

(1) Obama is...

option that is being most seriously considered is a proposal made this past summer by Gen. Martin Dempsey, then the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to keep 3,000 to 5,000 troops for the counterterrorism mission.

The officials said that the Pentagon had also presented other options that range from just an embassy force of about 1,000, which mainly protects American diplomats in Kabul, to maintaining the current force of roughly 9,800, which would also allow American forces to continue training and advising the Afghans.

But the Obama administration is also likely to be wary of continued involvement in Afghanistan. Despite being in the country for 14 years, and training Afghan troops—an effort that has cost 65\$ billion—Afghanistan remains restive. The inability of Afghan security forces to hold onto Kunduz in the face of a long-planned Taliban onslaught are only likely to raise more questions about what the U.S. hopes to achieve in the country.

The Taliban formally announced Wednesday that it had withdrawn from Kunduz. Afghan security forces managed to retake the city with help from U.S. airstrikes and special forces, but the Taliban attributed its withdrawal to protecting “civilians from bombings and prolonging it [the battle] is a waste of humans and ammunitions.” (Agencies)

(2) Ghani Vows ...

local products,” Ghani said. He maintained that developing the sector was a top priority for government and that all the requirements of foodstuff for security forces will, in the next two years, be from local products only.

“We have drafted plans to include local products in procurement agreements of police and army within one year, and this process will reach 100 percent in the next two years,” he added.

Meanwhile, a number of women farmers called on the government to help improve women’s economic conditions in villages.

“Lots of work is needed to be done to support women in agriculture. There are lots of problems that need to be solved,” said Nazifa, a participant at the event. The exhibition meanwhile will be held over the next three days and 200 different types of agricultural products are on display. (Tolonews)

(3) UN Official ...

of families were reportedly displaced from the northern city of Kunduz – the first city Taliban has seized in the past 14 years following their ousting in 2001.

“Afghanistan faces a long and challenging road to peace, stability and development,” said Ging. “But after thousands of lives lost and billions of dollars invested, it is imperative that we do not give up now. We must renew our commitment to supporting the people of Afghanistan on their difficult road to recovery.”

According to the UN official, Afghanistan “has a lot of overlapping humanitarian challenges” and as so far this year, about 130,000 people have been displaced in the country due to the ongoing conflict.

Despite urgent humanitarian assistance needed, Ging said the funding for action is currently standing at 204\$ million USD, which is less than 50 percent of what is needed.

“The international community has a commitment and a responsibility to Afghanistan for the medium and longer term and issues and the challenges are not going to be overcome quickly and therefore we have to have the resolve to stay the course,” he briefed reporters after his recent visit to Afghanistan and Pakistan. He warned the continuous deterioration of the humanitarian situation will likely jeopardize international community’s investment of billions of dollars already made in Afghanistan. (Tolonews)

(4) Taliban Threaten...

addition they issued death threats against all staff members and threatened to target the media organizations’ facilities.

The lawmakers however announced their support to the TV channels and urged

the government to take every possible measure to protect the lives of journalists – whom the Taliban declared their “military objectives.”

According to the MPs, the Taliban does not want the two TV channels to reveal their crimes to the nation.

“Our media outlets are being threatened because they showed the people the crimes committed by the Taliban,” said female lawmaker Raihana Azad said.

“We announce our support to the media and we want them to continue to reveal the crimes committed by the Taliban.”

Echoing Afghan media’s unanimous condemnation of the threat on Tuesday, where they made it clear that any attack on the media would be construed as a war crime, the MPs went one step further and said the threat itself was a crime.

“Taliban criminals threatened our two important TOLO and 1TV channels and this is a crime,” MP Iqbal Kohistani told the session. Calling Taliban and Daesh the servants of Pakistan, the MPs demanded the international community put pressure on Pakistan and Taliban to stop their “cold war.”

“Today everyone can clearly see the interference of Pakistan into Afghanistan matters. Taliban, Daesh and other groups are getting support from Pakistan,” said MP Osman Farahi.

In addition, the Speaker of the House Abdul Raouf Ibrahim asked security institutions to ensure the safety of journalists and media organizations.

“These two channels have done nothing except reveal the crimes of the Taliban,” Ibrahim said, urging the government to take immediate action to safeguard the media organizations.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Human Rights Watch (HRW) have also expressed their serious concerns at the recent threats against the two TV channels.

In a statement issued by UNAMA, the organization urged all parties to the conflict to respect and protect the right to freedom of expression. (Tolonews)

(5) EU Lashes ...

