very good person. He served his country.'

'He helped in any way he could. He was there (in Afghanistan), helping innocent people.

'This was his second deployment; he first made a trip to the Middle East and arrived in Afghanistan for about a week.

'I prayed every day,' she said.

The last time they spoke was four days ago, she said.

'I just told him to be careful, that I was worried about him and I couldn't wait for him to come back,' Holguin said.

'He told me he was fine and not to worry. He was brave. If he was scared, he didn't show it.'

She said she holds no animosity toward the president, saying her son 'wanted to be there.'

Holguin learned her son was dead when she received a phone call Friday at 2:30 a.m.

Officials in Indiana confirmed that Corporal Humberto Sanchez was also among the dead.

Sanchez graduated from Logansport High School in 2017. He also attended Columbia Elementary.

'Like many, I have been heartbroken over the recent loss of the 13 U.S. service members who were murdered in the terrorist attacks against our evacuation efforts in Kabul, Afghanistan,' Logansport Mayor Chris Martin said in a statement on Facebook.

'Even more heartbreaking is learning the news today that one of those killed was from right here at home in Logansport, Indiana.

'This young man had not yet even turned 30 and still had his entire life ahead of him. Any plans he may have had for his post-military life were given in sacrifice due to the heart he exhibited in putting himself into harm's way to safeguard the lives of others.'

Sanchez's friend Kennedy Rhiannon Rickerd wrote on Facebook: 'Humberto Sanchez throughout school you were always making everyone in the room laugh & I will remember that side of you when I think about you always, RIP.'

Their identities emerged on Friday as Pentagon officials revealed there was only one suicide bomber at Kabul airport on Thursday and not two, as previously claimed - adding to confusion over the attack and fears for the ongoing operation on the ground.

Nikoui said he knew his son was dead when he saw two Marines approaching his home on Thursday at 7.15pm PST.



© Handout

David Lee Espinoza was a 20-year-old U.S. Marine from Rio Grande, Texas. He is pictured with his mother, Elizabeth Holguin, who told DailyMail.com on Friday that he was a 'good person'. She last spoke to him four days ago



Max Soviak, from Ohio, is seen in 2018. He graduated from Edison High School in Milan, Ohio, in 2017



© daeganpage/Instagram

Daegan Page (left) from Nebraska was among the 13 U.S. military servicemen who died in Thursday's attack



Daegan Page (third from left, rear), who was killed in an attack by ISIS-K at Hamid Karzai Airport in Afghanistan on August 26, 2021, is seen with fellow Marines in photos from his Instagram page



Page, from Omaha, was a member of the 2nd Battalion Marine Regiment based at Camp Pendleton, California

He said he sat with the two emotional Marines, who cried more than he did, and then had them leave.

'I was actually trying to console them. But at the same time, I just wanted them to get out as soon as possible so that no one from my family came back and saw them.

'I thought it appropriate that I be able to tell them,' he said.

Nikoui told Tucker Carlson on Fox News that he then realized his relatives might want to see the Marines.

He asked them if they could wait outside, while his family returned from a football game.

'They sat out there for four hours,' he said. 'I was in awe and just humbled by their performance.'

Nikoui told The Daily Beast that his son, who was based at Camp Pendleton in California, would often bring other Marines home on the holidays if they couldn't get back to their own families.

'My wife and I felt very honored that [since] these other boys weren't around their homes, that we were able to provide some sort of family life for them.

'He really loved that [Marine Corps] family. He was devoted - he was going to make a career out of this, and he wanted to go. No hesitation for him to be called to duty,' he said.

Speaking outside the four-bedroom home today, a relative told DailyMail.com that Kareem's family were inside signing the documents required to repatriate him.

He added: 'They're totally devastated and they need some time. All the family are here and we're supporting them.'

A steady stream of people have been seen coming and going from the home all day, among them some of Kareem's colleagues from the Camp Pendleton Marine base in San Diego.

Earlier today, Kareem's mother Shana Chappell posted angrily on social media, blaming Vice-President Kamala Harris for the loss of her son.

Kareem's death is also being mourned by his home city of Norco - a small community of 26,000 people nicknamed 'Horsetown' that sits 50 miles east of Los Angeles.

Confirming his death, the city released a message of condolence that read: 'The City of Norco mourns the loss of Norco resident U.S. Marine Corps Lance Corporal Kareem Mae'Lee Grant Nikoui who was killed in action while stationed at the Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan on Thursday, August 26, 2021.

'The U.S. Marine, who graduated from Norco High School in 2019 and served in JROTC, was committed to serving his country and is survived by his mother, father and siblings.'

