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Reporter's Notebook: Kabul Family Grieves And Swears Revenge

By PRANAY B. GUPTA
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KABUL, Afghanistan, March 7 — Four days after his wife had given birth to their second child, Amir Faryabhi died. A fusillade of bullets fired from a Soviet armored personnel carrier tore through his body as the 28-year-old bricklayer participated in a huge anti-Russian demonstration in Jaded Maiwand Square. He was among scores of Afghans killed that afternoon in Kabul, two weeks ago.

Zehrab Faryabhi, his wife, remembers how cold and sunny it was that day, and she remembers how hastily the funeral arrangements had to be made because under Shiite-Moslem custom a dead person must be buried by sundown. Amir Faryabhi's grave is marked by a simple whitewashed stone, on Karte Sakhi hill, just a mile or two from the mud-walled, two-room house that he shared with his brothers, Sultan and Aziz.

Only Hazara Moslems, like Mr. Faryabhi, are buried in this graveyard. There are perhaps 200 simple white tombstones on this site; only Mr. Faryabhi's grave is decorated with two tiny flags that his family makes certain stay in place there.

One of the flags is stark white, the other is a very bright red. The flags are crossed and pushed into the hard soil just in front of Mr. Faryabhi's tombstone. "Such crossed flags in Afghanistan mean that the dead man's family will some day avenge his death," Aziz Faryabhi, a gangly 17-year-old, said. "We will avenge Amir's murder."

Zehrab Faryabhi hides her grief well and even manages to smile occasionally as she tends to her newborn boy and keeps watch over her other son, two-year-old Hassan.

"They have come to save Afghanistan, these Russians — that is what we are told," Mrs. Faryabhi said, speaking in Dari. "But what we know is that we are being butchered, especially us Hazaras."

In recent weeks, there appears to be a campaign by the Soviet-supported Government of President Babrak Karmal against the Hazara Moslem community of Kabul. The Hazaras are mostly poor, among the poorest in a country of poor people, and they work at menial jobs like street-sweeping or in trades like brick-laying. But there seems to be a belief among the authorities that the Hazaras are at the heart of the rebel movement in Afghanistan.

Every day, Soviet and Afghan soldiers sweep through areas like Karte Sakhi to look for hidden arms, and every night some Afghan sentry gets shot at. The Russians send only Afghan troops to such neighborhoods at night.

Here in Kabul, residents have a special, derisive, name for the Soviet soldiers. They call them "mamaa," a sarcastic use of the word "uncle."

"Look, mamaa is rumbling around," Ajit Singh, a Sikh money-changer in the Shehzadeh market in the old section of Kabul, said to his 15-year-old son, Jagjit, as a column of Soviet tanks passed near their shop the other morning.

"You mean mamaa is stumbling around," the youth replied.

The Russian troops do not mingle with Kabulites. They live in barracks beyond the airport, or in a heavily fortified camp on the Bala Hissar hill. Their officers and the Russian civilian "advisers" live mostly in a section of town called Mikro-ryan, where there are tall apartment blocks.

Kabulites have been puzzled about the ethnic origins of the Soviet troops. A recent experience added to the confusion for one young Indian expatriate who works for a German pharmaceutical concern here.

It was about eight o'clock in the evening, the time when the curfew started, but the streets of Kabul had long been deserted — except for the roving tanks and the military police jeeps. The Indian, a bachelor, had just fixed himself a Scotch, when there was a loud banging on his front door.

Soviet Soldiers Ask for Drinks

A dozen Russian soldiers stood there. They pushed themselves in and, in German, asked for cigarettes and drinks. Since the Indian spoke German, he was able to get along conversationally with the troops.

They were passing by the house, the soldiers said, and they just wanted a rest and a bit to drink and eat. The Indian's servant, an Afghan, cooked additional kebabs for the "guests." The Russians kept drinking and left the kebabs untouched. The Indian grew worried and he slipped away for a moment and surreptitiously called the local police station. The policeman he spoke to said there was nothing he could do about the situation.

The "guests" talked about how they missed their families, how dull things were in Kabul. They grew boisterous, according to this Indian, and soon ribald jokes were being made about Afghans. It was six o'clock the next morning when the soldiers left.

"But they voluntarily emptied out the ashtrays and offered to wash the glasses before they left my house," the Indian later said.

As more and more Soviet troops flood into this capital city, there are fewer and fewer other foreigners left here.

Not only have the Pakistanis evacuated most of their embassy personnel, so have the Saudis, the French, the British and others.

There is little doubt among embassy people in Kabul that, with the obvious exception of the Soviet diplomatic compound, every foreign Government representative in the city is kept under surveillance by the Afghan secret police force, which is now being supervised, according to Afghan military officials, by the K.G.B. All phones of foreigners are tapped, too.

In particular, local Afghans who are employed by these embassies are subjected to house searches and prolonged questioning by the authorities.

Some of these Afghans who have been questioned say that the authorities wanted to know of any links President Hafizullah Amin, who was killed in the takeover, may have had with the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States. Recently, the American Embassy got a formal letter from the Karmal regime urging that it turn over to the Government all C.I.A. files on President Amin.