# Article information:

Liberia: How the Government Silenced Accountability in Runup to Election
<https://www.liberianobserver.com/liberia-how-government-silenced-accountability-runup-election>

# Article summary:

1. Liberia's independent corruption watchdog, the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC), has almost ceased functioning due to changes made by the government that included firing all staff and stripping the commission of its authority to seize public officials' assets or freeze them if indicted.

2. The changes have stalled prosecutions and investigations, leading to a drop in asset declarations to the LACC and a lack of morale among staff.

3. Critics argue that the overhaul was intended to silence accountability and undermine the fight against corruption, while proponents claim it will deepen the Commission's powers to root out corruption.

# Article rating:

May be slightly imbalanced: The article presents the information in a generally reliable way, but there are minor points of consideration that could be explored further or claims that are not fully backed by appropriate evidence. Some perspectives may also be omitted, and you are encouraged to use the research topics section to explore the topic further.

# Article analysis:

The article "Liberia: How the Government Silenced Accountability in Runup to Election" by Tina S. Mehnpaine with New Narratives provides a critical analysis of the Liberian government's recent overhaul of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC). The article argues that the changes have effectively silenced the independent corruption watchdog, leaving little scrutiny of government corruption in the run-up to next year's election.

The article cites an anonymous source within the Commission who claims that prosecutions have been stalled due to the changes, and that morale among staff is at zero. The source also suggests that asset declaration to the LACC has dropped, indicating a lack of accountability for public officials.

Critics argue that this outcome was precisely what the government intended when it submitted the "Act Restating An Act to Re-establish the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission" to the legislature earlier this year. The act mandated firing all staff and requiring them to reapply for their jobs, effectively stripping the commission of its authority to seize or freeze accused public officials' assets.

The article notes that some anti-corruption activists are afraid to call out corruption and criticize the government after a series of mysterious deaths of potential whistle-blowers in Liberia. LACC chairperson Martin has said he has been targeted with death threats from government supporters since his firing.

While some anti-corruption activists have welcomed the prosecutorial powers granted by the new act, there are other aspects of it that concern them. In addition to limiting citizens' access to information, critics argue that it imposes unreasonable secrecy on the Commission, preventing it from sharing fundamental information with the public about its interactions until an indictment is issued.

The article notes that Lofa County Senator Steve Zargo voted against the bill, arguing that inadequate enforcement rather than inadequate laws is responsible for corruption in Liberia. Some activists argue that a government so mired in corruption should not be pushing an overhaul of an anti-corruption commission.

The article provides a critical analysis of the Liberian government's recent actions, highlighting potential biases and one-sided reporting. It notes that some claims are unsupported or missing evidence, and that counterarguments are not fully explored. The article also suggests that promotional content may be present, and that both sides may not be presented equally. However, it does note possible risks and concerns related to the government's actions.

# Topics for further research:

* Liberia government corruption and accountability
* Anti-corruption activism in Liberia
* Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission powers and limitations
* Whistleblower protection in Liberia
* Liberia government's track record on anti-corruption efforts
* International support for anti-corruption efforts in Liberia

# Report location:

<https://www.fullpicture.app/item/62b9e05ca40d41fd8a2342cb96a8d6e2>