The city also promised to inscribe his name on the Lest We Forget Wall at the memorial plaza that sits in a park downtown.



Adrian
@AdrianGazcon



one of my good friends growing up was one of the Marines that passed away, and it hurts that he's gone..

RIP Humberto Sanchez, thank you for your service, you're a hero bro 🕊️



8:49 PM · Aug 27, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone
© AdrianGazcon/Twitter



Marine Cpl. Humberto Sanchez (left) of Indiana was killed in Thursday's attack



© Facebook

Sanchez's friend Kennedy Rhiannon Rickerd (pictured, with Sanchez) wrote on Facebook: 'Humberto Sanchez throughout school you were always making everyone in the room laugh & I will remember that side of you when I think about you always, RIP'



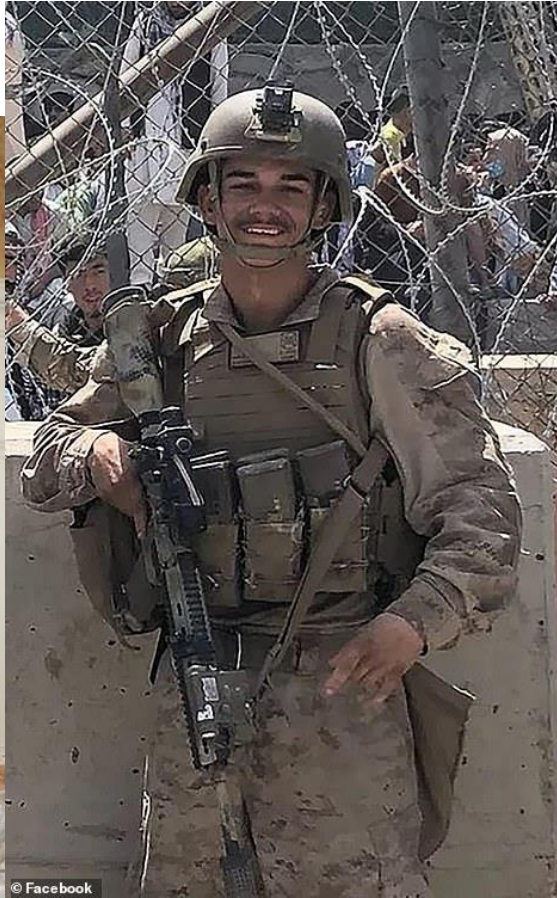
Hunter Lopez, pictured in his dress uniform, comes from a California law enforcement family, headed by his dad, Riverside County Sheriff's Captain Herman Lopez (2nd L) and his mother, Deputy Alicia Lopez (2nd R)



© Facebook



Lopez was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines. He planned to follow his parents into the Riverside County Sheriff's Office after completing his deployment



Soviak, left, was in his early 20s and was from Ohio. Kareem Nikoui (right) from California wanted to stay in the Marines his whole career, his family said on Friday





Rylee McCollum was due to become a father. He is pictured with his pregnant wife, right, shortly before deploying to Afghanistan in April



© instagram



max_soviak It's kill or be killed,
definitely trynna be on the kill side

#imnotsurprisedmotherf [blurred] #NDA

© instagram

•
This is the tragic final Instagram post by Max Soviak, one of the young Marines killed in the ISIS-K attack on Thursday

There is now confusion over how the military confused one explosion with two on Thursday.

Speaking at a briefing on Friday, Army General Hank Taylor said: 'We do not believe there was a second explosion at or near the Baron Hotel. It was one suicide bomber.

'We're not sure how that report was provided incorrectly but we do know that in the confusion of very dynamic events like this, can cause information to sometimes to be misreported or garbled.'

General Taylor also confirmed on Friday that the U.S. is sharing the names of citizens and Afghan allies with the Taliban, but claimed it is so the Islamists ensure they can get through to the airport.

Former President Donald Trump said on Thursday night that it equates to giving them a 'kill list' of enemies and where to find them.

There is growing frustration among DC politicians - who are now calling for Biden to be impeached or resign.

On Friday, he refused to take questions on it during a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, and called it a 'dangerous but worthy mission'.

Vice President Kamala Harris returned to DC on Friday from Guam after shying away from the crisis since it began on August 14.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy said on Friday the President must face a 'day of reckoning' for how he has handled the situation.

'Look, I'm extremely frustrated with this president,' McCarthy said in a press conference.

He said a president needs to have 'the faith, the trust, and the confidence' of Americans - which he said Biden lost on Thursday after a devastating attack on Kabul airport, which killed at least 170 people and 13 US troops.

'When that day passes, we can take up anything that - to hold accountable for the actions that have been taken, the lies that have been given, the mis-decisions that put Americans in harm's way, and the decision to leave Americans behind,' he said.

