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## **January 11, 2019: National Current Affairs**

### **1. President accepts Azam Swati`s resignation**

- After a lapse of more than one month, President Dr Arif Alvi has finally accepted the resignation of former federal minister for science and technology Azam Swati.
- The president accepted the resignation of Mr Swati on January 9, 2019.
- A notification issued by the Cabinet Division on Thursday said that the president had on the advice of Prime Minister Imran Khan accepted the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) leader`s resignation with effect from Dec 6.
- The former minister had submitted his resignation on Dec 6 soon after meeting Prime Minister Khan.
- Mr Swati was accused of having been involved in the transfer of former Islamabad inspector general of police Jan Mohammad and illegally occupying state land adjacent to his farmhouse in the federal capital.

### **2. UN to host special screening for Malala`s biopic**

- Nobel Prize laureate and education activist Malala Yousafzai`s biopic Gul Makai will be screened at a special show organised by the United Nations.
- The screening which will take place in London on Jan 25 will see 450 dignitaries from around the world in attendance, including representatives of Pakistani and Indian high commissions, British officials as well as members of the UN and IIMSAM (Intergovernmental Institution for the use of Micro-algae Spirulina Against Malnutrition).
- Reportedly another screening of the film will be hosted mid-February at the UN headquarters in New York.

### **3. Govt allows hunting of Markhor, Ibex**

- Two foreigner hunters hailing from USA and Switzerland have arrived here through a helicopter for hunting of Markhor and Ibex in the limits of Toshi Village Conservation Committee (VCC), District Chitral.
- Two foreigner hunters having proper hunting trophy and shooting licence are searching for suitable prey for the last three days.
- Mr Christopher from USA have paid \$92000 and Rs10,000 for shooting licence as well as Mr Stacky from Switzerland who want hunting of an Ibex have paid Rs145,000 and Rs10,000 for shooting licence.
- Hunting trophy licence was issued after proper auction at international level by Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Switzerland

## **January 11, 2019: International Current Affairs**

### **4. German court brushes aside suit over Karachi factory fire**

- A German court on January 10, 2019 threw out a lawsuit by Pakistani plaintiffs against clothing retailer KiK over a deadly 2012 fire at a Karachi garment factory, saying the statute of limitations had expired.
- The blaze at the factory in Baldia, Karachi, left 258 people dead in one of Pakistan`s worst industrial disasters.
- A survivor and three relatives of victims of the tragic incident had sought damages for pain and suffering from KiK of 30,000 euros (\$34,600) each.
- They argued that, although KiK did not cause the fire, it shared blame for a lack of safety measures at the factory.
- The European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), a Berlin-based rights group supporting the plaintiffs, said it was considering appealing the ruling.

### **5. Opposition leader wins DR Congo vote, but rival & church cry foul**

- Opposition leader Felix Tshisekedi was on January 10, 2019 declared winner of DR Congo`s presidential election, but his victory was dismissed by the runner-up and questioned by the Catholic Church, clouding the vote`s legitimacy and hopes of peace.
- In a pre-dawn announcement, election officials named Tshisekedi, son of the country`s long-term opposition leader, provisional winner of the troubled vote to replace President Joseph Kabila.
- The news brought thousands of supporters onto the streets while others who had backed his opposition rival Martin Fayulu came out in protest. Four people died in unrest.
- Fayulu, who came a close second, denounced the result as an `electoral coup`, The Democratic Republic

of Congo's influential Catholic church also said Tshisekedi's victory did not tally with data collected by its own monitors.

