Beat: Politics

Nelson Mandela undergoes successful procedure to remove gallstones

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USPA News - Anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela underwent a successful procedure on Saturday morning to remove gallstones, a week after he was hospitalized for a lung infection, a spokesman for South African President Jacob Zuma said. Presidential spokesman Mac Maharaj said doctors discovered earlier this week that Mandela had developed gallstones, which are hard, pebble-like deposits that form inside the gallbladder.

It is in addition to a recurrence of a previous lung infection which had previously been made public. "The medical team decided to attend to a lung infection before determining when to attend to the gall stones," Maharaj said in a statement, which referred to Mandela by his Xhosa clan name. "This morning, the former president underwent a procedure via endoscopy to have the gall stones removed. The procedure was successful and Madiba is recovering." Mandela, 94, was hospitalized on December 8 at 1 Military Hospital near South Africa`s executive capital, Pretoria. Zuma previously said the anti-apartheid icon was "recuperating" from the lung infection, but a lack of information has caused growing concern among many South Africans. "Madiba is recuperating from a lung infection at a Pretoria hospital. We wish him a speedy recovery and assure him yet again, of the love and support of many in the country and abroad," Zuma said Thursday while speaking at an airport in the South African judicial capital of Bloemfontein. 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.

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