

MEDIA RELEASE

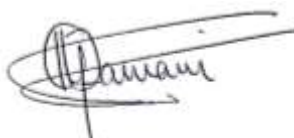
ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION WILL NOT BE INVESTIGATING THE BURNING OF THE DASH-8 AT MENDI DURING THURSDAY'S RIOTS

The Chief Commissioner of the Accident Investigation Commission, Mr Hubert Namani, today announced that the AIC will not be investigating the events in Mendi, Southern Highlands province, that resulted in a Dash-8 aircraft operated by LinkPNG being destroyed.

Mr. Namani said “the AIC was promptly notified about the Mendi riots on Thursday afternoon and the substantial damage to Mendi town and airport infrastructure and the aircraft. Subsequently the AIC has been fully briefed by the National Airports Corporation and LinkPNG on the rioting in Mendi and the breaching of the airport security perimeter, culminating in the physical attacks on the Dash-8 aircraft causing significant damage, then destroying the aircraft by fire.”

“He said that in accordance with International Standards this is not an air safety matter because the aircraft was parked and the engines were shut down. However, it is an extremely serious Aviation Security occurrence and a criminal act warranting Police and Aviation Security investigation due to it occurring on an airport, resulting in an aircraft and airport infrastructure being destroyed in the rioting.”

Mr. Namani made a strong statement about the role of the AIC and its ongoing commitment to cooperate with other agencies in the quest for aviation safety. He said, “as always, the AIC stands ready to provide assistance, but since this is a Police and Security matter that will inevitably result in blame and liability, both of which are outside the mandate of the AIC, any assistance by the AIC would have to be provided without becoming involved in a blame investigation. At this point in time such assistance has neither been requested by law enforcement authorities, nor is it contemplated by the AIC.”



Approved:

Hubert Namani, LLB
Chief Commissioner

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