

**(1) 40 Percent ...**

intelligence officer. The Special Forces is considered to be a strong line of defense in fighting insurgency in the country. (Tolonews)

**(2) China Ready...**

will strengthen mutual trust and maintain peace and development in the region, Hua said. (Xinhua)

**(3) 22 Villages...**

insurgents. "The operation still continues in the district to clear all insurgents," he said.

However, he did not provide details about any casualties among security forces sustained during the operation. The Taliban have not yet commented about the operation. (Tolonews)

**(4) Migrant ...**

Mediterranean to Europe, marking a 36.5-percent drop from October, when a record 220,535 arrived on Europe's shores, the UN's refugee agency said.

"It's the first (month) this year that actually shows a decrease compared to the previous one," UNHCR spokesman William Spindler told reporters in Geneva.

"It's a big drop," he said, but stressed that "the figures are still very high."

He said the slowdown last month was linked to "fluctuating climate conditions in the Aegean but also a crackdown on smuggling by Turkish authorities."

His comments came two days after the European Union vowed to provide three billion euros (\$3.2 billion) in cash as well as political concessions to Ankara in return for its cooperation in tackling Europe's worst migrant crisis since World War II.

Turkey hosts more than two million refugees from the Syrian conflict and is the main launching point for migrants coming to Europe, via Greece. More than 886,000 migrants have arrived in Europe by sea so far this year, according to the latest UN figures.

Most of them are fleeing conflict and violence in places like Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, and the vast majority of them -- 738,000 -- have landed on the Greek islands before moving up through the continent towards northern Europe.

A total of 3,515 people have meanwhile perished in the Mediterranean trying to reach Europe, most of them along the longer and more dangerous route from Libya to Italy.

The UN's children's agency and the Organization for Migration meanwhile warned Tuesday that women and children make up an increasing proportion of the migrants and refugees on the move, and currently account for more than half, up from just 27 percent a few months ago. This has had tragic consequences, since children especially are more vulnerable along the journey.

Along the eastern Mediterranean route from Turkey to Greece, where more families are travelling, children account for at least 30 percent of the 589 deaths so far this year, IOM and UNICEF said.

In October alone, at least 90 children died in the eastern Mediterranean. (AFP)

**(5) British Envoy...**

speaking at a gathering named "Beyond Boundaries" that was attended by Turkish, Pakistani and Russian ambassadors as well as journalists and civil society members from Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"I wanted to particularly give one message today if I may... We are on the cusp of a breakthrough that could lead to a real peace process. We have been here before and efforts have always dissipated but there are real possibilities now and signals coming from the Taliban and the signals coming from Afghan and Pakistani governments and the signals

are coming from the region and from internationals like Britain and the United States, Germany and France," the ambassador said.

She said that the international community particularly the United Nations' Security Council will play a vital and crucial role in supporting Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Afghan peace process.

At the same event, Pakistan Ambassador to Kabul Syed Abrar Hussain said Kabul and Islamabad should open a new page in their relations.

He said: "Cooperation and not confrontation holds the key to the fledgling peace process in Afghanistan. This process can be slow, at times irritating ... but a negotiated peace deal is the only option. It takes two to make peace, but only one to make war. Forums like these provide people of both the countries to sit together and come up with tangible solutions that can bridge the existing trust deficit between the two countries."

Officials at the meeting also talked about the presence of Taliban and Daesh militants, insecurity and relations between Kabul and Islamabad. It was the second session between Afghan and Pakistani civil society members and journalists. (Tolonews)

**(6) Germany...**

will also continue its role in training, advising and assisting the Afghan National Security and Defense Forces (ANDSF) and institutions under the umbrella of NATO's Resolute Support mission, adding that the number of German troops would be increased to 980.

He added, however, the Afghan government should also fulfill its commitments to the international community and accelerate its pledges of reform, fighting corruption and the peace negotiation process with Taliban.