'That choice and that answer should never be given by the president of the United States.'

At the Pentagon briefing on Friday, Kirby revealed that thousands of terrorists from ISIS-K, the group responsible for the attack at the airport, escaped from Bagram prison earlier this summer after Biden's troops cleared out from the base, leaving it to outnumbered Afghan forces to supervise them.

U.S. troops abandoned the base overnight on July 2.

The prisoners were filmed being freed by the Taliban on August 15.

Military experts have pinpointed the sudden, overnight withdrawal of US troops from Bagram on July 2 as the moment the U.S. gave Afghanistan away.

In the 24 hours since Thursday, the U.S. has only evacuated 300 Americans from Kabul but up to 1,000 remain stranded.

The government claims not everyone wants to leave, but they cannot get in touch with everyone to check.



The flag at the White House is flying half-staff in honor of the Marines killed in Thursday's attack by ISIS



Flags at military cemeteries are also flying at half-staff. A women visits the grave of her loved one in San Diego's Miramar National Cemetery



A flag flies at half staff in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, on Friday in tribute to the 13 U.S. service members killed the day before



Neighbor's tie yellow ribbons to flags in front of the family home of U.S. Marines Staff Sgt. Taylor Hoover in Sandy, Utah on Friday

NEWS COMMENT:

Speaking at a briefing on Friday, Army General Hank Taylor said: 'I can confirm that we do not believe there was a second explosion at or near the Baron hotel'. He and Pentagon spokesman John Kirby also revealed that the US is giving information to the Taliban of citizens and refugees

MG Taylor offers an update on yesterday's attack at the Abbey Gate.
pic.twitter.com/LLRlehWEkS

— Department of Defense us (@DeptofDefense) [August 27, 2021](#)

McCarthy also criticized Biden over his August 31 deadline for a full withdrawal - a decision that came despite pleas from fellow heads of state and lawmakers here at home.

'Why would President Biden pick the Taliban over our allies and over Americans?' he questioned.

Republican Rep. Peter Meijer also heckled Biden's handling of the chaos in Afghanistan late Thursday night, and urged Congress to reclaim its war powers authority to prevent future crises.

After the deadly blasts at Kabul airport Meijer posted on Twitter grieving the loss of 13 U.S. service members in the 'horrific attack' on Kabul airport.

He said his 'heart is absolutely broken' for the families of the fallen troops and their fellow troops.

'On Tuesday I saw Marines bravely managing chaos at Abbey Gate.

'Today, the grave risk they took to save countless lives was made terribly clear,' Meijer wrote on Twitter, referencing a widely criticized trip he and Rep. Seth Moulton took to the airport amid the evacuation effort.

'This was a position they should not have been in, but President Biden's reckless withdrawal gave them no other choice.

'Congress needs to reclaim its authority over war powers to ensure such a catastrophe never happens again.'

Pentagon Press Secretary John Kirby confirmed there were two blasts, tweeting on Thursday: 'We can confirm that the explosion at the Abbey Gate was the result of a complex attack that resulted in a number of US & civilian casualties.

'We can also confirm at least one other explosion at or near the Baron Hotel, a short distance from Abbey Gate. We will continue to update.'

It has also emerged that Biden's administration gave a list of Afghan allies' names to the Taliban in the naïve hope they would then help get them out.

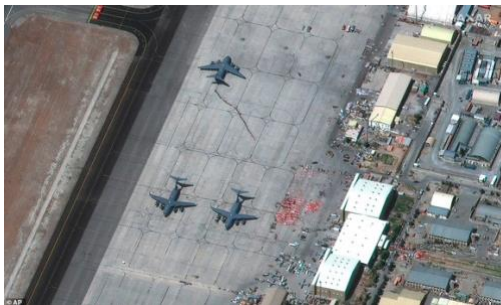
Trump called it a 'kill list' that all but guaranteed their deaths.

The U.S. now one of the only nations still evacuating from Kabul amid increasing threats of another ISIS attack.

Western countries have been scrambling for the last two weeks to get their people out of Afghanistan before the deadline, and their missions were hurried even more when Biden refused to extend it this week.



