

*Coffin holding Patrice
Lumumba's tooth returns to DRC
60 years after his murder*



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Kinshasa, June 23 (RHC)-- The Democratic Republic of Congo is preparing to soon hold three days of national mourning for slain independence leader Patrice Lumumba, who was assassinated in 1961.

Earlier this week, Belgium, the former colonial power, handed over a tooth that a Belgian police officer said he took as a trophy after he helped cut up Lumumba's body and then dissolved it in acid.

The tooth is believed to be the only remains left of Lumumba, who was killed a year after he became the first elected prime minister of the Congo in 1960. The CIA had ordered his assassination but could not complete the job.

Instead, the United States and Belgium covertly funneled cash and aid to rival politicians who seized power and killed Lumumba. A coffin holding Lumumba's tooth was flown from Brussels to Kinshasa.

Patrice Lumumba's son Roland spoke to reporters: "In order for a soul to rest in peace, it needs to be buried, even if it's just part of a person's finger nail or hair, so that the mourning can be completed. And this can be done through this restitution."

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