

(1) Afghan President...

Two senior interior ministry officials said the security officials had cited policy differences with the government amid deteriorating security as the main reason for resigning.

However, Ghani rejected the resignations and instead instructed them to find ways to prevent fresh attacks by militant groups.

Heavy fighting between Taliban insurgents, as well as other militant groups, and security forces has raged across Afghanistan this year. There have also been suicide attacks in Kabul and other major cities.

Authorities have been bracing for more attacks with parliamentary elections due on Oct. 20. The scale of the violence has shocked government officials, who are facing bitter criticism over their handling of the war. (Reuters)

(2) Afghan Leaders...

that he "met HE Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović @KolindaGK, President of Croatia. We discussed bilateral relations, security and political developments and ways of mutual cooperation and fighting terrorism. I thanked the President and the people of Croatia for their relentless support for Afghanistan," Abdullah tweeted. (Tolo news)

(3) Killing of ISIS-K Emir...

and appointed as the ISIS Khurasan emir after the killing of Haseeb Logari.

The anti-government armed militant and terrorist groups including ISIS Kurasan loyalists have not commented regarding the report so far. (KP)

(4) Hamdullah Mohib...

to keep in place all security measures and Hanif Atmar's personal security measures in place; Now, our goal is to focus on the future," Ghani added.

The president also thanked Mohib for his hard work during his time as Afghanistan's ambassador to Washington DC and wished him success in his position as new National Security Advisor (NSA) for the National Unity Government.

Mohib in turn thanked Ghani for trusting him and handing over the responsibility to him; he pledged to carry out his duties to his best ability.

Mohib also thanked Atmar for his efforts and said he would continue to consult with him and he assured the NSA's staff that department functions would continue as normal and that with their cooperation they would strengthen the institution's affairs.

Mohib, who is 35 years old, has been ambassador to Washington DC since 2015.

Originally from Nangarhar province, Mohib studied in the UK and earned a degree in computer systems engineering. He also has British citizenship.

After seven years in the UK, Mohib returned to Afghanistan, as director of information technology at the American University of Afghanistan.

During the 2009 Afghan presidential elections, Mohib was one of Ghani's campaign aides. When Ghani lost the race to former president Hamid Karzai, Mohib returned to the UK to study for his Ph.D., at Brunel University.

In 2014 he graduated with a Ph.D and again returned to work on Ghani's 2014 election campaign.

This time around Ghani won the elections and when he was sworn into office, Mohib was appointed as his deputy chief of staff. One year later, Ghani appointed him as Afghanistan's ambassador to the United States.

Atmar's Surprise Resignation

The announcement of Mohib's appointment came immediately after Atmar's unexpected resignation - which he said was due to "serious differences over policies and approaches at the top level of government."

He said he differed in opinion

"when it comes to national unity, national consensus, peace and security political management, electoral affairs, good governance and regional affairs."

Atmar also stated that "because of my differences of these things in recent months I am stepping down because we haven't reached a consensus."

Atmar, 49, was appointed to the position when the National Unity Government was established in 2014 and signed the Bilateral Security Agreement between Afghanistan and the US in the same year.

On Saturday night, officials said that Ghani had meanwhile called for the resignation of his other top three security chiefs - Wais Ahmad Barmak, Minister of Interior; Masoum Stanikzai, the National Directorate of Security (NDS) chief; and Tariq Shah Bahrami, the Defense Minister. However, early Sunday Ghani's office issued a statement that the president had rejected their resignations and ordered them to continue their work.

"Wais Ahmad Barmak, Minister of Interior, Masoum Stanikzai, the National Directorate of Security (NDS) chief and Tariq Shah Bahrami, the Defense Minister officially handed in their resignation letters and the President did not accept them and asked these officials to continue their work and also give him guides for better security," the statement read. (Tolo news)

(5) Terrorism 'a Common...

The two sides also discussed peace talks, upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections, regional co-operation for fighting terrorism and ensuring peace in Afghanistan.

They also conferred on the US strategy for Afghanistan and South Asia, the role of Croatian troops in assisting Afghan forces and political and security situation of Afghanistan during the meeting. (Pajhwok)

(6) Afghan Political...

the launch of biometric registration of the voters for the upcoming elections under the supervision of the technical teams and to be guaranteed by the relevant authorities.

They also demand a change in the electoral system as per the demands of the political parties, movements, and leaders.

The joint declaration issued at the end of the political leaders meeting two weeks ago also included the facilitation of the monitoring facilities during the electoral processes. (KP)

(7) Afghan Air Force...

