

ROAD TRANSPORTATION AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN ABAKALIKI, EBONYI STATE, 1996-2024

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ABSTRACT

Existing studies on Abakaliki have discussed colonial road development, migration, transport entrepreneurship and urbanisation, but they give limited attention to how road transportation shaped the city after the creation of Ebonyi State in 1996. This study examines the contribution of road transportation to the urban development of Abakaliki between 1996 and 2024, while using earlier developments only as historical background. The study adopts a qualitative historical method and draws on archival material from the National Archives, Enugu; records from the Ebonyi State Ministry of Works; relevant published and unpublished studies; and nine oral interviews conducted in 2024 with transport operators, motorists, an EBOTRANS administrator and other participants in the sector. The evidence shows that sustained road investment, the establishment and expansion of Ebonyi State Transport Service (EBOTRANS), and the growth of private transport companies strengthened Abakaliki's connections with major Nigerian cities, supported trade and mobility, created transport-related employment and encouraged migration into the state capital. The benefits were constrained by poor road maintenance, taxation disputes, centralised loading arrangements, rising fuel costs, weak conditions of service for some drivers and the use of ageing vehicles. Road transportation was an important enabling factor in Abakaliki's post-1996 urban development, but its contribution depended on the quality of infrastructure, transport governance and the operating environment for public and private providers.

Keywords: road transportation, Abakaliki, Ebonyi State, urban development, EBOTRANS

Introduction

Abakaliki, the capital of Ebonyi State in south-eastern Nigeria, developed historically as an agricultural and commercial centre known particularly for yam and rice production. Colonial interest in the area intensified in the early twentieth century because roads were needed to move agricultural produce and other raw materials to larger commercial centres. The opening of a direct motor road from Abakaliki to Enugu in 1925, followed by the Abakaliki-Ogoja road in 1930 and other routes in the 1930s, increased the movement of produce, manufactured goods and people (Ajaegbo 177; Ottenberg 81). The expansion of rice production from the 1940s further strengthened Abakaliki's attraction to traders and migrants (Ndinkora 8).

These early developments provide the historical foundation for the post-1996 period examined in this paper. The creation of Ebonyi State in 1996 transformed Abakaliki into a state capital and increased the need for reliable intra-state and inter-state mobility. Government road projects, the establishment of a state-owned transport service and the expansion of private transport companies subsequently became important parts of the city's growth. Road transportation also supported occupations such as driving, vehicle repair, spare-parts trading, fuel retailing and other services connected to passenger and goods movement.

The research problem is that much of the existing literature explains the colonial origins of road transportation in Abakaliki or discusses transport development in Nigeria generally, while the relationship between transportation and Abakaliki's urban development after state creation has received less focused historical attention. This study therefore investigates how road infrastructure and transport services contributed to the development of Abakaliki between 1996 and 2024, the continuities with the earlier transport economy, and the major constraints that limited the sector's contribution. The discussion proceeds from the theoretical framework and methodology to a brief historical background, post-1996 road investment and transport services, their developmental contributions, the challenges of the sector, and the conclusion and recommendations.

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by Growth Pole Theory, associated with François Perroux and later given a stronger spatial and regional-planning interpretation by Jacques-Raoul Boudeville. Perroux argued that economic growth does not occur evenly across space; rather, it emerges around particular centres of activity and spreads through linkages to other sectors and places (Perroux 307-20). Boudeville extended this reasoning to regional planning by relating growth poles to identifiable geographical centres and the networks that connect them (Boudeville).

The theory is useful to this study because Abakaliki became the political and administrative centre of Ebonyi State in 1996 and increasingly functioned as a concentration point for government activity, trade, services and population. Roads and transport services did not create urban development on their own, but they connected the state capital to surrounding communities and to cities such as Enugu, Onitsha, Aba, Abuja and Lagos. In this sense, transport infrastructure and services acted as channels through which people, agricultural produce, goods, labour and investment moved into and out of Abakaliki. The framework therefore directs attention to the link between improved connectivity and the concentration and diffusion of economic activity.

The theory also has limits. Growth can be concentrated in an urban centre without producing equal benefits for transport workers, passengers or peripheral communities. Poor maintenance, high operating costs, taxation disputes and weak regulation can reduce the expected benefits of improved connectivity. For this reason, the paper uses Growth Pole Theory as an interpretive guide rather than as proof that every road project automatically produced development.

