

"To Remember Haziza's Family, Bashir's Family, Jamila's Family, and Hundreds of Other Afghan Families"

by

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The air attack on Kabul, Afghanistan began at 8:57 p.m. Kabul time October 7th. On that Sunday night, U.S and British missiles and strike aircraft hit thirty sites across Afghanistan, including seven in urban areas [three in Kabul].

Twelve year old, Haziza, lived with her father, mother, four brother and sisters, in a poor neighborhood next to Kabul's airport. Her father ran a small grocery business there selling chewing gum and cigarettes. Haziza recalls the first night of U.S attacks,

"I along with my father and 3 brothers, was in my grandfather's house when the first batch of thundering war planes started pounding Kabul on October 7 last, whereas my mother and a two month old brother stayed back in our home.....it was really very terrifying as there were explosions one after the other."¹

¹ Intikhab Amir, "Afghan Children - A Ray of Hope for Their Country," Dawn [November 4, 2001]. .Life in the makeshift Tajabad camp is described in Intikhab Amir, "Afghan Refugees Leading A Miserable Life," Dawn [November 7, 2001] at

Upon returning to their home they found it in ruins and her mother and baby brother buried in the wreckage. All electricity had been cut. Rescue searchers were desperately lighting pieces of paper, one after another, trying to burn away small patches of Kabul's night.² Her father fled Kabul for Pakistan to live in the decrepit Tajabad camp.. Haziza now washes clothes there to earn a few rupees, one of 20 persons living with her aunt. Some fare better, many worse, barely surviving on begging, poorly paid factory work where sexual harassment is rampant, collecting garbage, and prostitution.³ In nearby town of Jamrud, children as young as 5 are auctioned off in a fortified warehouse.⁴

All the munitions were accounted for - on target. The U.S. had pulverized Haziza's home.

That same Kabul morning of October 8th, **34-year old Abdul Bashir** agonized over loosing his beloved five-year old daughter, Zaniulla, who was killed when a U.S bomb aimed at a Taliban tank post on a nearby hill, fell instead in front of the apartment block in northern Kabul.⁵ Since then, Bashir can't stop talking about "my beautiful daughter."⁶ Bashir and his wife, Shakilla, suffer nervous disorders while their 2 remaining children awake screaming at night.

All the munitions were accounted for - on target. A U.S. bomb fell in a playground of an apartment block killing "a beautiful daughter."

Exactly two weeks later, on October 21st, American planes bombed the area of Tarin Kot in southern Afghanistan and killed 21 people from two families.⁷ Those who died were 17 children, 3 women and a man who was driving them in a tractor-trailer on a road out of town, ironically to avoid the bombing going on in the town. According to survivors,

<http://www.dawn.com/2001/11/07/nat21.htm> . Photos of life in the Peshawar camps may be found in Marcus Stern, "Refugees At Crossroads," Copley News Service [September 26, 2001], at http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/nation/terror/dispatches/20010926-9999_1n26refugees.html

² Christina Lamb, "After the Bombs, Tales of Horror and Misery," *The Age* [October 22, 2001] and especially Barry Bearak, "Escaping Afghanistan, Children Pay Price," *New York Times* [October 31, 2001], at <http://www.pulitzer.org/year/2002/international-reporting/works/103001.html>

³ M. Ilyas Khan, "Pitiable Afghan Woman," *Dawn* at <http://www.sabawoon.com/news.asp?id=2913&view=detail>

⁴ Andrew Bushell, "Sale of Children Thrives in Pakistan?" *Washington Times* [January 21, 2002] at <http://www.yorku.ca/iwpr/afghan/saleofchildren.htm>

⁵ "Afghan Victims of U.S Strikes Seek Aid," *Times of India* [February 13, 2002], citing an A.F..P. report.

⁶ "Victims Demand Compensation," *Dawn* [February 14, 2002], at: <http://www.dawn.com/2002/0214/int2.htm>

⁷ produced by Marc W. Herold, on the basis of reports by Aamir Latif [IslamOnline correspondent], Carlotta Gall [*New York Times*], Catherine Philip [*The Times*], and others.

most of the children were killed when a plane struck the tractor-trailer. Then, as relatives rushed to the scene and carried the wounded into a house, the planes returned and bombed the house, killing most of the wounded and injuring four who tried to help.

On the dark night of October 21, 2001, in the central highlands of Afghanistan, near the capital city of Tirin Kot, U.S war planes struck a 'suspected Taliban command facility' called Gar Mao just outside the city dropping five bombs on it and then struck the police station at around 8 PM, followed with later attacks.

The avengers of 9/11 hit a single-storied mud-walled house surrounded by apricot orchards in the small village of Thorai, situated just outside Tirin Kot. A total of 18-32 people belonging to Jamila's village died. A second strike at 10 PM killed many in Dery Gul's family trying to flee on a tractor. Jamila, recalls,

"we were having dinner that night. It was probably 8 or 8:30 PM, suddenly, a deafening explosion rocked the entire village which was followed by a series of explosions...my children and mother-in-law started screaming in panic. 'Americans have attacked' my husband shouted. 'Extinguish the candles', he asked me...I cannot explain exactly what happened....[I] only remember a huge explosion and I lost my senses. When I came to consciousness, I saw my relatives and other villagers engaged in digging through the debris and mud to find out the dead bodies of their near and dear ones. My first question was about my children and husband. I asked one of my relatives who recovered me from the wreckage of my destroyed house, about my inmates. He kept quiet. He did not answer saying everything is all right now. 'The attack is over. Don't move. You are injured.' I felt I was covered with blood. But I kept asking about my children and other family members. But I kept asking about my children and other family members..."

Jamila lay on a wooden bed, wrapped in bandages, in the general ward of Quetta's Civil Hospital, along with several other injured persons from the U.S. attack. She was carried there from Kandahar - where she could not be treated because of the collapse of the Afghan hospital system - by the Al-Rasheed Trust, an Islamic charity, a relief agency still

working inside Afghanistan. She suffered multiple fractures in her leg, arms, and shoulder.

"On my insistence, [my relative] told me that my elder son, Waheedullah, younger Shakir, and youngest daughter Saima had been returned to Allah. My mother-in-law, brother-in-law and four other [friends] also died in the attack. My husband, Ghaziullah, and daughter [10 year-old] Shakira were seriously injured. They were brought to Kandahar general hospital, where my husband was pronounced dead."

Jamila ended the conversation with

"I don't want to say anything more. I just want to ask Americans what they have achieved after killing my innocent children and other family members. Were they terrorists? Did they kill any American?"

Jamila's only living family member is her daughter, Shakira. Another family also lost many members.

Army Lt. Col. Jim Yonts of U.S. Central Command in Tampa, Florida, a veteran in the Army's public affairs service in Europe, uttered vintage Pentagon-speak :

"....we had been watching [it - the compound] for a couple of days...we verified the target and on the night of the 21st, we dropped some precision-guided munitions on the target, and destroyed that target. All the munitions were accounted for - on target."⁸

Haziza, Zaniulla, Wheedullah, Shakir, Ghaziullah.....are victims of U.S. state terrorism.

All the munitions were accounted for - on target.

⁸ Carlotta Gall, "October Strike on Taliban Hit Civilians, Survivors Say," New York Times [February 13, 2002], at: <http://www.commondreams.org/headlines02/0213-05.htm>