The event was addressed also by Chief of Army Staff Sharif Yaftali who highlighted the importance of strengthening the AAF. He said that plans are in place to target militants both by ground and air forces to pay way for holding elections in a secure environment. (Agencies)

(8) Afghan Private...

Afghanistan Shubham Chaudhry said the Geneva Conference on Afghanistan will be important for the country as the donors will assess the performance of the National Unity Government to ensure continued support by the international community towards Afghanistan in years to come.

"My understanding and I think this is where the Geneva Conference is really going to help with Afghanistan is kind of setting the stage in the next four years; offers an opportunity for the government to be in a conversation with its main international partners to talk partly, looking back at what has been accomplished in the last two to five years, but then to explain what are the plans for the next two to five years," said Chaudhry on Saturday. (Wadsam)

(9) Atmar Resigned...

Atmar's letter of resignation stated that he is stepping down due to "serious differences over policies and approaches at the top level of government."

"The distance between the president and Mr Atmar has been very serious,

there has been differences of views, the second (problem) can be interpreted in the way and the approach the two sides had towards elections, the third related to the approach of Afghanistan towards tackling issues related to regional peace and the engagement of regional powers in the peace process in Afghanistan," said Aziz Rafae, a civil society activist.

The Presidential Palace issued a statement late Saturday saying Ghani had accepted Atmar's resignation and stated Hamdullah Mohib, ambassador to Washington, has been appointed in his place.

Mohib however has no working experience in the security sector.

"The issue that Atmar is being forced to resign is possibly because of the elections which concerned the president about the presence of Atmar in ARG (presidential palace) and in government, not only him (Atmar), but also those whom Atmar had an influence over were forced to step down," said former deputy minister of defense Atiqullah Baryalai.

Atmar enjoyed strong relations with Ghani in the past and was even honored with a medal in 2016.

Unconfirmed reports say that Atmar resigned in order to run in next year's presidential elections. (Tolo news)

(10) Technical Tasks on...

system functions to the CSO is against the law.

"Why has the election commission not been tasked with this? ... Additional departments should not be established to take on the election commission's tasks," Yusuf Rashed, head of Free and Fair Election Foundation of Afghanistan said.

The election commission also said due to the closure of its offices for 10 days, by supporters of a number of disqualified candidates, they have been unable to prepare the voters list. (Tolo news)

(11) Afghanistan Way...

this," the technical and vocational deputy head of the GDPES said.

In 2014, at the Asian Games in South Korea, Afghanistan won two silvers and a bronze medal - while over 100 athletes participated.

"Most of the athletes are selected according to relations and its results in our athletes returning from the games with no medals," Hussain Rahmati, a sportsanalyst said.

TOLONews was not able to get comment from the National Olympic Committee on this issue.

So far, China is way ahead with a total of 162 medals. Their team has bagged 72 gold, 57 silver and 33 bronze.

In second spot on the Medals Table is Japan with 115 medals in total. They have 39 gold, 32 silver and 44 bronze. (Tolo news)

(12) All-Girls Robotics...

competition to improve the environment. Each team, consisting of up to five high school students, had a standard kit of parts to build a robot capable of feeding power plants to scale and build a transmission network in the most efficient way.

National teams were placed in randomly assigned alliances, and competed to achieve their goal and accrue points.

"They checked our robots in New York customs, but they (customs officers) did not repack properly after checking and send them to Mexico and some parts of our robots had been broken and some parts had gone missing, so we took two days to just repair our robots," said one robotic team member Sumayya Farooqi.

"Other teams had a lot of equipment, so we borrowed equipment from other teams to compete," said robotic team leader Fatima Qaderyan.

Back in May, the Afghan robotic girls team returned home after wrapping up a successful tour in Canada and the US.

The Afghan robotics team won the "Entrepreneur Award" at Europe's biggest robot festival in November

last year.

In July 2017, the girls also won another well-recognized award at an international robotics competition in Washington the team was warmly welcomed at an international event in Amsterdam in the Netherlands in October last year.

Researchers, scientists and inventors from 100 countries attended the two-day event. (Tolo news)

(13) OIC Condemns...

broad and comprehensive review including consultations with major donors and international organizations," the Secretary-General concluded. (WAM)

(14) Sweden's School...

"Every day feels like a year. It's a pain to have to wait to long," Ahmad, one of the youths, told TT.

He said that when he had fled his home in Iran, where he lived as a paperless Afghan migrant, he had little idea of where he was going.

