

(1) Martyrs Week, ...

He added that ethnic and linguistic differences should not be fueled during the current situation in the country.

However, politics did enter the ceremony.

Former president Hamid Karzai reacted to the new US strategy on Afghanistan and said Afghanistan should not become a competition ground for foreign countries.

Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah also called for the nation to stand united and sent a message to all militants to join the peace process. "Come and stand besides your people. No one here would see you as a stranger if you stop standing by strangers," he said referring to militants.

Former jihadi leader Abdul Rab Rassoul Sayyaf meanwhile said he is concerned about recent moves by some insurgent groups to try to divide ethnic groups in the country.

He called on the people and politicians to stand united and accept each other.

The head of the High Peace Council Mohammad Karim Khalili said people are united but that politicians are fueling differences among them. He said intellectuals, religious scholars and politicians sometimes are behind differences among the people.

He said a strategy which includes peoples interests should be drawn up in order to forge peace with the Taliban.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Mohaqiq, the second deputy of the chief executive, said the war against insurgents needs a clear strategy.

He added that the ideology which drives terrorist groups to violence must be tackled.

Earlier in the day Abdullah laid a wreath at the Resistance Monument at Massoud Square. (Tolonews)

(2) AAF to Receive ...

delivery support, pilot training and maintenance", the Diplomat reported.

The estimated completion date of the contract is 2022.

According to a MD Helicopters press release, the first deliveries under the contract will be 30 MD 530Fs for an estimated \$177 million. The first part of the order is expected to be completed by September 2019.

"Mission Equipment for these aircraft will include a ballistic crash worthy fuel system, consisting of a main fuel tank and a 38-gallon Auxiliary Fuel Tank, high capacity landing gear, FN Herstal Weapons Management System, DillonAero Mission Configurable Armament System (MCAS) weapons plank and Fixed-Forward Sighting System, Rohde and Schwarz M3AR Tactical Mission Radio, and FN Herstal .50 caliber HMP 400 Machine Gun Pods and M260 7-shot rocket pods," MD Helicopters noted in a press statement released on Wednesday.

Earlier this week, Gen. Phillip A. Stewart, commander of Train, Advise, Assist Command said in an interview with TOLONews that \$7 billion will be spent on the Afghan Air Force over the next four years.

"We expect the Afghan Air Force to be fully professional, sustainable and capable and independent and that's our whole goal here," he said. Under the new aid package, the number of aircraft owned by the AAF will be doubled in the next four years.

This comes after Major General Abdul Raziq Sherzai, the commander of Kandahar Air Brigade, last week said more military aircraft should be delivered to the hard-pressed Afghan security forces who have been battling insurgent groups in their traditional heartlands in Kandahar and Helmand provinces for weeks. He said that the Kandahar Air Brigade, despite having inadequate facilities on hand, continue to back the ground forces in their campaign against the militants in Helmand and Kandahar provinces, where in recent months violence dramatically increased following the Taliban's

new attempt to seize control of the strategic province of Helmand in the south and infiltrate neighboring provinces.

The Kandahar Air Brigade that operates under the command of 205 Atal Army Corps has about 20 different types of aircrafts - a figure security officials claim is nothing near what they need to deal with the current scale of security issues that have undermined large swaths of land in the south. (Tolonews)

(3) Taliban Ban ...

woman who must be accompanied by a family elder can go to visit a doctor."

Another resident, Jabbar, said the Taliban had imposed ban on women to visit the bazaar.

"Every Sunday, there was a crowded bazaar here. Men and women from nearby Allasai and Nibrab districts would come for shopping, but now the bazaar wears a deserted look after the Taliban ban."

He said the Taliban removed curtains the shopkeepers had installed in front of their shops to show women what they wanted to purchase hidden from people's eyes.

Other residents offered similar accounts. Afghan Local Police (ALP) commander in Tagab, Asad Agha Sapi, also confirmed the Taliban's announcement, but said the ban on women was yet to be implemented. But Kapisa police spokesman Mohammad Ayub Yousafzai said security forces existed in the Tagab bazaar and the Taliban's ban on women remained rejected.

The Taliban have formally said nothing about barring women from going to the bazaar, but local militants say the ban is aimed at 'preventing 'immorality'.

The Taliban last year banned watching television in the district. (Pajhwok)

(4) IEC Assesses ...

with them to their areas and the team have returned safely after the assessment (of polling centers in those areas)," the head of IEC secretariat Imam Mohammad Warimach told TOLONews on Friday.

Election monitoring organizations criticized the IEC over the assessment of polling centers areas which are out of government's control, saying that holding election in those centers will be a big problem for the electoral process.

"They (IEC) say 33 districts are insecure, but we believe the number of is much more. In these districts, it is better to use technological packages," said Habibullah Shinwari, member of the Election Watch Organization of Afghanistan (EWA).

