

US keeping troops in Afghanistan till next year to eliminate ISIS: Obama

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The United States is maintaining a large number of American troops in Afghanistan in order to wipe out the Islamic State (ISIS) in the country.

Barack Obama

"In Afghanistan, one of the reasons that I decided to largely maintain our current force posture was so that we could keep eliminating ISIL's (ISIS) presence there," President Barack Obama said on Thursday.

"We delivered another blow last month when we took out a top ISIL leader in Afghanistan, Umar Khalifa," he said.

Obama recently announced his intention to keep 8,500 American troops in Afghanistan till January next year as against the 5,500 decided earlier.

Obama said every time there is a terrorist attack he feels disappointment, because he would like to prevent all of them.

"That's true not just when the attacks are in Europe or in the United States. When you read stories about attacks in Lebanon, Iraq or Afghanistan, or distant parts of the world that don't get as much attention, they get my attention," he said.

"Because that is somebody's kid, somebody's mom, somebody who is just going about his business and mindlessly, senselessly, this person was murdered. So I haven't gotten numb to it. It bugs me whenever it happens, and wherever it happens," he said replying to a question.

"We are constantly pushing ourselves to see are there additional ideas that we can deploy to defeat this threat," he added.

- (With PTI inputs)