"I knew, like, absolutely nothing about Europe," he said. "I thought it was like one country."

Harnesk said that several of the youths were homeless and struggling to feed themselves during the wait, as they no longer qualify for support from Sweden's social services.

She said there was also "enormous frustration" over the law's arbitrary cut-off lines, noting that a boy who had to wait 13 months for his first ruling from the Migration Agency was not eligible to apply under the law, but if it had instead taken 15 months, he would have been

"It's become, as the youth say themselves, a lottery in the sense of who can stay and who can't," she said.

The law was rushed through Sweden's parliament by the red-green coalition government with the support of the Left Party and the Centre Party. (Agencies)

Pompeo Decries 'Abhorrent Ethnic Cleansing' in Myanmar on Anniversary

WASHINGTON - The United States will continue to hold accountable those responsible for what he described as the "abhorrent ethnic cleansing" of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Saturday.

Pompeo's statement came on the one year anniversary of the conflict in western Myanmar's Rakhine state that drove more than 700,000 Rohingya from their homes into neighboring Bangladesh.

"A year ago, following deadly militant attacks, security forces responded by launching abhorrent ethnic cleansing of ethnic #Rohingya in Burma," Pompeo said on Twitter, using an alternative name for Myanmar.

"The U.S. will continue to hold those responsible accountable. The military must respect human rights for #Burma's democracy to succeed."

The military ruled Myanmar for nearly 50 years after seizing power in a 1962 coup and retains considerable powers under a 2008 constitution.

Myanmar government spokesmen Zaw Htay was unavailable for comment on Sunday.

The government, led by Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, has denied refugees' allegations of atrocities, saying security forces lawfully suppressed Muslim militants in Rakhine.

Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh held demonstrations and prayers on Saturday to mark the anniversary of the outbreak of the conflict.

Thousands of refugees marched prayed and chanted slogans in events across the sprawling camps in southern Bangladesh. Many wore black ribbons to commemorate what they said was the

start of the "Rohingya genocide".

Across the border in Myanmar, the government said security patrols had been increased in the conflict area ahead of the anniversary for fear of further violence. Members of the mostly Buddhist Rakhine ethnic group and Hindus from Rakhine state said they would hold events to remember those killed by Rohingya militants in attacks that triggered the crisis. (Reuters)

UK-Iranian Woman Returns to Tehran Jail after Plea Rejected

LONDON - Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, the British-Iranian woman who has been held in Tehran for more than two years on sedition charges, returned to prison on Sunday after temporary release, dashing her family's hopes of an extension.

"We have just heard the sad news that Nazanin's extension has been refused and she has returned to prison," said a tweet on the official "Free Nazanin" Twitter account.

"Here is the moment she said goodbye to a distraught Gabriella," it added, along with a picture of Zaghari-Ratcliffe and her four-year-old daughter.

She was unexpectedly released for a three-day furlough on Thursday, and was reunited with members of her family outside the Iranian capital.

Husband Richard Ratcliffe said they had received "mixed messages" from the Iranian authorities on Sunday, ahead of her return to Evin prison.

The charity worker had initially been told her request for an extension had been approved, but then received a call telling her to return to prison by sunset.

"She was shivering and shaking and crying - and said: 'How can you take me away from my baby, when she needs me?'" he said in an email received by AFP

"Gabriella was crying and sucking her thumb -- she didn't want her mummy to go back."

Ratcliffe said his wife, who has denied all charges filed against her in Iran, spent her time with her parents and daughter in Damavand, a mountain resort near Tehran. (AFP)

Merkel Says EU Should Meet Existing Emissions Aims, Not Set New Ones

BERLIN - A proliferation of extreme weather events around the world provides ample evidence that climate change is a reality, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Sunday, but she rejected calls for more ambitious climate protection goals.

Extreme temperatures across the northern hemisphere this summer have fueled concerns that climate change is gathering pace, leading dozens of countries to call for greenhouse gas emissions to be cut at a faster rate than planned.

But Merkel said such calls, most recently from the European Commission's climate chief Miguel Arias Canete, for swifter cuts to harmful carbon dioxide emissions would be counterproductive, adding that setting new goals made little sense when European countries were already struggling to meet their cuts targets.

"I'm not particularly happy about these new proposals," she said of Canete's call to increase from 40 to 45 percent the scale of cuts to target by 2030.

"I think we should first stick to the goals we have already set ourselves. I don't think permanently setting ourselves new goals makes any sense." (Reuters)