European Commission Vice President Frans Timmermans told reporters, in a message timed to reach the heads of state and government ahead of the summit in Brussels.

More than 500,000 people fleeing war or poverty have entered Europe this year, most of them via Greece and Italy, overwhelming border authorities and reception facilities. Under the media spotlight, EU leaders pledged last month to provide hundreds of millions of euros in aid for Syrian refugees and to tackle the problem at its roots, in Africa and Turkey.

In an effort to spur countries into action, the European Commission last month also sent 40 warning letters to members over their failure to properly implement EU asylum laws and procedures. None have replied.

At their summit – the fourth this year focused on the migration challenge – the leaders will debate ways to strengthen Europe’s borders to the outside world, including a possible EU border guard. (AP)

(6) Parliament Rejects...

collected more than 160 million AFS over a period of two weeks since the tax collection started on 23rd September.

The officials in the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology said they have employed a new system to ensure transparency in collection of tax.

“After many days of non-stop hard work, fortunately we have now a Semi-Real Time Data Management System in place that can give us detailed information on the number of subscribers and varying trends of the market activities; For example with MTN, AWCC and Salaam data we have found that more than %76 of subscribers are those who have charged 50 Afgs one time top up and the tax collected by these subscribers forms %62 of total amount.” Telecommunication Minister Abdul Razaq Wahidi told a press conference earlier this month.

The government’s decision to apply tax on mobile users comes as the telecommunication sector

has seen a remarkable growth in the country in the recent decade. More than 20 million people are reportedly subscribed to mobile phone services with 2 million of them using internet services across the country. (KP)

(7) Survey Shows...

farmers understand how dangerous that is for Afghanistan and how harmful it could be for the future of our country,” said Zabiullah Daim, media adviser to Afghanistan’s counter-narcotics minister.

The Taliban, which have been waging war against the Afghan government since 2001, are heavily involved in poppy cultivation and opium distribution.

Billions of dollars have been spent on counter-narcotics efforts in Afghanistan in the past decade, including programs encouraging farmers to switch to other cash crops like wheat, fruit and saffron. (AP)

(8) Taliban’s...

reporting all sides of the conflict,” said Dietz.

“Resorting to threats against reporters and the media outlets they represent has no place in such a conflict. It only serves to make the work that reporters have to carry out more dangerous,” he added.

“Threats against the media from any side, at any time, for whatever reason must be rejected in the strongest terms possible.”

CPJ promotes press freedom worldwide and defends the right of journalists to report the news without fear of reprisal. CPJ ensures the free flow of news and commentary by taking action wherever journalists are attacked, imprisoned, killed, kidnapped, threatened, censored, or harassed.

On Monday, the Taliban issued a statement and a video categorizing TOLO TV and 1TV as “military targets” and said all facilities, offices and staff are now considered military objects “which will be directly eliminated”.

This comes after the insurgent group, that was ousted from power in 2001, accused the TV channels of broadcasting false news on the siege of Kunduz.

TOLO TV and 1TV are both privately owned Afghan channels – with TOLO TV and TOLONews being the most watched channels in the country.

Close on the heels of the CPJ’s reaction was that by the international Human Rights Watch which also strongly condemned the Taliban’s threats and statement that employees of the two channels were now “enemy personnel” who would be “considered military objectives” to be “directly eliminated.”

Human Rights Watch said: “It’s an alarming new low, even for the Taliban, who have long threatened and killed journalists and other civilians,” adding that under international law, treating journalists and other civilians as military targets and deliberately attacking them constitutes a war crime.

The organization said that despite the achievements gained by the media in Afghanistan over the past 14 years, “that achievement is increasingly under threat”.

“The Taliban’s claim of having the ‘utmost respect for independent and impartial news outlets’ rings hollow when they threaten to target journalists for their work. They should publicly rescind their threat against the TV stations’ employees and acknowledge that negative coverage is no justification for targeting civilians,” said Human Rights Watch.

The European Union mission in Afghanistan has also condemned the threats. In a short statement on their twitter account they said: “The EU strongly rejects the recent statement of Taliban designating two Afghan media outlets as military targets. The EU condemns any attack against media and journalists as a breach of the international law. Any threat against a journalist or a media outlet is a threat against freedom of expression in Afghanistan.” (Tolonews)

(9) MP Claims...

Mansour stayed in Nawa District for five days to lead operation.

This was the first time he came to Afghanistan, even though, government knew about it but

no actions taken against him, Rahmani said.

