

## (1) Afghan War...

three sectors that are extremely vulnerable, he added.

Analysts and human rights activists meanwhile speculate that this year's cost of war will far exceed that of 2014. Women's Rights Activist Najiba Ayobi said: "It is very clear that this year the cost of war and fundamentalism is too high because of ongoing conflict." The findings of this study shows that 60 percent of the national budget is being spent on security and only four percent on the health sector.

According to the report, there is an extra budget allocated to the ministries of defense and interior affairs, the national security council and the National Directorate of Security (NDS). Ministry of Defense gets an additional \$1.5 billion USD over their annual budget; the Ministry of Interior gets almost \$1.2 billion USD extra; National security Council gets over \$1.5 million USD and the NDS an additional \$200 million.

In addition, civilians have also paid a really high price - since 2001, an estimated 26,272 people have been killed in the conflict. (Tolonews)

## (2) Massoud Claims ...

management," Massoud said while meeting ANA commanders who recently fought in Kunduz.

Massoud's remarks came a day after Ghani ordered the appointment of a number of key military officials to fill posts which were being run by caretakers.

Ghani has however said on different occasions that he would distance security institutions from politics.

Political interference in appointments and promotions aren't acceptable, Ghani said while visiting war-hit city of Kunduz last week.

In a recent move, the defense ministry recommended a number of proposals to Ghani in an effort to bring about necessary reforms within the ministry. But on Sunday night, Ghani promoted 61 ANA officers - some to heads of departments and some as generals - in a bid to increase capacity building, maintain security and protect national sovereignty.

The Ministry of Defense welcomed the appointments and said it was important to fill some key vacancies in efforts to curb militancy and to strengthen security.

"Sixty to 70 generals retired last year and their posts remained vacant. A decision was taken to fill some vacancies," said a spokesman for the ministry of defense Gen. Habiburrahman Afzal.

Meanwhile, a number of ANA commanders who participated in the Kunduz war have complained about what they say are serious issues soldiers fighting the Taliban are facing. One of their main concerns was that reinforcements took so long to reach Kunduz.

"One of the key problems is that reinforcements did not arrive quickly so that we could secure the area and move forward. We had to clear the area and move forward and take control of more areas. But we were supposed to defend the same areas as reinforcements took time to reach us. If they had been there the enemy would not have been able to confront us," Khalid Amir, a commander of the Afghan special forces said.

Military analysts meanwhile accuse government of establishing the ANA according to ethnic structures. They have called for a nonpolitical army.

"We are still a long way from having nonpolitical police and army. Currently we do not have nonpolitical police or army. Even the country's political structures have been formulated on the basis of certain ethnic and ideological perspectives," military commentator Jawed Kohistani said.

"Today we need to have such an army [nonpolitical] keeping in mind that honesty, patriotism, qualifications and social justice are required for the appointments," Kohistani said. (Tolonews)

## (3) Breakthrough...

of Pakistan and other stakeholders and that some progress is expected in the coming days.

"We have kept saying this for a long time that eventually we will have to go back to reconciliation," he said. Now, he claimed, there would be some 'breakthrough' soon. "We are optimistic that detractors will fail and the reconciliation process will resume soon," The Express Tribune quotes the unnamed official as saying.

The revival of the fragile peace process would be one of the key agenda items during Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's upcoming visit to the US, the official said.

Mohammad Nawaz Sharif who left Islamabad for Washington this morning is expected to return home on October 25.

President Obama had said last week that he would urge Sharif to convince

Taliban to resume peace talks with Afghan government. (KP)

## (4) Health Minister...

Jirga (Lower House of Parliament) to answer questions over the spike in drug addicts in Afghanistan.

Feroz warned that unless the guilty officials are brought to justice, all efforts to fight the scourge will be useless.

"As long as government officials are involved in distributing drugs to addicts all efforts will be undermined which is unfortunately a big challenge," he said.

In addition, he complained the government has not budgeted for building facilities to treat addicts.

He also said that more than 80 percent of drug addicts in the country have received treatment but that at least 60 percent have gone back to their old habits.

"Until we are provided with a budget, our strategy to treat addicts will fail," he said adding that the ministry of finance has not given his ministry enough money to deal with this problem.