The historical evidence is used to assess both the developmental effects and the constraints of road transportation in Abakaliki.

Applied to Abakaliki, the framework helps distinguish between the presence of roads and the wider economic effects generated through those roads. A road corridor becomes developmentally significant when it reduces isolation, supports regular movement and allows activities concentrated in an urban centre to connect with a wider market. The evidence examined in this paper therefore looks beyond the physical existence of roads to the transport services operating on them, the routes opened, the occupations sustained and the movement of people and goods that followed. This approach is particularly relevant to a state capital whose administrative importance increased sharply after 1996.

Methodology

The study adopts a qualitative historical method. Primary evidence was drawn from archival material at the National Archives, Enugu, including records on the control and movement of agricultural produce, and from road-project records obtained from the Ebonyi State Ministry of Works in August 2024. The study also uses nine oral interviews conducted in 2024 with an EBOTRANS administrator, transporters, motorists, a motor mechanic, an activist and a tricyclist. These interviews provided evidence on the operation of transport companies, routes, taxation, working conditions and changes in the transport sector. Secondary materials include books, theses and studies on Igbo transport enterprise, Abakaliki urbanisation and Nigerian transportation.

The sources were read comparatively and chronologically. Archival and ministry records were used to establish institutional and infrastructural developments, while oral evidence was used to explain experiences and practices that are poorly represented in official records. Where the available evidence is incomplete, especially in the financial fields of the road-project records, the study does not infer figures that are not documented. The colonial and pre-1996 material is retained only to explain the historical foundations of the transport system; the main analytical focus is the period from 1996 to 2024.

The interviews were not treated as substitutes for documentary evidence. Rather, they were used to illuminate aspects of transport history that official records do not fully capture, such as route experiences, taxation disputes, working conditions and the practical effects of transport policy on operators and passengers. Where oral accounts addressed the same issue, they were compared with one another and with available documentary material. This was especially important because recollections may differ on dates and sequence. The study therefore gives greater weight to points that can be supported by more than one source and avoids presenting an uncertain date as settled fact.

The study is limited by gaps in the available official records. The Ministry of Works data contain missing entries for VAT, dates and amounts paid on several projects, while the oral evidence does not always preserve the same level of chronological precision. These limitations do not invalidate the historical patterns identified, but they restrict the kinds of financial or year-by-year claims that can responsibly be made. The analysis consequently focuses on documented projects, institutional changes, transport routes and recurring experiences rather than reconstructing figures that are absent from the surviving material.

Historical Background to Road Transportation in Abakaliki

Before the development of motor roads, people in the Abakaliki area moved largely on foot and carried agricultural produce through local routes. Colonial road construction altered this pattern. A direct motor road linking Abakaliki with Enugu was opened in 1925, followed by the Abakaliki-Ogoja road in 1930 and the completion of the bridge over the Yahe River in 1939. These

routes linked Abakaliki more closely with Enugu, Ogoja and wider commercial networks and supported the movement of yams, rice, cattle and manufactured goods (Ottenberg 81). The Ezzagu-Achiagu connection to the Abakaliki-Enugu road in the 1930s also opened parts of the Ezza area to motor traffic and the yam trade.

As motor traffic expanded, private transport entrepreneurs became increasingly visible. Operators such as F.J.J. Okeke Motors, God's Time Motors, Iruka Motors and Ojemba Motors connected Abakaliki with places including Onitsha and Ogoja. By the 1980s, additional firms and owner-drivers had entered the sector. Oral evidence indicates that many operators combined transport with earlier experience in mechanics, trading or related occupations (Nwankwo). This supports Esse's argument that road transport attracted Igbo entrepreneurs because demand was high, returns could be comparatively rapid, and ownership carried economic and social value (Esse 198). The sector also supported mechanics, spare-parts dealers, fuel sellers and other service occupations. These developments formed the transport economy inherited by the new Ebonyi State in 1996.

Road Infrastructure and Connectivity, 1996-2024

After the creation of Ebonyi State, successive administrations invested in the construction, rehabilitation and expansion of roads in and around Abakaliki. Table 1 presents selected projects for which records were available from the Ebonyi State Ministry of Works. The dates in the source material are uneven, and several entries do not contain VAT or final-payment information. The table should therefore be read as a record of selected projects rather than a complete financial history of road construction in the state.