Peace talks between Afghan government and Taliban have been stalled since the death of Mullah Mohammad Omar, the Supreme Leader of Taliban, was confirmed after first round of the negotiation in Pakistan in July.

But the process is expected to revive as per the agreement of President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and Pakistan's Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif.

The agreement was reached during a meeting on the sideline of the climate change conference in Paris on Monday. (KP)

**(7) Indian PM ...**

Modi's first official visit to Afghanistan after taking office in 2014.

India and Afghanistan have friendly relationship from decades and after Afghanistan was struck by the deadly earthquake in October, MP Narendra Modi expressed his condolences over the loss of lives and damages and offered assistance to the victims.

India has played a crucial role by participating in the rebuilding of Afghanistan following the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001.

Since 2002, the Government of India has committed USD 2 billion dollars to the socio-economic rebuilding of the Afghan state and society in accordance with the development priorities of the Government and the people of Afghanistan.

The ongoing infrastructure projects ongoing by India include Salma dam, renamed to "Afghan-India Friendship Dam", in western Herat province which will incur a cost of around \$300 million by the time of its completion.

Besides India's assistance in construction sector, the country is also helping Afghanistan militarily in its war on terror. (KP)

**(8) Rabbani ...**

discussed the need to develop, strengthen and enhance

the NATO-Afghan enduring partnership agreement."

"On the issue of the troops and how much funding we need beyond 2020, of course currently, as you know, that \$4.1 billion US dollars is required and that will continue until 2020. And after that, of course, Afghanistan has also its part to play, has to make some contributions of about \$500 million US dollars every year," he added.

This comes while the NATO also announced that the alliance will keep about 12,000 troops in Afghanistan through next year and confirmed the commitments - roughly 7,000 US troops and 5,000 from NATO member states and partners.

On Tuesday, the NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said at a press conference that after 2016 the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) mission will focus only on training and mentoring in Afghanistan and those bases will be located in only four provinces in the country.

The two-day meeting of NATO foreign ministers began on Tuesday in Brussels at the organization's headquarters.

NATO Secretary-General said on the sidelines of the meeting that Afghanistan is an important country for NATO, which will not allow the country to become a safe haven for terrorists as Afghanistan's insecurity was in turn a big threat to the security of NATO countries.

"We are in Afghanistan to prevent that Afghanistan again becomes a safe haven for international terrorists. It is also in our security interests to make sure that doesn't happen. So we are in Afghanistan of course to support Afghans but we are in Afghanistan also to support ourselves because if Afghanistan becomes a safe haven for international terrorists that will also be a threat to us," he said.

Stoltenberg said he supported the peace process by the Afghan government and asked the neighboring countries to help with the process.

Meanwhile, the German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, speaking at the NATO summit, said he supports the extension of the "Resolute Support" training mission in Afghanistan, and that Montenegro should be encouraged by upcoming discussions on its possible membership of the bloc.

"The security situation is still difficult and that is why today I recommended that we extend the training and advice mission "Resolute Support" which should have come to an end, and that Germany will continue to play its leading role in the north of Afghanistan," he said.

Fourteen years after the United States first sent troops to Afghanistan, NATO members have doubts about the ability of its army and police to defend itself against Taliban fighters, who briefly took over the northern city of Kunduz in September. (Tolonews)

**(9) Bulgaria to ....**

Iraq light weapons. "We remain part of this coalition and will continue to help as well as we can," said Mitov.

He commented that the invitation to Montenegro to start NATO membership negotiations was a triumph of the Open Door policy and a very strong message at a time of major geopolitical dynamics. "The stability of the Western Balkans is of exceptional importance, we are all delighted that Montenegro was invited," he said.

Bulgaria's chief diplomat also said Sofia wants to sign an agreement on goodneighbourly relations with Macedonia.

