

Beat: Miscellaneous

S. Africa`s last apartheid-era leader hospitalized for pacemaker

-, 02.07.2013, 14:44 Time

USPA News - Frederik Willem de Klerk, who served as South Africa`s last apartheid-era leader and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for engineering the end of apartheid, was hospitalized on Tuesday for the installation of a pacemaker, officials said. De Klerk, 77, had been feeling unwell in recent weeks while with his wife Elita on a working visit and holiday in Europe.

He had returned to the South African city of Cape Town on Sunday in light of the hospitalization of former President Nelson Mandela, who remains in a critical but stable condition. "After his return to South Africa on Sunday, Mr. De Klerk felt dizzy and saw his specialist yesterday (Monday)," his foundation said in a statement. "He has had several such spells in recent weeks and his specialist recommended the immediate installation of a pacemaker. He will be fitted with a pacemaker later today and will spend the night in hospital." Following Tuesday`s hospitalization, South African President Jacob Zuma wished De Klerk a speedy recovery. "We wish the former President well during this difficult time. Let us keep him and his family in our thoughts and prayers," he said in a statement issued through the presidency. Mandela, who was hospitalized in Pretoria last month for a recurrence of a lung infection, also remained in hospital on Tuesday. Presidency spokesman Mac Maharaj said Monday that the anti-apartheid icon is still in a critical but stable condition, and Zuma urged South Africans to prepare for Mandela`s upcoming 95th birthday on July 18. 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-1196/s-africas-last-apartheid-era-leader-hospitalized-for-pacemaker.html>

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619