Feroz states that despite 45,000 addicts being treated a year, the health ministry's efforts to curb the problem are not helping.

Meanwhile, the MPs also complained about the lack of drug addiction treatment centers in the country, which they directly link to the sharp increase in addicts in the country.

Robaba Parwani, an MP, said: "The number of drug addicts increase daily in Kabul and there are not enough centers to treat them."

However other lawmakers stressed the need for the counter-narcotics law to be amended in order to resolve the issue.

Naeem Lalai, the head of the Wolesi Jirga's committee on counter-narcotics said: "As long as profound amendments are not brought to the counter-narcotics law, all our anti-drugs efforts will fail."

Meanwhile, deputy minister of interior affairs on counter-narcotics Baz Mohammad Ahmadi has linked the increase in the number of drug addicts to the insecurity in the country.

"Unfortunately drugs have a direct link to terrorism," he said.

Insecurity, insurgent attacks, withdrawal of foreign forces and government neglect over counter-narcotics has created problems in their anti-drugs drive, Ahmadi said.

He added that the poppy cultivation has however dropped by 19 percent in 2015 compared to last year and that drug production has dropped by 48 percent compared to last year. (Tolonews)

## (5) Iran Ready ...

Agency (AISA) noted that In an attempt to boost foreign trade, Afghanistan needs to expand trade relations with the neighboring country and Iran's role is valuable in investing in Afghanistan.

Iran Chamber of Commerce has also vowed that Iran's exports and investments will increase in Afghanistan.

According to presented statistics, Iranian goods imports to Afghanistan reach to more than \$2 billion annually which have been said that in contrast, Afghanistan's export to Iran is in a low level.

Previously, President Ashraf Ghani in his visit to Iran urged Iran's private sector to invest in Afghanistan.

During his recent visit to Tehran, Afghan and Iranian presidents stressed on their will for starting a new chapter in relations between the two countries and stepping up cooperation to deal with challenges common for both countries.

The National Unity Government's efforts to improve relations with neighboring Iran is coming as a follow-up to former president Hamid Karzai's visit to Tehran in 2013.

The two leaders agreed on enhanced efforts by the two countries to tackle the compounding security threats posed by terrorism as well as drug production and trafficking.

The two countries have also signed agreements of cooperation in other areas such as refugees and economic ties between the two countries. (ATN)

## (6) Nations to...

national deployments are not in doubt, he said.

"Several of our largest contributors have already communicated with us that they will remain in their current posture," Breedlove told Reuters.

He declined to give details. But a second senior NATO official said Germany, Turkey and Italy were willing to remain in Afghanistan at their current levels.

Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi said last week that Italy is considering keeping its soldiers in Afghanistan for another year. The official said that "our understanding is that is going to happen."

Germany, as the top NATO-country contributor, has around 850 troops in

Afghanistan, followed by Italy with 760 and about 500 for Turkey, according to the latest NATO data.

"We should make any changes on our troop structure based on conditions on the ground, not on schedules," Breedlove said. "Other nations are already ringing in that they are committed."

Unlike the United States, NATO has never set an end date to its "Resolute Support" training mission in Afghanistan, currently a 6,000-strong force that also includes troops from some 40 countries, including NATO members, the United States and their allies.

A formal decision is expected to come at NATO's next meeting of its foreign ministers in Brussels in early December, a third official said.

Although Afghan forces have recaptured the strategic northern city of Kunduz, its brief fall to the Taliban last month underscored concerns about the capabilities of Afghanistan's security forces.

A U.S. military strike in Kunduz that hit an Afghan hospital run by Doctors Without Borders, or Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), also generated international outcry and underscored the perils of leaving a fragile country too quickly.

U.S. President Barack Obama had aimed to withdraw all but a small U.S. force before leaving office, pinning his hopes on training and equipping local forces to contain Taliban militants fighting to return to power.

But now he will slow plans to draw down U.S. troops from Afghanistan and instead keep the current force of 9,800 through most of 2016 before beginning to trim levels from 2017.

Washington has spent around \$65 billion on preparing the fledgling Afghan security forces of about 350,000 personnel.