Giving insight about the recent failed attack of Taliban on Ghazni city, Rahmani said that they “Taliban” planned to explode several car bombs and other militants to storm the provincial capital but security forces foiled the plan.

He said Taliban are now planning to attack Qara Bagh and Moqar districts.

Rahmani’s comments come after the Deputy Chief of Staff of Afghan National Army said that they prevented the arrival of Mullah Akhtar Mansour in northern Kunduz province.

General Murad Ali Murad said that Taliban planned to occupy the province’s capital for a few days and bring their supreme leader for a press conference to show that he is in Afghanistan.

Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour is believed to be in Pakistan. (KP)

(10) City Bank ...

ways of banking. We raised our capital from 58\$ million to 550\$ million throughout this period,” said head of the bank in a meeting with visiting Afghan delegation. Bank Shahr officials said if Afghanistan agrees they are ready to assist the country establish a similar bank to work for the city development and construction.

Afghanistan’s Minister of Urban Development and Housing Sayed Sadat Mansoor Naderi who is leading the delegation to Iran welcomed the offer.

“The development of your bank shows strong administration and commitment of service. I welcome and back your offer to provide similar facilities for the people in my country.” Naderi said.

Minister Naderi arrived in Iran on Saturday for the recruitment of Iranian investment for the housing projects in Afghanistan, expansion of cooperation for the roads and urban development, experience sharing, and looking at the affordable housing projects there. (KP)

(11) Afghan Girl...

drinking water for children in IDP camps.”

Aziza will compete with two other nominees – one from Liberia and Puerto Rico.

The International Children’s Peace Prize is an initiative of Marc Dullaert, Chairman and Founder of the Dutch KidsRights Foundation, and is awarded annually to a child, anywhere in the world, for his or her dedication to children’s rights. (Tolonews)

(12) Govt. will...

government’s responsibility. “The Media and their workers have an important role in flourishing of the democratic system, giving information to the citizens as well as in strengthening national and public interests; facilitating continuation of this important and sacred mission remains responsibility of the government,” the statement adds.

“The government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan reassures that in due consideration of the complete independence of the press, it will not hesitate to put every effort to ensure protection and safety of every journalist, as citizens of this country, and media organizations.”

Yesterday in a press conference, Afghan journalists warned of boycotting the coverage of Taliban news if they harm journalists or media organizations.

In a statement released on Monday, Taliban accused 1TV and Tolo television channels of propagating against them and threatened to attack them and their staff members.

“The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan from now onwards does not recognize Tolo and 1 TV channels as media outlets but designates them as military objectives due to their disrespectful and hostile actions towards the Afghan Mujahid nation.” The press release stated. “Hereafter all the reporters and associates of these channels will be deemed enemy personnel, all of their centers, offices and dispatched teams will be considered military objectives which will be directly eliminated.” The statement threatened. (KP)

(13) Taliban ...

a plan to leave up to 5,000 American troops in the war-torn country through 2016.

Gen. John F. Campbell, the commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, recommended during congressional testimony last week that Obama consider leaving a larger force in the country, citing the rise of the Islamic State and insurgent violence there.

“Based on conditions on the ground, I do believe we have to provide our senior leadership options different than the current plan we are going with,” Campbell, who has developed multiple options for leaving more U.S. troops in Afghanistan, told the Senate Armed Services Committee. (Agencies)

(14) MSF Repeats...

in frontline hospitals all over the world,” said Liu in the statement. The U.S. airstrikes have destroyed the main building of MSF’s Trauma Centre in Kunduz and the hospital is no longer operational. This left tens of thousands of people without access to emergency medical and surgical care in a city devastated by weeks of intense fighting.

The IHFFC has sent letters to the governments of the United States and Afghanistan officially offering the commission’s services and awaits their response, the statement added. (Xinhua)

(15) NDS Arrests...

the insurgents planned to send to Pakistan for terrorist training, the statement adds.

These children were brought in to the city from Shigal District of Kunar province under the pretext of religious studies by specific individuals, the statement states. They were later returned to their families. (KP)

(16) Upcoming...

Germany, Russia, and Ukraine) on the situation in the East of Ukraine, and the work on completing the Economic and Monetary Union will also be on the two-day summit agenda. (Xinhua)

(17) Roadside ...

happened in the eastern Khost province Wednesday morning had left six civilians injured, a local official said.