Table 1: Selected Roads Constructed or Rehabilitated under Different Administrations, 1997-2019

S/ N	Administration	Contractor	Project	Date
1	Walter Feghabor	Manikson	Construction of Enugu-Abakaliki Road	Oct. 1997
2	Walter Feghabor	F.O. Onwuegbuna	Construction of 3 km Nkaliki Road and additional work	Nov.-Dec. 1997
3	Walter Feghabor	A.C. Okorie & Co. Ltd	Rehabilitation of Onwe Road	Oct. 1997
4	Simeon Oduoye	Don. Tech. Ltd	Rehabilitation of Ezza Road, Abakaliki	Not available
5	Simeon Oduoye	D/Con Int'l Ltd	Rehabilitation of Abakaliki-Afikpo Road up to Nkwoagu, Abakaliki	Not available
6	Simeon Oduoye	Onald Engineering and Industrial Projects Ltd	Reconstruction of Ebonyi State Secretariat Road and Alo Street, Abakaliki	Not available
7	Samuel Ominyi Egwu	Hapel Ltd	Dualisation/expansion of Abakaliki Urban-Enugu Road (12 km)	Mar. 2004
8	Samuel Ominyi Egwu	Mapron & Jeluz Nig. Ltd	Construction of Ogbaga-Nkaleke-Ugbodo Road (23 km) with spur to Nwofe	Sept. 2006

9	Martin N. Elechi	Brass Engineering Const. Ltd	Dualisation of a section of Enugu-Abakaliki Federal Highway (82 km)	Mar. 2011
10	Martin N. Elechi	James J.S. Constr. Co. Nig. Ltd	Dualisation of 3 km Abakaliki-Afikpo Road from Akanu Ibiam Roundabout to Mammy Market	Feb. 2012
11	Martin N. Elechi	CCECC Nig. Ltd	Dualisation of Enugu-Abakaliki Highway from PDP Secretariat to EBSU Gate	Feb. 2014
12	David N. Umahi	China Zhonghao Nig. Ltd	Construction of Hill Top-Nwofe Road (23 km)	Dec. 2015-June 2017
13	David N. Umahi	Klyn Constr. Works Ltd	Construction of Road Safety Road, Abakaliki	Aug. 2018-Feb. 2019
14	David N. Umahi	Jomen Constr. Co. Ltd	Construction of Ndiagu Layout Roads (6.6 km)	Dec. 2015-June 2017
15	David N. Umahi	Sardar Construction Nig. Ltd	Construction of Golf-Quarry-Expressway Road, Ezza Road-Emefor (7.09 km)	Dec. 2015-June 2017

Table 1 (continued): Financial details for the projects numbered above.

S/N	Contract Sum	VAT	Amount Paid
1	₦48,629,070.00	₦4,501,794.00	₦40,518,000.00
2	₦21,315,871.50	₦2,122,220.00	₦19,100,000.00
3	₦9,815,767.00	₦222,222.00	₦2,000,000.00
4	₦16,671,375.00	Not available	₦9,330,000.00
5	₦38,830,550.00	Not available	₦2,000,000.00
6	₦21,418,331.55	Not available	Not available
7	₦2,202,653,487.54	Not available	Not available
8	₦934,263,283.80	Not available	Not available
9	₦1,810,337,917.68	Not available	Not available
10	₦1,655,000,000.00	Not available	Not available
11	₦4,271,805,154.27	Not available	Not available
12	₦3,638,150,239.50	Not available	Not available
13	₦54,487,686.14	Not available	Not available
14	₦774,684,274.00	Not available	Not available
15	₦825,842,780.00	Not available	Not available

Source: Ebonyi State Ministry of Works, data retrieved 22 Aug. 2024.

The pattern in Table 1 is more significant than a simple list of contracts. The available records show continuity in road investment across successive administrations, but they also suggest a shift in scale: the projects recorded for 1997 were valued in tens of millions of naira, whereas several projects from 2004 onward were valued in hundreds of millions or billions. This reflects the growing emphasis on dualisation, expansion and longer urban or inter-urban corridors as Abakaliki developed as a state capital.

At the same time, the repeated absence of VAT and payment data limits any reliable comparison between contract values and actual expenditure. The gaps reveal a record-keeping problem in the available files and mean that the table cannot be used to judge project completion or financial performance without additional documentation.

