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Iauko brings disgrace to Kilman government

Publisher vows to press charges against minister

By Royson Willie

A MINISTER OF THE STATE, Harry Iauko, led a group of men yesterday around 3pm into the Daily Post newspaper's office and assaulted the Publisher of Daily Post, Marc Neil-Jones, as well as threaten staff of the newspaper over articles carried in the newspaper about the minister's handling of land issues, the Airports Vanuatu Limited board suspension, Transparency International's column and letters to editor.

All these were carried throughout the week in different issues of the newspaper.

The group led by the minister entered the Daily Post office quietly and all, including the Minister for Public Utilities went into the Publisher's office and assaulted him at his desk.

The minister was clearly heard by Daily Post staff shouting at the top of his voice as Mr Neil-Jones was assaulted.

An angry Neil-Jones said he will be pressing charges against the minister on several counts including aiding and abetting an assault.

He said he will be pressing charges against the minister because he was the one who could have stopped the men from going into the Daily Post



Iauko (right) with police in front of Daily Post office after the assault and inset is the government vehicle driven by Jay Ngwele with Iauko's men

office to assault, but instead Iauko stood right next to him and watched the assault taking place.

A doctor's examination on Neil-Jones found marks on his neck indicating someone had strangled him. Neil-Jones said he was grabbed in the neck and kicked.

"I was particularly angry to seek Jay Ngwele with the group because he owes me

over Vt300,000 for construction work that he was paid to do but never did," he said.

Minister Iauko even threatened the Editor of the Daily Post, Royson Willie, saying "yu wantem mi brekem face blo yu?" (do you want me to break your face?) with one of the men by the name of Nanua from North Tanna threatening the Editor.

The Editor has condemned

the attack on the free and independent media in Vanuatu saying such action is a disgrace and unacceptable, especially when a state minister was involved in such completely not statesmanship action.

The men with the minister were mostly from North Tanna, Middle Bush on Tanna and Whitesands on Tanna living in Port Vila.

The thugs used a govern-

ment vehicle with registration number G762 to carry out the act.

This government vehicle was driven by Iauko's political crony, Jay Ngwele.

Police arrived at the scene as the group was leaving the office.

The details of the assault have already been given to the police who are handling the case.

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