

## KOSOVO: SOC Monk Attacked

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Mid-morning Wednesday, 13 June 2012, in a southern part of Kosovska Mitrovica (majority Albanian population) Father Mitrophan, a monk of the Crna Reka Serbian Orthodox Monastery was attacked and beaten up. The attack occurred at around 10am, approximately 150 meters from the municipality building, close to the Jugobanka bank building. According to the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) sources, two unknown attackers hit Mitrophan, who was in his cassock, with fists and a metal object. Apparently, some nearby security staff did not react to what was going on. After the attack, the Kosovo police unit transported Mitrophan to a hospital in the northern part of a divided city, where the majority has Serbian population.

Deputy Director of the Health center Dr. Milan Ivanović stated that Father Mitrophan was pushed to the ground and was also kicked several times. He was admitted to a hospital with injuries close to nape of the head, minor concussion and hand injuries." After two days hospital treatment he was released to a house care.

According to the information Center 9 received from the SOC Eparchy of Raška and Prizren, Father Mitrophan was born in Kosovska Mitrovica in 1955, and he also grew up there. On the day of the attack he was going to a municipality building after the administrative matters regarding recent passing away of his father, who was one of the few Serbs still living in the southern part of the city after 1999.

SOC Bishop Teodosije immediately visited attacked monk in a hospital and afterwards sent a written statement to a number of diplomatic representatives and KFOR officials in Priština strongly condemning 'this cowardly attack' that shows that the priests and monks of the SOC in Kosovo live under a constant threat and without true freedom of movement.

Although the police stated that they are checking some security camera tapes from the crime scene, and although evidently there were some eye witnesses, no further statements on this investigation were offered to the public, even ten days after the attack. Two attackers are still not identified and at large.

