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Sri Lanka

NSSP General Secretary attacked at airport

- News from around the world -

Publication date: Wednesday 8 December 2010

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The General Secretary of the Nava Sama Samaja Party was attacked at the airport by Aviation authority officials on 7th December while the police were looking on. Finally Bahu and all the rest are back safely. The vehicle was heavily damaged and several people received minor injuries.

MTV Katunayaka correspondent Prema Lal and Lanka news journalist Shantha Wijesuriya who went to cover Dr. Vickramabahu Karunaratna's arrival were also assaulted.

A group of officials who were in uniform and on duty mobbed Dr. Vickramabahu Karunaratne when he stepped out of the airport to be welcomed by NSSP officials, party members, trade union leaders, lawyers and human rights activists. Dozens of aviation officials who surrounded him called him a 'traitor who wants to divide the country united by Mr. Mahinda,' and attacked. Several well wishers, including women, who came to his rescue were injured.

The port and aviation authority comes under President Rajapaksa. Before that the president's brother Chamal Rajapaksa was the minister in charge. It is a well-known fact that government ministers employ their political supporters for positions in their ministry.

Dr. Vickramabahu Karunaratna was returning to Sri Lanka after a visit to Britain on a personal invitation. He was in Britain to attend the 88th birthday celebrations of his dean at Cambridge, Professor Reg Goodwin. He was invited and his passage was paid for by Professor Goodwin's son Mark.

While in London Bahu was invited to address several public meetings notably the Tamil remembrance day 2010 held at the Excel auditorium attended by tens of thousands in addition to a meeting at the House of Commons. The following week, President Rajapaksa who arrived in Britain had to abandon a scheduled talk at the Oxford Union due to protests by Tamils who accused him of war crimes.

The government of Sri Lanka has accused Dr. Karunaratne and opposition parliamentarian Dr. Jayalath Jayawardena of organising the protests in London in collusion with Tamil Tiger supporters.