

## U.S. to Host Iran-Focused Global Summit Next Month: Pompeo

WASHINGTON - The United States plans to host a global summit focused on the Middle East, particularly Iran, next month in Poland, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told Fox News in an interview to air on Friday.

Pompeo told Fox the international gathering would be held Feb. 13 to Feb. 14 in Poland to "focus on Middle East stability and peace and freedom and security here in this region, and that includes an important element of making sure that Iran is not a destabilizing influence."

U.S. President Donald Trump's top diplomat is visiting a number of Middle Eastern countries this week in an effort to shore up support in the region amid a number of ongoing fronts, from the U.S. troop withdrawal from Syria to the Saudi-Qatar rift to the killing of U.S.-based



Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

Pompeo, in the midst of his eight-day trip through the region, has said that the United States is "redoubling" its efforts to put pressure on Iran and sought to convince allies in the region that it was committed to fighting the Islamic State

despite Trump's recent decision to pull U.S. troops out of Syria. Pompeo told Fox News the summit would include representatives from countries around the world to address Iran's regional influence as the Trump administration has sought to pressure Tehran. (Reuters)

### (1) Daudzai Discusses...

between the two countries. Meanwhile, on Thursday President Ghani's Special Envoy met with Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao, chairman of Qaumi Watan Party, where they discussed the Afghan peace process.

The two sides stressed the need for cooperation on peace between Afghanistan and Pakistan, the HPC said in a statement.

Daudzai also met Asfandiyar Wali Khan, head of Awami National Party, where they discussed the Afghan peace process, regional situation and Pakistan's role in the peace process. (Pajhwok)

### (2) Afghanistan...

Fatah Eshratzai, spokesman for MoLSAMD

Afghanistan has also sealed similar agreements with Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Qatar as moves to overcome the issue of unemployment.

"One of the temporary solutions to the issue of unemployment is to send workers to other countries which are committed to us, this is a positive step," said Mohammad Ali Mashal, an economic analyst.

Statistics from the Afghan government reveal that over 400,000 new job seekers were added to the workforce in the country yearly.

Currently, 1.9 million people from the workforce do not have jobs, said the ministry. (Tolo news)

### (3) Afghan Govt...

US on the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan Criticising Taliban's refusal to talk to Afghan government, Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah on Wednesday said that as long as that did not happen the hopes of ending the conflict would remain a pipe dream.

Another round of talks to build on Abu Dhabi meeting is expected later this month. (Pajhwok)

### (4) Protection...

from specialised psychosocial help.

The child protection is provided by UNICEF as part of "Afghan Children on the Move" - an EU action to protect children in Afghanistan. In the child-friendly spaces, children can play together and feel safe, which also strengthens their families. (Monitoring Desk)

### (5) International...

will take place at the Youth Center in Bukhara.

Within the framework of the event, it is intended to hold 3

panel sessions with participation of foreign experts on the issues of enhancing Uzbekistan's tourism potential. Besides, signing of Declaration on the Role of Cultural and Historical Centers of Uzbekistan in Development of Islamic Culture and Civilization is expected.

Following the meetings, the Uzbek side will ink investment agreements with foreign partners.

On the final day of the forum a tour to Samarkand will be organized. (PR)

### (6) Constitution can't be...

and as a result many people opted to indulge in drugs smuggling and other illegal activities. A large number of areas were out of the government's control where people were subjected to atrocities and their legal and human rights were openly violated, she said.

Samar also cautioned against trampling on people's rights for the sake of achieving peace, saying no one had the right to make a political deal on the blood of Afghans.

She said those involved in massive war crimes should openly apologize to the nation and that women and the victims of the war should be present in peace talks besides the warring parties. Balkh provincial council chief Mohammad Afzal Hadid said human rights abuses could end in Afghanistan if the war was stopped. (Pajhwok)

### (7) Iran FM Comment...

Taliban," Zarif, who was in New Delhi for talks with Indian leaders, told NDTV in an interview.

"But we also believe that the Taliban should not have a dominant role in Afghanistan."

Zarif said it was up to Afghans to decide what role the Taliban should have but Afghanistan's neighbours would not want them to be in overall control.

Reacting to his comments, Afghanistan's deputy foreign minister Idrees Zaman said that any kind of Iran's links with the Taliban out of the frame work of state to state relationship could harm bilateral ties between Kabul and Tehran.

He termed the suggestion of change in the government system and inclusion of armed groups in the government as 'against all diplomatic norms' and 'a clear interference' in the internal affairs of the country.

Earlier, Deputy Presidential Spokesman Shah Hussian Murtazavi said that Iranian officials spoke the Taliban language and

acted as their spokespersons in recent times.

On his Facebook page, Murtazavi wrote if the neighbouring country believed in talks with armed groups, it should talk to internal armed opponent groups such as the Mujahidin Khalq.

The Taliban's Qatar delegation traveled to Iran recently twice and held talks with Iranian officials. The Taliban later said they discussed post-occupation of Afghanistan with Iranian officials. (Pajhwok)

### (8) US Rejects Russia's...

process in Afghanistan according to its own scenario," the ministry said.

Afghanistan presidential election was scheduled for 20 April 2019, but last month, the Independent Election Commission said the elections have been postponed to 20 July 2019 in order to bring more reforms at the commission.

"Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission could make a decision to postpone the presidential elections scheduled for April 20 until June 20 under pressure from the United States, which needs time to get ready for the voting in accordance with its scenario," the statement said. According to the statement, officially it has been said that Afghan elections postponed for technical reasons, but that is not the case.

The statement also highlights that Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and the election commission was calling that the elections should be held based on the schedule, but the decision was imposed on them.

"We note that this decision was made despite the repeated assurances by Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and Afghanistan's Election Commission concerning the need to strictly adhere to the deadlines for the election announced earlier," read the statement.

Russian Foreign Ministry also said the Afghan peace talks is another issue that has caused Afghan elections to be postponed. Talking on the US possible troops withdrawal from Afghanistan, the statement said US is trying to create some Afghan anti-terror units which will operate for the interest of US.

"US media reports about Washington's intention, in light of the planned reduction of the US military contingent in Afghanistan, to create some Afghan 'counter-terrorist units,' which will not be controlled by Kabul but will operate in the interests of the US

## Norway Issues First Exploitation Permit for CO2 Storage on Continental Shelf

OSLO - Norway has awarded the country's first exploitation permit for carbon dioxide storage on the Norwegian Continental Shelf to Equinor, the energy company formerly known as Statoil. The area allocated for storage of carbon dioxide is located near the Troll oil and gas field and was announced in July 2018, the Norwegian Ministry of Petroleum and Energy said in a statement.

Equinor is currently performing front-end engineering and design (FEED) studies on storage with project partners Shell and Total. The storage solution is part of the large-scale carbon capture and storage (CCS) project in Norway.

Equinor and its partners will now mature the storage concept towards a plan for development and operations (PDO) scheduled for delivery



in 2019. An investment decision for the Norwegian full-scale CCS project is expected in 2020-2021. "The government has an ambition to realize a cost-effective solution for full-scale carbon capture and storage in Norway, given that this will result in international technology development," Minister of Petroleum and Energy Kjell-Borge Freiberg said. (Xinhua)

special services, make one draw a similar conclusion," the statement said.

Russian Foreign Ministry says that due to creation of such units, Kabul last November refused to send its representatives to Moscow format meeting in which they had the chance to have dialogue with members of Taliban movement.

In reaction to Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs remarks on Afghan elections, the US Embassy in Kabul says in a statement that the decision to delay presidential elections was made by the IEC in order to address administrative and technical deficiencies that were apparent in the parliamentary elections in the fall.

"We join with the many Afghans and others in the international community who believe that serious elections reform is necessary," the US Embassy in Kabul says in a statement.

The US Embassy says it is up to Afghans to elect their leaders, and they deserve elections bodies that are capable and staffed with experts who can restore public trust in the process. (Tolo news)

### (9) Women Attend...

"It was a good tournament. We saw new faces here. It was helpful for girls," said Bayat.

"It is a sign of improvement for girls. Bowling is fascinating for girls," said Alokozay.

The athletes meanwhile said they are faced with a lack of facilities and environment for promoting this sport. (Tolo news)

### (10) Half of Working...

Ministry of Economy last year in November.

"From an economic point of view, almost half of the working age population is not interested in working and they are not interested in seeking jobs in the market," said Rahimi.

The head of the National Procurement Authority, Ilham Omar Hotaki, said the unemployment challenges should be removed so that Afghanistan can reach lasting peace.

"If we want lasting peace, we should pay attention to creating job opportunities," Hotaki said. Last year on December 10, the International Labor Organization (ILO) said findings by different organizations show the rate of unemployment in Afghanistan is between 25 percent and 30 percent and indicates Afghanistan has the highest number of unemployed workforce in the world. ILO figures show that about

400,000 new people enter the workforce and market in the country every year.

The figures from the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled show that their findings reveal the rate of unemployment and lack of sufficient work in the country is at 35 percent.

Meanwhile, Abdulbasit Mawaj, head of the AIESEC, an international non-governmental in Kabul, which hosted the forum, said Afghan youth need more attention in terms of provision for job opportunities.

"The youth do not need only a university document... they need someone to support them as we did today," he said.

At the end of the forum, from the schemes of 250 youth participants, three schemes will be selected and the National Procurement Authority and a number of private banks will prepare the ground for their implementation. (Tolo news)

### (11) Helmand Elders...

land grabbing practice had not been taken.

"The government cannot protect its property so how will it protect the public property," he questioned.

District Chief Mula Dad Tobagar acknowledged tens of acres of land had been grabbed.

"Effort to retrieve the grabbed land and to chalk out a plan in this regarding was underway," he said. Gereshk Mayor Sardar Wali Barakzai said up to 3,000 acres of land had been recovered so far. (Pajhwok)

### (12) More than...

which is treated physically in the first stage and the next stage is psychotherapy, which forms 90 percent of the treatment of addicts," said Setara Azizi, head of the addiction treatment center.

Sayed Mohammad Sadat, caretaker of the Herat counter-narcotics directorate, said they are fully prepared and equipped for treatment of the women and children who want to leave addiction. (Tolo news)

### (13) 7 Rebels Killed...

Separately, seven Daesh rebels were killed in foreign forces drone strike in the Haska Mena district.

Maj. Mohammad Haroon Yousufzai, spokesman for the 201st Se-lab Military Corps, said the drone strike happened in the Nari Awbu area on Thursday night in which seven rebels were killed and one injured.

Daesh and the Taliban have not spoken about the incidents. (Pajhwok)