That is still far from complete, with Germany's Defence Minister Ursula von der Leyen saying last week in Brussels that NATO needed to make sure the Afghans were capable of keeping their country stable. (Reuters)

## (7) Abdullah Meets ...

Chief Executive explained the stance of the National Unity Government.

Matters relating good governance, reforms, electronic national identity card, economic programs of the government, peace process, relations with Pakistan, fall of Kunduz, security developments and EU cooperation with Afghanistan were discussed. Besides stressing for reforms in the government, the ambassadors assured EU its firm cooperation with the National Unity Government in implementing its programs. (BNA)

## (8) Drug Dealing...

bosses remain undisclosed, we will continue to see such people within our system and in the leadership," a university lecturer Abdul Hamid Safwat said. (Tolo News)

## (9) ANSF t...

tired to launch more of its attacks on the villages and districts of the country.

The 2015 fighting season between the Taliban and Afghan security forces is turning out to be the bloodiest on record since 2001.

Insecurity has significantly increased throughout the country, civilian deaths have shot up, and the Afghan security forces are taking large, and potentially unsustainable casualties.

The pressure from the calendar apparently led Afghanistan to begin preparing operation plans for the three months winter-offensive.

Heavy snows and freezing temperatures could arrive as soon as next two months.

Meanwhile, Afghan army commanders have also stress on winter operations to destroy and eliminate terrorist groups.

"We have our own projections and our operational plans in three months of winter season," said Gen. Abdul Rahman, deputy of defense ministry's department of strategic public relations.

However, winter will paralyze movement by most Afghans in the hills, including both the anti-Taliban fighters and the millions of Afghan civilians who are liable to face acute hardship or death in a harsh winter coming after the longest drought in the country's memory.

In October 2015, President Barack Obama announced to keep around 5,500 troops in Afghanistan beyond 2016.

This comes as the Afghan government tries to wind down its military operations against terrorist groups; which Afghanistan's future remains precarious at best. (ATN)

## (10) NATO Launches...

demonstrate that NATO "can deal with everything from conventional military engagements to more subtle hybrid warfare techniques and propaganda."

Vershbow said the geopolitical situation is considerably more unstable than the last time such large-scale exercises were held during the Cold War, citing Russia's annexation of Crimea, support of eastern Ukrainian separatists and attacks against moderate rebels in Syria, as well as the spread of terror groups into Libya and Syria.

"In this new world, NATO's allies and partners must be able to move quickly and act decisively," he said.

The Sicilian city Trapani will be the operational center for the exercise that begins Wednesday and runs through early November, extending into Spain, Portugal and adjacent waters. The exercise envisions a fictitious invasion by a large country of a small alliance member, creating a crisis with religious and ethnic dimensions, threatening energy supplies and navigational freedom with risks of terrorism and cyberattacks.

At a news conference, Vershbow denied that the fictitious aggressor was Russia.

"That is not to say that some of the challenges we are addressing and testing our forces for are not analogous to the challenges we would face were we to have a conflict with Russia," he said. (AP)

## (11) Karzai wants...

unfortunately, yes, there is more radicalism in Afghanistan, and indeed, in the whole region, than there was ever before. That is why I've been calling for a long time now for re-thinking of the strategy in the fight against terrorism; for re-evaluating whether this struggle against terrorism is a failure or if there's a broader issue at hand here that we don't know yet about or we don't understand. Therefore, you're right, it's very much time, rather long overdue, to reconsider the whole question and to find answers together with major countries in this region, meaning Russia, China and India. In other words: the U.S. and its NATO allies must now begin to consult with major powers and explain it.

The next question Shevardnadze asked was whether the world's greatest powers have failed in Afghanistan.

Karzai responded: We must first find out if this has been a failure, but if this is not described as a failure, by the U.S. and its allies, then we need to have explanations from them on what else is the reason. Therefore, we have questions, too, here in Afghanistan, as people have questions around the world. There's no doubt that radicalism has increased, there's no doubt that extremism has increased, there's no doubt that suffering has increased, especially in Afghanistan and in the Middle East, so we need answers and we need to scratch our heads and explain it.

In her third question, Shevardnadze pointed to the increasing attacks of Taliban and the fall of northern Kunduz city.