Table 2: Federal Roads Connecting Abakaliki with Other Areas

S/ N	Route	Location	Distance	Surface Type
1	Abakaliki-Afikpo Road	Abakaliki/Afikpo LGAs	60 km	Asphalt
2	Old Abakaliki-Ogoja Road	Abakaliki/Ogoja	17 km	Asphalt
3	Abakaliki-Obubra Road	Ebonyi LGA/Cross River	44 km	Asphalt
4	Abakaliki-Enugu Road	Abakaliki/Enugu State	47 km	Asphalt/Rigid Pavement
5	Abakaliki-Ndubia-Yahe	Abakaliki/Cross River	70 km	Asphalt
6	Nkwegu-Enyigba-Ikwo Road	Abakaliki/Ikwo/Cross River	21 km	Asphalt/Rigid Pavement
7	Amachi-Apiapum Road	Ebonyi/Cross River	24 km	Asphalt
	Total		283 km	

Source: Ebonyi State Ministry of Works, State Development Plan 12; data retrieved 22 Aug. 2024.

Table 2 shows that Abakaliki's road network is not only urban but regional. The 283 kilometres of listed federal routes connect the capital with Afikpo, Enugu and several corridors leading toward Cross River State. This pattern helps explain why transport services in Abakaliki developed beyond local passenger movement: the city functions as a transfer point for people, agricultural produce and other goods moving between Ebonyi and neighbouring areas. The mixture of asphalt and rigid pavement on selected corridors also indicates continuing attempts to strengthen heavily used routes. In the context of Growth Pole Theory, these connections are important because they provide the physical channels through which the economic and administrative functions concentrated in Abakaliki interact with surrounding areas.

Taken together, the two tables show that infrastructure development after 1996 was both urban and outward-looking. Projects within Abakaliki improved circulation around the state capital, while the federal corridors linked the city to neighbouring states and other commercial centres. This dual character is important to the paper's argument. Urban development requires internal accessibility, but a capital city also depends on external connections through which food, building materials, labour, visitors and services can circulate. The selected projects therefore strengthened Abakaliki not only as a place through which vehicles passed, but as a destination and organising point within a wider regional network.

The records also reveal continuity across administrations rather than a single government being responsible for the transport infrastructure on which the city depended. Feghabor's administration recorded early rehabilitation and construction projects after state creation; the Egwu period included larger expansion works; the Elechi period continued with major dualisation projects; and the Umahi period recorded additional urban and connecting roads. Because the table is selective and incomplete, it cannot establish which administration invested most effectively. It does, however, show that road development remained a recurring policy concern across the period under study.

Changes and Continuities in Abakaliki Transport Services, 1996-2024

The creation of Ebonyi State brought a direct public-sector intervention in transport services. Walter Feghabor, the first military administrator, established Ebonyi State Transport Service (EBOTRANS) on 17 November 1996. Oral evidence from the organisation indicates that the initial fleet began with four buses, later increased to eight and then to about twenty. Taxis and minibuses were also introduced for urban mass transit within the state capital, although this aspect of the service was short-lived (Nebe).

EBOTRANS expanded further under the first elected governor, Samuel Ominyi Egwu, who provided twenty Hiace buses. The larger fleet enabled the company to operate routes from Abakaliki to Abuja, Aba, Uburu, Afikpo and Enugu. Revenue from the service supported operations and the development of a new facility along the Rice Mill Road axis, to which the management later relocated (Nebe). The importance of this phase lies not merely in the number of buses acquired but in the widening of Abakaliki's direct connections to economic and administrative centres outside the state.

Private operators complemented the state service. From the mid-2000s, companies such as Romchi Mass Transit and Peace Mass Transit operated routes linking Abakaliki with Nnewi, Enugu, Onitsha, Aba, Nsukka, Lagos and Abuja, while Enugu North Mass Transit, Ifesinachi Transport Services, GUO Transport Service, Abia Line Mass Transit and Ikwo Youths Mass Transit also served the city (Mgbemena; Omeke). This represented continuity with the older tradition of private transport entrepreneurship but on a larger inter-state scale. Public and private services together increased the frequency and geographical range of passenger movement through Abakaliki.

The interaction between public and private transport providers is another important feature of continuity and change. EBOTRANS represented direct state participation in passenger transport, while private companies supplied additional routes, vehicles and frequencies that government services alone could not provide. The resulting system was therefore mixed rather than exclusively public or private. This mattered for Abakaliki because route diversity reduced dependence on a single operator and widened the number of destinations that could be reached directly from the state capital.

