

# Kandahar Assassins: Stories from the Afghan-Soviet War

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Mohammad Tahir Aziz Gunnam: Kandahar Assassins: Stories from the Afghan-Soviet War  
David McCullen: Foreword



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Assassinations are a near-daily occurrence in Afghanistan. Whether by rogue Afghan security forces or by lone individuals roaming the cities and districts, the threat of a target killing is very real. *Kandahar Assassins* offers an unparalleled view of this phenomenon from the perspective of the assassins. Published in 1986 in Pashto and a perennial classic in Kandahar's bookstores, *Kandahar Assassins* tells the story of two well-known assassins who operated in the southern city during the 1980s war.

The stories of 'Lame Ghazi' and Commander Ghaffari involve ambitious raids and plots carried out within the Afghan-controlled city. This book offers a corrective to the idea that assassination is a new phenomenon in Afghanistan.

Mohammad Tahir Aziz Gunnam was a doctor working in Pakistan at the time, allowing him access to a variety of figures within the Afghan mujahedeen. Originally from Kandahar, Gunnam offers insight as an Afghan who was close to both the events and the people he describes. Judging from this book, the style and manner of assassinations in southern Afghanistan doesn't appear to have changed much. *Kandahar Assassins*,

therefore, offers a unique perspective on the world of these target killers and how they carry out their operations. It is an essential read for any soldier serving in Afghanistan as well as those seeking to understand the history behind the current conflict. Dr David Kilcullen wrote the introduction to this English translation of the book. "a Thousand-and-One Nights of the Afghan jihad... a detailed and lyrical account of the war that he and his contemporaries fought against in Kandahar during the 1980s" - Dr David Kilcullen (from his introduction), counterinsurgency expert and author