"Taliban's control in a number of areas will pave the way for extensive fraud and it will result in big political crisis," Zabihullah Farhang, a political activist, said. However, Warimach said the first steps to prepare the voters' list and hold the upcoming parliamentary elections has been taken by the IEC. "We hope that government purchases the equipment for the commission and after that we will prepare the voters' list which is an important part of the process and will help us to ensure elections' transparency," he said.

The parliamentary and district councils' elections are scheduled to be held next year in July. (Tolonews)

(5) Sayyaf Warns...

repercussions and will encourage the enemy to carry out more destructive activities like jackals. Sayyaf further added that the country and the nation are not only facing the menace of terrorism and extremism but corruption and debauchery also remains as one of the key issues threatening the country.

He warned that the current fight will not yield positive results unless the nation unites to fight the corruption and growing debauchery.

In other parts of his speech, he expressed regarding the efforts to spark differences among the people through ethnic divisions and other

means.

He said preferring a specific ethnic group or language is not a crime but using them to spark divisions is a major sin and crime.

Sayyaf also called on Taliban to join peace process and keep their weapons and ammunition for the defense of the country.

Sayyaf is one of the most influential jihadi leaders and has been harshly criticizing the Taliban group for their insurgency activities, calling their so called jihad as a move against the principles of Islam. (KP)

(6) Pakistan, China...

out to address the Afghan issue." He said peace in Afghanistan is in the best interest of Pakistan, China and the entire region.

Wang, who is hosting Asif on his first trip abroad as foreign minister, said China, Pakistan and Afghanistan will hold new high-level talks this year to push forward settlement negotiations even while the US deploys thousands of more troops. (Pajhwok)

(7) A Day of Careless ...

off by security forces.

Kabul residents blasted security departments for not having controlled the supporters, who had been putting people's lives at risk, they said. "Everyone is afraid. Afghanistan is not safe and then they fire in this situation," a Kabul resident, Ashraf Ghulam Alizada, said.

Another resident Mohammad Rafi Osmani said there could be three reasons for the lack of control. He said "either the government does not want to stop the convoys, or government is involved in it, or it cannot (stop the gunmen)."

Meanwhile, Kabul garrison commander Mohammad Afzal Aman said they concentrated mostly on maintaining the security of the Loya Jirga tent, where the main ceremony was held.

Aman said security forces had identified a number of culprits and would arrest them in the days to come.

"Myself and a number of officers and a group of soldiers came out to the streets to stop the firing. But unfortunately we couldn't find them. I also have heard that they have fired in parts of Kabul," said Aman.

But residents have questioned why supporters have to drive through the streets firing into the air.

Dor Mohammad, a Massoud supporter, said government does not give them their dues and that they feel it is their right to shoot into the air.

"Our women have lost their husbands and our children are orphaned. We raise our voices and ask for justice, but government does not ensure our rights. Let them do this and take their rights in this way," said Dor Mohammad.

But in another part of the city, a number of residents commemorated Massoud's assassination in peace by giving food to the needy and reading the Quran. A number of artists also painted murals of Massoud on a wall in memory of him.

"We thought instead of creating problems and closing streets, it was better to deliver a good message to the people. We came here and painted pictures of the national hero on the wall to tell the people that the national hero was not familiar only with weapons and war," said Rafi Jasoor, one artist. (Tolonews)

(8) Hatred on the...

Linder in a statement said Wednesday "The design of the leaflets mistakenly contained an image highly offensive to both Muslims and the religion of Islam."

Gen. James further added "I sincerely apologize. We have the deepest respect for Islam and our Muslim partners worldwide."

He said an investigation would be held "to determine the cause of this incident and to hold the responsible party accountable." (KP)

(9) Artworks at Balkh ...

paintings have the context that there should be someone who opens the door of peace to the Afghan

people," said Saadiya, another participant of the exhibition.

Diyana, another participant, said she is was trained in the abstract art for one year.

"My artworks are about peace and a hope for the future," she said. The viewers at the exhibition who were mostly youths said they welcome the move by the art group.

"Such moves are giving encouragement to girls and women to move forward in their social life," said Sajjad, a resident of Balkh.

"Such exhibitions are good opportunities for girls who are able to have a strong role in the society," said Masih, a student. (Tolonews)

(10) Helmand University...

teacher training centres and education department facilities.

Tribal elder Matiullah Matai said two separate places in different areas of Helmand had been allocated to the university, but no work had been launched for the construction of buildings.

He said there was need for collective efforts by different stake holders to construct the land.

Governor Hayatullah Hayat said he would strive to resolve the dispute over the land allocated for the university. He promised the provincial government would soon re-allocate the land to the university and Helmand University would be made a slandered higher education facility. (Pajhwok)

(11) Biggest Solar...