“Six people, all of whom are civilians, sustained injuries as a roadside bomb struck a vehicle of villagers council of Ismael Khil district, Khost province at around 10:20 a.m. local time today,” district governor Yunus Zadran told Xinhua.

He also blamed Taliban militants for organizing the bloody bombing, saying the armed outfit by conducting subversive activities attempts to terrorize the locals

The armed militants also opened fire and killed a traffic police officer and injured another in Taliban hotbed, the southern Helmand province, Wednesday morning, an official said.

“The deadly attack took place in the main bazaar of Greshk district, Helmand province at around 08:30 a.m. local time. The attacker riding a motorcycle fled the scene shortly after spraying bullets on their victims,” district governor Fahim Musazai told Xinhua, adding the dead and the injured were shifted to a provincial hospital.

Musazai, however, blamed Taliban militants for the attack. However, the armed outfit has yet to claim responsibility.

Taliban militants fighting the government to regain power have speeded up activities over the past couple of months and have captured a few districts in parts of the war-torn country.

Taliban militants who retreated from the northern Kunduz province on Tuesday after suffering heavy casualties at the hand of government forces launched massive offensive on the eastern Ghazni’s provincial capital Ghazni city on Monday and sporadic fighting is still continuing, according to local officials. (Xinhua)

(18) Iranian ...

people and the anti-terror coalition led by Russia. Meanwhile, Boroujerdi stressed that the Iranian economic and military support to Syria will continue. (Xinhua)

(19) Clinton Wins ...

administration, among which about half were personal and thus deleted. The Clinton camp turned over the other half, 30,000 emails in total, to the State Department last year.

Clinton’s Republican rivals have long claimed that Clinton had deleted certain work-related emails, mainly on the 2012 Benghazi attacks that claimed four American lives, including the U.S. ambassador to Libya, to protect herself. (Xinhua)

(20) Turkey, ...

the return of the refugees to their homeland, the two leaders agreed.

“If a safe zone had been created in northern Syria three years ago, millions of Syrians wouldn’t have left their country,” Davutoglu stressed, as some EU countries are beset as well by a sudden influx of refugees. (Xinhua)

(21) Palestinians...

and freedom,” Abbas said.

He referred to the current wave of violence as a “fierce campaign that targets our existence with uprooting, settlement building and targeting al-Aqsa mosque with Judization and division.” Abbas concluded by sending his condolences to the families of Palestinians killed by Israel, and expressing hope that next year would see the independent Palestinian state established.

Violence erupted mid-September over the flashpoint holy site of al-Aqsa mosque compound.

Palestinians say Israel’s measures on the ground aim to change and divide the compound by allowing Jewish prayers to be conducted, contrary to the status-quo. Israel said that these remarks were untrue. (Xinhua)

(22) IS Battles ...

time as they are bombed by Russian jets and are bracing for a broad ground offensive by the army.

“There are mobilizations by the regime in most parts of Aleppo, particularly in Bashkoy,” he said, referring to another town north of Aleppo, which before Syria’s civil war began in 2011 was the country’s biggest city and a major commercial and industrial center.

“There were advances (by Islamic State) at dawn but we were able to recover Ahras entirely. There are battles in Tel Jabin,” said Ali, speaking to Reuters via an internet messaging system.

Iran has sent thousands of additional troops into Syria in recent days to bolster one offensive that is underway in Hama province and in preparation for another in the Aleppo area, two senior regional officials told Reuters.

In another sign of Iran’s central role in support of President Bashar al-Assad, a team of Iranian lawmakers arrived in Damascus on Wednesday, and pictures circulated on social media showed the head of the Revolutionary Guards’ Quds Force, Qassem Soleimani, in western Syria. (Reuters)

(23) Russian...

by the United States, unable to resist attempts of the developing countries to gain a stronger position within the World Trade Organization, opted for creating regional alliances like Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership (TTIP). Twelve Pacific Rim countries reached a TPP agreement on Oct. 5 to create the largest free trade area of the world, while the TTIP, a free trade deal involving the United States and the European Union, is still in negotiations. (Xinhua)

(24) Pakistan ...

of an anti-Shiite group behind some of Pakistan’s worst sectarian atrocities was killed in a shoot-out with police, along with 13 other militants.

Malik Ishaq and his fellow Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) militants, including senior commanders, were shot dead in in Punjab.

And Islamic State militants were behind a brutal attack that killed 45 Shiites in Karachi in May, a Pakistani official told AFP Monday, despite the government’s long-held stance that the jihadist group does not have a presence in the country. (Agencies)