

Georgian Dream Drops Planned Regional Policy State Minister Post After Mdinaradze Exit

BY MESSENGER STAFF

Georgian Dream will not create the planned post of State Minister for Regional Policy after Mamuka Mdinaradze left politics, Georgian Dream Parliament Speaker Shalva Papuashvili said on Monday.

It was announced in July that Mdinaradze, then State Minister for Coordination of Law Enforcement Bodies, would take the new post. His current position was due to be abolished, while the Ministry of Regional Development was also set to be dissolved.

Mdinaradze was appointed Regional Development Minister on an interim basis pending parliamentary approval of the changes expected in the autumn.

He resigned as minister and left politics on August 27. He had also served as head of Georgia's State Security Service from September 2025 to April.

"The position of State Minister [for Regional Policy] will no longer be created," Papuashvili said at a press briefing.

"The creation of this position was conceived precisely because of Mamuka Mdinaradze's political experience, political weight



and knowledge. Since he made the decision to leave politics, this decision has changed," he said.

Papuashvili said the State Minister for Coordination of Law

Enforcement Bodies post would still be abolished.

The government is also discussing merging the Ministry of Regional Development with the

Ministry of Infrastructure. The two ministries were separated in a government restructuring in April 2025.

Asked who could lead the

merged ministry, Papuashvili pointed to Infrastructure Minister Revaz (Rezi) Sokhadze.

"Rezi Sokhadze is doing a good job," he said.

Gharibashvili Lawyer Says Prison Visit With Children Was Canceled

BY MESSENGER STAFF

Lawyer for former Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Gharibashvili said on Monday that a planned visit with his children was canceled last week, a claim rejected by Georgia's Special Penitentiary Service.

Lili Gelashvili told TV Pirveli that Gharibashvili had been due to meet his children at Rustavi Penitentiary No. 12.

"He had a scheduled meeting with his children and it was canceled. It was exactly last week. We don't know what the reason was," she said.

The penitentiary service said there had been no scheduled visit to cancel. It said Gharibashvili, who is held in a closed-type prison, had already used his two annual long visits.

"Irakli Gharibashvili is in the N12 penitentiary institution,

which is a closed-type institution. According to its regulations, he is entitled to 2 long appointments per year," the service told Radio Liberty.

The rules allow prisoners in closed-type facilities two long visits a year, with one additional visit possible as an incentive.

The dispute comes as Georgia's Public Defender has raised concerns about prisoners' contact with their children. In March, Public Defender Levan Ioseliani asked parliament to change the law to improve communication between imprisoned parents and their children.

Ioseliani said in February that most prisoners, including jailed politicians, had limited means of communicating with people outside prison and could not meet their minor children.

Gelashvili suggested the reported cancellation was connected to pressure on Gharibashvili's family. She pointed to the recent dismissal of his brother-in-law, Levan Sanamashvili, from the National Probation Agency.

"Can I ask a counter-question - what was the reason they started dismissing his family

members from their jobs?! Of course, it's all connected," Gelashvili said.

The Probation Agency did not comment on Sanamashvili's dismissal, saying it did not disclose information about individual employees.

Gharibashvili has also accused the authorities of targeting him and his family. In

Facebook posts this month, he said Bidzina Ivanishvili and the government were responsible for their safety and alleged that he was being pressured to admit to corruption offenses to keep him out of politics.

Gharibashvili was charged on August 24 with accepting a 750,000-GEL bribe. He faces 11 to 15 years in prison if convicted.

The News in Brief

PREPARED BY MESSENGER STAFF

Georgian Citizens Among Passengers in Deadly Bus Crash in Russia

Georgian citizens were among the passengers of a bus traveling from Georgia to Moscow that crashed in southern Russia, killing five people and injuring 38, according to reports from Russian media.

The crash occurred on August 30 on the Kavkaz highway in Russia's Stavropol Krai, near Zheleznovodsk. The bus collided with a KamAZ truck and went

off the road.

Ten children were among those injured, and the injured passengers were taken to hospitals in Pyatigorsk. Preliminary reports said 43 people were on the bus.



Russian media reported that the bus was traveling on the Georgia-Moscow route and that most of the passengers were

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