The period also demonstrates that transport development was not a one-time event associated only with the creation of Ebonyi State. EBOTRANS expanded, private companies entered or widened their operations, and transport routes adjusted to the growing administrative and commercial importance of Abakaliki. The continuity with earlier decades lay in the use of transport for trade and migration; the major post-1996 change was the scale of institutional support, road investment and inter-state passenger connectivity associated with a newly created state capital.

Contributions of Road Transportation to Abakaliki's Development

Road transportation contributed to Abakaliki's development first by supporting commerce. Earlier roads had been built largely to facilitate the movement of agricultural produce, and that function continued after 1996 in a more diversified urban economy. Improved connections enabled traders to move rice, yams and other produce from the Abakaliki area while bringing livestock, food items, manufactured goods and other commodities into the city. The transport network therefore connected local production and consumption to wider regional markets rather than leaving Abakaliki dependent on its immediate hinterland.

Second, the sector generated direct and indirect employment. Drivers and conductors depended on passenger transport, while mechanics, vulcanisers, spare-parts dealers, fuel sellers,

vehicle washers and other service providers benefited from the presence and maintenance needs of commercial vehicles. These activities created an economic chain around transport terminals, workshops and major road corridors. The evidence therefore supports the argument that transportation influenced urban development through related occupations and services, not simply through the physical movement of passengers.

Third, transport connectivity encouraged mobility and migration. Abakaliki had attracted migrant farmers, traders, artisans and civil servants long before 1996, but its elevation to state-capital status increased the importance of regular transport connections. Afigbo's account of Igbo migration into the Upper Cross River area provides the longer historical background to this movement (85). In the post-1996 period, inter-state bus routes made it easier for workers, traders, students, visitors and investors to enter and leave the city. This supported the expansion of markets, housing demand, services and social interaction associated with a growing capital city.

Finally, road projects and transport services reinforced Abakaliki's position as the administrative and commercial centre of Ebonyi State. The scale of road investment shown in Table 1 and the regional connections in Table 2 demonstrate that the city was progressively integrated into wider transport corridors. This does not mean that transportation alone explains Abakaliki's growth. State creation, public administration, agriculture, education, commerce and population change were also important. The evidence instead shows transportation as an enabling system that linked these activities and made their expansion easier.

The developmental effects of transportation were also visible in the relationship between mobility and urban services. Regular passenger movement supported activity around motor parks, roadside commercial areas and workshops, where travellers and transport workers created demand for food, repairs and other everyday services. The evidence available does not provide a complete statistical measure of the number of jobs or businesses created, so the paper does not attempt to quantify this effect. What the oral evidence does show is the existence of a network of occupations whose livelihood depended directly or indirectly on commercial transport.

Transportation also contributed to the social integration of the state capital. Routes to Enugu, Abuja, Lagos, Aba, Nnewi and other destinations connected Abakaliki residents with educational, administrative and commercial opportunities beyond Ebonyi State, while also making the city more accessible to outsiders. Such movement helped sustain the city's role as a meeting point for people of different occupational and regional backgrounds. In this respect, transport was not merely an economic service; it was part of the process through which Abakaliki functioned as a growing urban centre.

Viewed through the Growth Pole framework, these findings suggest that transport served as one of the channels through which activities concentrated in Abakaliki interacted with a broader region. The theory is therefore supported only in a qualified sense. Connectivity helped the city attract and circulate economic activity, but the strength of that effect depended on road condition, transport cost, regulation and the capacity of operators to maintain services. This qualification is important because it prevents the analysis from treating infrastructure investment as automatically equivalent to development.

Challenges of the Transport Sector in Abakaliki

The contribution of transportation was limited by persistent infrastructural and regulatory problems. Poor road maintenance increased travel time, vehicle damage and accident risks, particularly during periods of heavy traffic. Onokala and Olajide identify congestion, parking problems, accidents and environmental pollution among the wider challenges affecting urban transport in Nigeria (2951-52). In Abakaliki, these problems reduced some of the advantages

created by new road construction because infrastructure that was not adequately maintained could not provide the same level of mobility over time.