Karzai said: That was very unfortunate for people of Kunduz, and then the suffering that followed, for the civilians and the bombing of the Medecins Sans Frontieres Hospital - all of that should bring us back to your first question on how come there's an increasing radicalism and who is responsible for this. We know that such a large force cannot ever get together and launch such a major operation against a major Afghan city without foreign backing. Now, if this foreign backing, as we suspect, came from Pakistan, then, our allies, the U.S., who are now having bases here, who have a bilateral security agreement with Afghanistan, in which there's a clear reference to helping and defending Afghanistan if there's a foreign aggression against Afghanistan, that has to be then looked at and explained - both by the U.S. and by Afghans as well. Therefore, we need to explain to the Afghan people the fact of the matter.

When asked about Afghan National Security and Defense Forces, Karzaid said: The Afghan forces are, no doubt, heroic, no doubt they fight very well, no doubt they are trying to defend their country, but the Afghan forces are not properly equipped, they don't have the right weaponry and right elements needed, as far as the military training and all of that is concerned to provide a good defence of the country. But, even with a very strong force, if there's continued foreign intervention, and that intervention is left unanswered for years, you're doomed to get into situation like we are in Afghanistan. This has been one of my major issues with the U.S., with other allies: first, the training of the Afghan forces, the proper equipping of the Afghan forces, and then, addressing the question of sanctuaries beyond Afghanistan. As long as that continues, we will continue to suffer, meaning: the sanctuaries abroad, and the helping from abroad - as long as that continues, we will suffer.

Shevardnadze asked Karzai on whether he believes on peace talk with Taliban.

He said: Absolutely. Peace is imperative, the talks are imperative. Those Taliban, who are Afghans, who belong to this country, are requested to come back to Afghanistan and free themselves from foreign use, from foreign exploitation, and come back to their own country and rebuild this country along with other countrymen. There's no other way. I hope, sense will prevail in them, I hope patriotism will prevail in them and they will participate in rebuilding of this country and bringing peace in this country. Shevardnadze went on to ask Karzai about America's policy in Afghanistan.

He said: The double policy, for me, when I said it, meant that the U.S., on the one hand, said that terrorism did not emanate from Afghanistan that these sanctuaries were beyond Afghanistan. Admiral Mullen, then a U.S. Military Chief of Staff, said in a statement some years ago that one of the Afghan groups, the Haqqani network was a proven arm of the ISI. If that was the case, then how come they provided support to the ISI as well and to the Pakistani military as well? So it was this that caused... and other facts that were available to us, that we have heard from Americans time and again, that make us suspicious. You cannot be helping the victim and the perpetrator of an atrocity in the same time. If they are with us, fighting against terrorism, they should not be with those who are supporting terrorism. (KP)

## (12) Joint Special ...

who were officers of the contingent, were appreciated and praised by Special Envoy to President Ahmad Zia Massoud. The contingent by recapturing Kunduz city and fighting terrorists has been able to beat enemies of the people in the city; therefore, they were appreciated by Special Envoy to President. Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by giving lots of sacrifices have been able to recapture Kunduz city and killed a large number of the enemies. (BNA)

## (13) Taliban Hid ...

bombing," Kate Stegeman, MSF's communications director in Afghanistan, said Monday: The group said no staff had reported a Taliban flag on any wall of the compound.

MSF has acknowledged that it treated wounded Taliban fighters at the Kunduz hospital, but it insists no weapons were allowed in. Afghans who worked there have told the AP that no one was firing from within. (Agencies)

## (14) Signs of ...

justice, tranquillity and education," Dost stated. "He used to impose unjust penalties, closed educational institutions, maltreated people and indulged in such actions that cannot be justified," the report published by The Express Tribune further states.

"He is doing all this in the name of Islam and has EARNED a bad name for Da'ish. Therefore, I consider it as an Islamic obligation to withdraw allegiance to Saeed," the report adds. Mawlawi Abdul Rahim Muslim Dost, a former U.S. prisoner kept at Guantanamo Bay detention center, was with Hizb-i-Islami and Taliban before joining Daesh. (KP)

## (15) 5 Associates...

lah S/O Khalid and Samiullah alias Khanjar original residents of Kunduz province.