A US Air Force aircraft takes off from the military airport in Kabul on Friday, as the Pentagon said the evacuation of tens of thousands of people from Afghanistan still faces more possible attacks



In this satellite image provided by Maxar Technologies people are loading on an aircraft at Hamid Karzai International Airport, in Kabul, Afghanistan on Friday



U.S soldiers from the XVIII Airborne Corps in position guarding the at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Friday



U.S soldiers from the XVIII Airborne Corps in position guarding the at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Friday



© AFP via Getty Images
This is the aftermath of Thursday's attack outside Kabul airport. 170 people were killed in the bomb attack and more are imminent, American generals warned



A Taliban fighter stands guard at the site of the suicide bomb, which killed scores of people including 13 US troops, at Kabul airport



Hospitals in Afghanistan are now packed with people who were injured in the blast on Thursday



Afghans lie on beds at a hospital after they were wounded in the deadly attacks outside the airport in Kabul, Afghanistan



© AP

Afghans lie on beds at a hospital after they were wounded in the deadly attacks outside the airport in Kabul, Afghanistan



© AFP via Getty Images

Discarded suitcases and debris outside the gate of the airport where one of the suicide bombs went off on Thursday, killing 170 people



© AFP via Getty Images

Clothes and blood stains of Afghan people who were waiting to be evacuated are seen at the site of the August 26 suicide bomb



© AFP via Getty Images

Relatives transport the coffin of one of the victims of the attack away from the airport on Friday morning

Thursday's suicide attacks - which claimed the lives of 13 US troops and dozens of Afghans - were the final nail in the coffin for many.

RACE TO EVACUATE FROM KABUL

ONGOING EVACUATIONS

US

Russia

Turkey

ALREADY FINISHED

Britain

France

Denmark

Spain

Italy

Canada

Poland

Holland

Norway

Germany

Australia

Belgium

Sweden

Hungary

Britain's evacuation flights will finish on Friday, despite there being dual nationality citizens still stuck along with some allies.

British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace said on Friday: 'It is with deep regret that not everyone has been able to be evacuated during this process.'

'The threat is obviously going to grow the closer we get to leaving.'

'The narrative is always going to be, as we leave, certain groups such as ISIS will want to stake a claim that they have driven out the U.S. or the U.K.'

Canada has also halted flights, leaving some citizens behind.

'The government of Canada recognizes that there are a number of people in Afghanistan, including Canadian citizens, permanent residents, their families, and applicants under programs for Afghans, a government notice sent out last night, that was obtained by CBC News, said.'

Gen. Wayne Eyre, Canada's acting chief of the defense staff, said most of the Canadian personnel who were still in the country have left, but a small contingent stayed behind to support allies on the ground who have no hope of getting out.

Biden - who crumbled under questioning on Thursday night when confronted with the airport attack death toll - refused to push back the deadline to give allied countries more time to get their people out.

'It is in our interest to leave on time, on target,' Biden said on Thursday night.

The U.S. is relying on the Taliban's cooperation to let people through to the airport.

U.S. officials in Kabul gave the Taliban a list of names of American citizens, green card holders and Afghan allies to grant entry into the airport's outer perimeter.

The move was described as a gross security lapse, with one defense source telling Politico: 'Basically, they just put all those Afghans on a kill list.'

Trump told Fox News: 'Now we're giving lists of Americans to the Taliban so now you just knock on the door and grab them and take them out.'

'What you are watching now is only going to get worse, it can only go one way. We look like fools all over the world. We are weak, we are pathetic, we are being led by people that have no idea what they are doing,' he added.

Only U.S. citizens and visa holders are being removed, and in the next few days, the focus will turn to removing troops and equipment.



© VIA REUTERS
Afghan refugees arriving at the Rota Air Base in Spain on Friday. The airbase is shared by American and Spanish military forces



President Joe Biden crumbled on Thursday night as he took questions from reporters about the suicide bomb attacks



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British soldiers secure the perimeter outside the Baron Hotel, near the Abbey Gate, in Kabul, Afghanistan, Thursday, Aug. 26, 2021. The last British flights will leave today

On Thursday, General Kenneth McKenzie, the commanding general on the ground, said he expected more bomb attacks at the airport, but that the mission would continue despite the threat.

Biden has been widely condemned for creating the crowds at the airport that ISIS attacked by failing to get everyone out of the region before withdrawing his troops abruptly earlier this year.

It took just 11 days for the Taliban to sweep through the country that the U.S. maintained relative stability in for 20 years.

Thousands of men, women and children are still trying to flee the [Taliban](#), but their hopes are fading fast as the U.S. and its allies are packing up their rescue operations ahead of the Tuesday deadline.

People are still pouring into the canal which surrounds the perimeter of the airport, standing in waters which were in Thursday filled with the blood of scores of people after a bomb tore through the crowd.

Footage from the ground revealed a scene of utter despair, with shouts and cries among the Afghans, some seen clambering up walls out of the canal and others wading through with luggage atop their heads.

In one location, dozens of Taliban members with heavy weapons about 500 yards from the airport were preventing anyone from venturing forward.