

Opinion: politicians cashing in on earthquake relief, and a Chiriqui hospital named after the president's father

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Summary

La Prensa columnist Rolando Rodríguez criticises how government-aligned politicians have used earthquake aid for political gain, and notes that the Oncology and Nuclear Medicine Centre President Mulino opened in Chiriqui on Friday 16 October bears his father's name.

Details (summary of the article)

In his Saturday column for La Prensa, Rolando Rodríguez argues that the government condemns political exploitation of public resources while tolerating it among its own. He recalls President Mulino's claim that a Panameñista mayor in Mariato, Veraguas, handed out food bags to party members after the earthquake - a claim the mayor denied and for which no apology followed. The columnist notes that pro-government deputies and the First Lady's office were among the first to distribute aid, notably in La Pintada, and that the comptroller appeared there too, while former Assembly president Jorge Herrera was accused of electioneering with relief goods. He points to the Oncology and Nuclear Medicine Centre that Mulino inaugurated in Chiriqui on Friday 16 October, where the specialty sign carries the name of the president's father, a politician who held posts in the province, as an example of the same behaviour the government criticises. He contrasts this with Mulino's order to remove his own name from public-works plaques while his slogan "Con paso firme" appears everywhere, including vehicle licence plates. He closes with an anecdote from buying relief supplies with school friends: a stranger advised them to hand out the food themselves rather than give it to politicians.

Original (es)

Sábado picante: Réplicas y semántica

El reparto de ayuda, los homenajes familiares y la publicidad oficial ponen a prueba la coherencia de un gobierno que condena el aprovechamiento político de los recursos públicos, pero tolera prácticas similares entre los suyos.