Afghan and an Indian company. The project should be completed in one year.

After the implementation of the project, the solar power will be sold out to the DABS per megawatts less than seven cent (4.76 AFs) for 15 years and then it will be handed over to the electricity company.

"The USAID funds the project with \$10 million USD. The cost per megawatt should be less than seven and a half cents. We continue our efforts to provide the situation for the implementation of the project," said Amanullah Ghalib, head of the DABS.

Meanwhile, the contractor companies urged government to ensure the safety of the project.

"The project was delayed because it is a very big project and it is the first time that such a big project is being implemented in the country. We will do our best to implement it soon," said Naqibullah Hasanzai, head of the Afghan contractor company said.

Breshna officials said the project will provide electricity to Kandahar's industrial parks at the first stage after it is completed. (Tolonews)

(12) Acting Heads ...

wrangling and deals are to blame for not allowing professional people to be hired to these posts.

Syed Massoud Hussaini, a university teacher, told Pajhwok Afghan News the law had defined authorities of acting officials who could not work with full authority.

Currently heads of at least 10 departments, five district chiefs and four deputy district chiefs have been discharging their duty in acting capacity in Herat. The post of the deputy Herat governor has been vacant.

Syed Azem Kabarzani, a member of the Herat PC, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "I don't think the situation would improve until a centralized system of power exists. The president controls the entire power."

Abdul Qadir Kamel, political affairs expert, said most of the posts remained vacant or held by acting officials for political reasons. Had these posts been referred to the Administrative Reform Committee, suitable persons would have been hired on them in a transparent manner, he remarked.

Governor's spokesman Jilani Farhad said: "We have sent formal letters and the governor has travelled to Kabul recently to resolve the issue of acting officials. The governor shared the issue with the Administrative Reform Committee head and

the issue may be resolved soon", he said. (Pajhwok)

(13) Travel Entrepreneur ..

a phone interview from Kabul.

Sadi said her father and brother helped her with the \$50,000 needed to set up Banoo Travel Agency and friends from the Ministry of Women Affairs linked her to contacts in foreign universities to arrange places for women to study abroad.

She said in the past year her travel agency has managed to secure university places for 35 girls in Turkey and they are currently working on sending some women to Russia and India. She said the next target was universities in Europe.

One student, Muazama, who did not want to give surname, is getting ready to leave for a journalism course at Istanbul University with Banoo arranging her visa, travel and university admission at a cheaper cost than she could have arranged. "I always wanted to continue my education but never had a way to do it, but Marjana helped me to get admission for 50 percent cheaper at Istanbul University," Muazama said via phone. (Reuters)

(14) Massoud ...

area without paying any attention to his son.

"A car covered with pictures of the National Hero Ahmad Shah Massoud was driving fast and run over my son despite my son's hand was in my hand," said Zahir.

Relatives of Wali urged government and Massoud supporters to change the way of commemorating the Martyrs Week.

"They (supporters) should hold the Holy Quran recitation ceremonies instead of roaming in the Kabul streets. I call on government and those who celebrate the day not to create any problem for the people," said Latifa, a relative of Wali.

This comes after Afghanistan Green Trend members at a gathering on Friday urged the people to commemorate the Martyrs Week in a peaceful way and avoid creating problems to the residents. (Tolonews)

(15) Grape Farmers...

of the air cargo route to India has resulted in a (probable) increase in income for farmers," he said.

Meanwhile, a number of farmers and garden owners from Bagram district in Parwan province said their crops were good this year but they still need a good market for their produce.

They said they take their products to local markets but they cannot sell them at a good price.

"The increase of our harvests will not benefit us unless we have access to a good market for our products. We take our products to the center (Kabul) from far distances but we do not benefit from it," said Zahir, a farmer in Baghlan.

Afghanistan's grapes are considered to be of a high quality around the world and are popular in India and in a number of Gulf States. (Tolonews)

(16) Afridi Quits ...

family issue comeup," Afridi said in a Twitter post.

He said More

I look fwd to come in future & support the great initiative. I support bridging realtions via cricket for peace to unite nations."

Tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan cricket boards escalated after deadly bombings in Kabul late in May and earlier in June this year. However, it is yet not clear if the persistent tensions has played any role in the decision of Afridi or not. The Pakistan cricket board chairman Shahryar Khan said late in July that the cricket board of Pakistan has taken a position that until the Afghanistan Cricket Board apologise in public, we should not be reviving any cricketing ties with them.

The statement by Afghanistan cricket board for cancelling the potential upcoming series was issued shortly after a deadly bombing hit Kabul city that left over 150 people dead and hundreds more wounded. (KP)