"Clearly, it must be signed; we want to see our neighbours join the EU and NATO as soon as possible. Our wish is to lay good foundations of bilateral relations with this agreement which we have been negotiat-

ing too long," said Mitov. Questioned about the attacks on the websites of Bulgarian institutions and NATO's approval of a new strategy on hybrid warfare, Mitov explained it was impossible to define the nature of the attacks - whether they were targeted and whether they were part of hybrid warfare. "When we have completely clear information which allows us to claim something for certain, we will announce it," he said. (Agencies)

**(10) Italy to Keep ...**

"I want to say thank you to the Italian forces for being a catalyst of stability and security. I hope, Mr. Prime Minister, that tomorrow the Italian parliament will extend the mission of the Italian forces, vis-a-vis a resolute support mission, because that will be the statement that we together do not surrender to threats or force, but support a mission of value and values."

"Europe and Afghanistan, Italy and Afghanistan, are not now two distant locations but two allies, united by common threats. And the issue of, you stress, on a counter-narrative is essential. What is under attack by terrorist organisations is freedom. Belief in rule of law, belief in freedom of movement," according to Ghani.

This comes while NATO foreign ministers agreed earlier on Tuesday to keep about 12,000 troops in Afghanistan through next year, while pushing forward with a funding drive to help the country through 2020.

Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg confirmed the commitments - roughly 7,000 US troops and 5,000 from other NATO member states and partners. (Tolonews)

**(11) Afghans Coming...**

big for many - that is no reason to get asylum status or residency status here," she said, adding that in such cases people would be deported back home. (Reuters)

**(12) CoM Orders...**

been taken based on complaints by a number of government organizations.

He said: "An investigation was ordered in this regard. The government officials who take salaries, their job is to do their duty during official hours and serve the people. In future when there is a protest, they [government officials] should be present at their job and not leave their offices."

Civil society activists meanwhile criticized the decision by the CoM.

"Any step which is taken in this regard is illegal. If every citizen faces such a situation and then he or she is questioned for what they did is against the law," said Mujib Khalwatgar, head of Nai - an independent organization which supports open media in Afghanistan.

"The biggest guarantee is the 36th Article of the Constitution, based on which no one has the right to interrogate or punish someone for participating in a protest. Making the list of such people is against the law and even it is treachery," he added.

Following the brutal beheading of seven Zabul residents by alleged Daesh members, tens of thousands of people from around the country stood together and took to the streets and to social media platforms in protest over the killings last month. One mass protest march was in Kabul where an estimated 20,000 people took part. Such a public demonstration has not been recorded in over 40 years in Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

**(13) AISS Research ...**

and 151 police officers. 10 percent of interviewed police considered suicide attacks against Islam.

11 % of them considered the reason for joining police ranks, fight against terrorists and

20 % others due to economic problems.

"Our findings indicate that the extremism exists among our police and it will be challenging if the issue not addressed," said Abdul Ahad Muhammad, researcher of Afghanistan Institute of Strategic Studies.

The research stated that Afghan government must make efforts to eliminate corruption and nepotism because it will damage Afghan security forces.

But the interior ministry rejected extremism among police forces; citing these forces fight against religious extremism for years.

Previously, the Institute of Strategic Studies also found that radical tendencies are among universities in Afghanistan and unofficial religious schools which is a big danger for the future of Afghanistan. (ATN)

**(14) Blast Kills...**

peace, a reference to the Taliban militants. However, the armed outfit fighting the government to regain power hasn't commented.

The bloody blast occurred amid the government's mounting pressure on anti-government militants in the militancy-hit country.

Meanwhile, Afghan police in conjunction with units of the national army have killed 38 militants during a series of operations in the conflict-ridden country over the past 24 hours, the Ministry of Interior said in a statement released here Wednesday.

The operations, according to the statement, have been conducted in parts of Nangarhar, Kunduz, Helmand, Samangan, Faryab and Saripul provinces during which more militants were injured and a number of arms and ammunition were seized.

However, the statement didn't mention if there are casualties on the side of the security forces.

Afghanistan's National Directorate for Security, the country's counter-intelligence agency, said they have arrested 11 anti-government militants in the northern province of Kunduz.