## **6. India approves job quotas for poor upper caste members**

- Indian parliament has approved a bill providing a 10 per cent quota in government jobs for the poor members of upper castes who have been excluded from existing quotas for low ranking castes.
- The Congress party and other opposition parties supported the legislation, but criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government for getting it approved just months before national elections, in an effort the opposition claimed was aimed at winning votes.
- The Modi government surprised the opposition by unexpectedly moving the bill in the lower house of Parliament on January 7, 2019 and getting it approved. The upper house adopted it by sitting late into the night on January 8, 2019 during the final day of the current parliamentary session. The bill now only needs the approval of India's president, a formality, to become law.
- Discrimination under the caste system was outlawed soon after India's independence from Britain in 1947. But the system's influence remains strong and the government has sought to redress discrimination against those on the lower rungs by setting up quotas for government jobs and university spots.
- Until now, 49.5 per cent of government jobs and places in state-funded educational institutions were allocated to the lower castes.

## **7. Indonesian airline brings live music to the skies**

- Indonesian national flag carrier Garuda is bringing music to the skies with a series of live acoustic concerts on domestic flights.
- The carrier held its first in-flight concert on January 9, 2019, when two musicians performed for a captive audience aboard a flight between the capital, Jakarta, and the holiday island of Bali.
- Garuda said sets would last 10 to 15 minutes on select flights, and there would be a focus on promoting upcoming talent.
- While it may prove an unforgettable flying experience for some, it may not be everyone's idea of a good time.
- In 2017, US airline Southwest introduced live shows on some flights to a mixed reaction from passengers.

## **8. Pompeo vows 'every last Iranian boot' will be expelled from Syria**

- US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo vowed on January 10, 2019 the United States and its allies would work diplomatically to expel all Iranian troops from Syria, urging Middle East nations to forge a common

stand against Tehran.

- 'It's time for old rivalries to end, for the sake of the greater good of the region,' said Pompeo at a keynote address in Cairo.
- America 'will use diplomacy and work with our partners to expel every last Iranian boot' from Syria and bolster efforts 'to bring peace and stability to the long-suffering Syrian people', he added.
- The top US diplomat was in Egypt on the latest leg of a whistle-stop regional tour aimed at shoring up Washington's Middle East policy following President Donald Trump's shock decision to withdraw 2,000 US troops from Syria.
- In his speech at the American University in Cairo, Pompeo said the US is creating an anti-Iran front the Middle East Strategic Alliance bringing together Gulf countries as well as Egypt and Jordan.

## 9. China-Russia trade volume tops 100 bln USD

- Trade volume between China and Russia exceeded 100 billion U.S. dollars by mid-December 2018, a record high, the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) announced January 10, 2019.
- Sino-Russia trade growth outpaced those between China and its other major trade partners, according to MOC spokesperson Gao Feng, calling 2018 a "genuinely fruitful year" for bilateral economic and trade cooperation.
- China remains Russia's largest trade partner, while Russia is China's tenth largest trade partner.
- Bilateral trade structure also improved in 2018. Trade in mechanical and electrical products, high-tech products and agricultural produce rose 15 percent, 29 percent and 31 percent respectively in the first 11 months of 2018.
- The two countries also partnered on energy, nuclear, aerospace, cross-border infrastructure and other fields.

## January 11, 2019: Sports Current Affairs

### 10. Figo and Kaka arrive in Pakistan vowing to 'promote football'

- Two years ago, Brazilian football great Ronaldinho arrived in Pakistan along with several other retired football stars to play a series of exhibition matches in Pakistan.
- It was an event that the organisers expected to 'start a new chapter in the football history of Pakistan'. It didn't. Not much has changed. Pakistan football is where it was then.
- But what the Ronaldinho event did achieve was that it has opened doors for more retired football stars to come to Pakistan.
- On January 10, 2019, Ronaldinho's former Brazil team-mate Kaka arrived in Pakistan alongside Portugal

legend Luis Figo for a whirlwind day trip spanning two cities during which they promised to come back again for a series of exhibition matches as part of the `World Soccer Stars` event in April.

- Once again, the organisers` catchphrase is `promoting football`.
- The World Soccer Stars is an imitation of the Star Sixes, an event that was held for the first time in London in 2017 which saw 12 national teams, full of former international representative stars, play six-aside matches.

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