

The Mujahadin

- A mujahid is one who strives or struggles on behalf of Islam; Mujahideen is the plural of the same word. The word mujahid is an Arabic participle drawn from the same root as the Arabic word jihad, to strive or struggle. The term is most frequently used in reference to the self named Afghan mujahideen the guerrilla fighters who battles the Soviet army from 1979-1989, when the Soviets withdrew in defeat. The Soviets invaded in December, 1979 in order to provide support recently installed pro-Soviet prime minister, Babrak Karmal.
- The mujahideen were fighters from the mountainous areas of the largely rural country, and also maintained bases in Pakistan. They were entirely independent of the government. Mujahideen fought under the command of tribal leaders, who also headed Islamist political parties, which ranged from radical to moderate.
- The mujahideen received arms by way of Pakistan and Iran, both of which share a border. They made use of an arsenal of guerrilla tactics to thwart the Soviets, such as laying ambushes or blowing up gas pipelines between the two countries. They were estimated to be about 90,000 strong in the mid-1980s.
- The Afghan mujahideen were not seeking to wage an aggressive jihad beyond national boundaries, but were rather fighting a nationalist war against an occupier.

The mujahidin can be linked to our text because the Mujahadin were the ones that were having a fight during Najaf's stay in Pakistan. This is relevant because it links to the fact that this was the reason Najaf left the country, and the many family lives in Najaf's family, that were lost due to the ambushes.