The press release further states that the arrested group was killing imminent figures, planting landmines and torching schools.

NDS statements usually do not contain exact date of the achievements but they come after recent activities. (KP)

## (16) US F-16 ...

no injuries and safely returned to base."

The F-16 fighter jet was flying over Syed Karam district when it came under the enemy fire with photographs shared on social media purportedly showing a group of insurgents standing near the fuel tanks and munitions of the aircraft.

The photographs were first shared on Twitter late on Tuesday night, indicating two 'drop-tanks' and air-to-ground missile with two other bombs.

The Taliban group claimed a fighter jet was shot down by the group's fighters but the coalition forces rejected the report as baseless.

The incident took place a day after a NATO helicopter crashed in capital Kabul leaving five personnel of the Resolute Support mission dead.

It also followed a day after an aircraft of the Afghan National Army crashed in central Bamyan province of Afghanistan. (KP)

## (17) Europe's ...

president said, adding that "the request for asylum and getting it is more respected in Africa since some three million refugees have found safety and protection that they had lost in their countries."

The co-president of the Alliance for Liberals and Democrats for Europe, Pacific, Africa and the Caribbean (ALDE PAC) Louis Michel said "Europe should fulfil its moral obligation to humanity by welcoming refugees running away from war and violence."

"We should also welcome economic migrants, it is a challenge that can be solved in a win-win arrangement between Europe and Africa," he concluded. (Xinhua)

## (18) US Still...

"I don't have any specific expectations other than to try and move things forward and that will depend on conversations themselves," said Kerry, who said the United States was "not seeking a new change or outsiders to come in."

Kerry's visit to Spain follows a recent visit by Spanish King Felipe VI and his wife Queen Letizia to Washington DC, and an agreement signed between the two countries to increase the U.S. military base at Moron de la Frontera in the south of Spain. (Xinhua)

## (19) Kerry Says ...

maintaining the status quo at the compound, which has long been under Muslim religious administration while Jews are permitted to visit the site but not pray there.

"We are not seeking a new change or outsiders to come in, I don't think Israel or Jordan wants that and we're not proposing it," he said. "What we need is clarity."

Israel has deployed troops in and around Jerusalem and erected roadblocks in Palestinian neighborhoods in East Jerusalem to try and stop the most serious outbreak of Palestinian street attacks since an uprising in 2000-2005. (Reuters)

## (20) Britain...

enough is being done to counter extremism.

A 15-year old boy, thought to be Britain's youngest person convicted of terrorism, was sentenced earlier this month to a minimum of five years in jail for plotting an IS-inspired "massacre" on an Anzac Day parade in Australia.

Cameron called on the Muslim community to do more to combat the threat. (AFP)

## (21) Turkish ...

on Sept. 30, said the drone was not its asset.

Davutoglu said that the downing of the drone had a "deterrent" effect and that he hoped Russia would show a "more careful" stance after earlier incursions.

Turkey joined the U.S.-led air raids on Islamic State in July, and the United States is arming the PYD in its battle against the IS. (Xinhua)

## (22) French...

Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

There has been an uptick in the number of near-miss type incidents involving NATO and Russian military aircraft since the Ukraine conflict caused a surge in tensions. (Reuters)

## (23) 1 Suicide ...

the report said. It said the suspects were about to join IS in Syria and Iraq in a short time period.

Turkey has stepped up anti-terror operations across the country following the Ankara bombings. (Xinhua)

## (24) Nuclear ...

suspected was aimed at developing a nuclear bomb. Iran denies this charge.

In July Iran also agreed to reduce its stockpile of low-enriched uranium (LEU) to 300 kg of 3.67-percent fissile purification for 15 years. Weapons grade uranium must be enriched to around 90 percent fissile purity. (Reuters)

## (25) China to...

northern Pacific Ocean."

Established in 1992, PICES is an intergovernmental scientific organization aiming to promote and coordinate marine research in the northern North Pacific and adjacent seas. Its present members include China, the United States, Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea and Russia. (Xinhua)

## (26) Tajikistan's ...

with his or her own (often commercial) private activities, and in some instances may not even be a citizen of the sending country. Such consular appointments are usually given the title of honorary consul. (Asia-Plus)