Beat: Health

South Africa`s president says Mandela is `recuperating` from lung infection

-, 13.12.2012, 14:10 Time

USPA News - Anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela is "recuperating" after falling ill from a recurrence of a previous lung infection, South African President Jacob Zuma said during an event on Thursday. It remains unclear when the statesman might be discharged.

Speaking in Bloemfontein, the judicial capital of South Africa and the capital city of the Free State Province, Zuma said Mandela is recovering as he remains hospitalized for a sixth day. "Madiba is recuperating from a lung infection at a Pretoria hospital," he said, referring to Mandela by his Xhosa clan name. Zuma made the comments while renaming Bloemfontein International Airport to Bram Fischer International Airport and hours before unveiling a Mandela statue in the city. "We wish him a speedy recovery and assure him yet again, of the love and support of many in the country and abroad," he said. Mandela, 94, was hospitalized Saturday at 1 Military Hospital near South Africa`s executive capital, Pretoria. Zuma previously said the anti-apartheid icon was receiving medical attention consistent with his age and stressed there is no cause for alarm, but a lack of information has caused growing concern. Presidential spokesman Mac Maharaj on Tuesday said a series of tests revealed a recurrence of a previous lung infection, but it remains unclear when Mandela might be discharged. "Doctors attending to former President Mandela have reported that he has made progress during the past 24 hours and they are satisfied with the way he is responding to treatment," Maharaj said on Wednesday. Before being elected as President, Mandela was a strong anti-apartheid activist and the leader of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the African National Congress. He spent 27 years in prison after being convicted and sentenced to life in prison on charges for sabotage and other crimes. Much of his prison term was served on Robben Island. Mandela was released on February 11, 1990, and became president only four years later, leading the country with a multi-racial administration to end the apartheid. Mandela and Frederik Willem de Klerk were jointly awarded the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize for their work for the peaceful termination of the apartheid regime, and for laying the foundations for a new democratic South Africa.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-337/south-africas-president-says-mandela-is-recuperating-from-lung-infection.html

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