The spy agency also recovered arms, ammunition and military uniforms from the possession of the arrested insurgents. Both the anti-government militants and government forces have been doing their best to gain more grounds and consolidate their positions ahead of snowfall in mountainous Afghanistan. (Xinhua)

**(15) NDS Arrest ...**

ing Zakat (almsgiving) from the people. During the operation the forces also discovered a number of military uniforms as well as small and heavy weapons. However, the statement did not provide more details about the operation. (Tolonews)

**(16) 3rd Shift ...**

Their main duty is to provide vital security service to the base and several other facilities across the country. The new contingent will replace the 233 Mongolian soldiers who've served in Afghanistan since August 2015. The ceremony was led by the Commander of General Purpose Troops of Mongolia, Lieutenant General Radnaabazar Sükhbat. (AKIPress)

**(17) Moscow...**

agency during his visit to Cyprus. Meanwhile, Peskov said that Moscow's sanctions against Ankara over the downing of a Russian warplane are different from those imposed on Moscow over the Ukraine crisis, as it is preventive in nature to guard against terrorist threats. (Xinhua)

**(18) Russia Says...**

they said showed columns of tanker trucks loading with oil at installations controlled by Islamic State in Syria and Iraq, and then crossing the border

into neighboring Turkey.

The officials did not specify what direct evidence they had of the involvement of Erdogan and his family, an allegation that the Turkish president has vehemently denied. (Reuters)

**(19) NATO ...**

ment." The meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission was the last session in this week's two-day meeting of NATO foreign ministers. (Xinhua)

**(20) Abadi Says...**

came after an earlier announcement by U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter that the Pentagon was deploying a specialized operations force which would "over time" conduct unilateral operations in Iraq and Syria as part of the U.S. military campaign against the IS.

Iraq is witnessing a fresh wave of violence amid deteriorating security, with IS militants controlling parts of northern and western regions and committing crimes against Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds, Christians, Yazidi Kurds, and other ethnic and religious communities. (Xinhua)

**(21) Iraq Briefed ...**

He said the United States had asked other members of the 28-nation Western security alliance to provide special operations forces to provide such things as police training, ammunition and other items to Syria's neighbors. (Reuters)

**(22) PNA Warns ...**

calling upon Palestinians and Arabs to stay committed to the Arab Peace Initiative as a foundation to solve the Arab-Israeli conflict and achieve peace and security in the region. (Xinhua)

**(23) Yemen 'Extremely ...**

If "it takes more than four to five days" before solid information emerges "then you are in a totally different dynamic, and we are also aware of that," Daccord said.

The civil unrest in Yemen escalated in March when a pro-government coalition led by Saudi Arabia launched air strikes targeting Iran-backed rebels.

The worsening violence has heavily impacted the humanitarian relief effort. (AFP)

**(24) Stranded...**

fired tear gas to push back the crowd and one officer fired warning shots in the air, a Reuters witness said.

Tensions boiled over at the weekend after one migrant, believed to be Moroccan, was electrocuted and badly burned when he climbed on top of a rail wagon.

More than 800,000 people, most fleeing war, persecution and poverty in the Middle East, have arrived in Europe this year, overwhelming the continent's ability to cope with the unprecedented stream of people. (Reuters)

**(25) UK Parliament...**

weaken the militants held responsible for recent attacks in Paris, Beirut, Egypt and elsewhere.

Prime Minister David Cameron, confident of winning approval, has accused legislative opponents of sympathizing with terrorists.

That has sparked a backlash, particularly in the opposition Labour Party, whose leader, Jeremy Corbyn, opposes any expansion of the military role. A bruising debate began Wednesday morning in Parliament, with a vote expected late in the evening after more than 10 hours of discussion. Attacks may start within days if authorized by Parliament.

Andreas Krieg, assistant professor in the Department of Defense Studies at King's College London, cautioned that the use of additional air power against Islamic State militants may have little impact without the presence of a ground force with strong ties to the local civilian population. (AP)