Taxation was another source of tension. Oral evidence indicates that transport operators and tricyclists repeatedly protested what they regarded as excessive or arbitrary levies during the Umahi administration. The interview material contained in the submitted manuscript is not consistent on the exact year of a general transport strike, identifying different dates in separate versions of the same discussion. To avoid reproducing an unresolved factual contradiction, the evidence is treated here as establishing repeated strike or protest action during the period rather than assigning a precise year that the available interview record does not conclusively verify (Nwali; Nweke). The exact date should be checked against the author's original interview notes before final publication.

The centralisation of loading and stopping arrangements also created difficulties for some passengers. According to oral evidence, restrictions on established stopping points along the Enugu-Abakaliki Road meant that passengers living before or beyond the central park sometimes incurred additional transport costs after being carried past more convenient stopping points (Nwode). The concern raised by respondents was therefore not simply the existence of a central terminal but the accessibility and safety consequences of limiting intermediate stops.

Operating costs became more severe after the removal of the subsidy on Premium Motor Spirit in 2023. Respondents reported that higher petrol and diesel costs reduced operators' margins and contributed to higher fares and transport costs for goods (Nkenke). These pressures affected both passenger services and the movement of foodstuffs and building materials. Some drivers also faced irregular or inadequate remuneration and depended on trip allowances or charges on passengers' luggage for additional income (Nkenke). Such working conditions could undermine the stability and professionalism of transport services.

A further concern was the use of old or poorly maintained commercial vehicles. Oral evidence linked ageing vehicles with breakdowns, pollution, lost travel time and safety risks (Nweke). This challenge shows that road construction alone is insufficient: the developmental value of transportation also depends on vehicle condition, regulation, maintenance practices and the ability of operators to meet rising operating costs.

The challenges were also interconnected. Poor road condition increased vehicle maintenance costs; higher fuel prices raised operating expenses; taxation added further pressure; and weak remuneration could shift part of the burden onto drivers and passengers. These pressures could eventually reduce service quality or make some routes less attractive to operators. The transport problem in Abakaliki should therefore be understood as a system in which infrastructure, regulation, operating cost and labour conditions influence one another.

The available evidence also points to an institutional challenge in transport planning and historical accountability. Missing fields in project records make it difficult to evaluate expenditure and completion consistently, while conflicting recollections in oral testimony can complicate the reconstruction of particular events. Better administrative record-keeping would therefore serve not only financial accountability but also future planning and historical research. Reliable data on projects, traffic flows, vehicle condition, fares and transport employment would make it easier to assess the sector's contribution with greater precision.

Conclusion

The study finds that road transportation was an important enabling factor in the development of Abakaliki between 1996 and 2024. Earlier colonial roads created the initial transport corridors, but state creation changed the scale and purpose of transportation in the city.

Successive road projects, the establishment and expansion of EBOTRANS and the growth of private inter-state transport companies strengthened Abakaliki's links with surrounding communities and major Nigerian cities. These connections supported trade, employment, migration and the city's role as the administrative and commercial centre of Ebonyi State. The central contribution of the paper is to show that the relationship between transportation and urban development in Abakaliki is best understood as a system of linkages rather than as road construction alone. Roads created physical access; public and private operators converted that access into regular mobility; and the resulting movement supported markets, services and labour. At the same time, the evidence shows that the benefits of connectivity were weakened by maintenance problems, taxation disputes, restrictive stopping arrangements, rising fuel costs, weak conditions of service and ageing vehicles. Abakaliki's future transport contribution will therefore depend as much on governance and maintenance as on new construction.

Recommendations

Based on these findings, the study recommends the following:

1. The Ebonyi State Government should maintain existing urban and inter-urban roads on a regular schedule so that earlier infrastructure investment is not undermined by deterioration.
2. Transport taxes and levies should be clearly defined, harmonised and transparently administered in consultation with recognised transport operators in order to reduce disputes and repeated protest action.
3. Passenger loading and stopping arrangements should be reviewed to balance traffic management with safe and affordable access for commuters living outside the central terminal area.
4. EBOTRANS should strengthen fleet maintenance and, where resources permit, replace unserviceable vehicles so that the state transport service can continue to complement private operators.
5. Private transport companies should be encouraged through a predictable regulatory environment, while vehicle roadworthiness and maintenance standards should be enforced to reduce breakdowns, pollution and safety risks.
6. The Ministry of Works and other relevant agencies should improve project record-keeping, particularly for contract dates, VAT, payments and completion status, to support accountability and future historical research.

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