



(At a voting center)



(The village nearby)



(Both measure 190cm)

The additional 5 members joined Juba on the 1st of January, and got on to work on the 2nd with the visit to some voting centers. For the time being the atmosphere in the town is rather calm and quiet. Many centers are posted under the huge mango trees within the premise of schools, churches, and town buildings. Those local people who are working for the referendum speak out their feelings towards the upcoming event.



(Checking the location of voting centers at GPS)

Today, we will report from Khartoum, the capital of Sudan.

Here, many people do not use road maps. We simply have to ask passer-bys here and there for the location of voting centers. Most of the times, people are kind enough to indicate the roads, but quite often they show us wrong roads. When we manage to reach a voting center, we always make sure to check its exact location by GPS, so that we can return.

Reported by Mr. Kawanishi



With the final arrival of our team leader, Mr. Ishii, on the 4th, all the team members are now gathered in Juba. Representing the Japan Referendum Observation Mission in Sudan, the Team Leader Ishii made courtesy visits on the following day to those who are working for the referendum. He received a warm welcome from his interlocutors.



He then continued his visit to the voting centers and confirmed personally the arrival of voting materials and the progress of overall preparation.



Quite often primary schools are used as voting centers. Here is the Team Leader Ishii with children in the neighborhood who were playing at the center at the time of his visit. The team prays for enduring peace so that these children could play without any worries.

Reported by Mr. Yamamoto



(Scene from the interview by BBC)

With an early morning interview with BBC, and evening interviews with SSTV and Yomiuri Newspaper, the media interest seems increasing and which made me a sobering effect.

(Gondokoro visit)



The voting centers of the Gondokoro area look rather located on a map along a main road. But what we discovered is that one indeed is situated at a half hour inland from the main road and the other is on an island in the Nail River. We thus made a visit to the center by boat.

Villagers in the island are those who displaced themselves in order to avoid the cross-fire during the conflict in the mainland and here we also witnessed the traces of the war. Voting materials had started arriving since last night and the preparation was being well shaped up for tomorrow's big day.

Reported by Ms. Watanabe

Today, we made a convoy with four vehicles in order to reach Liria area. On our way, we managed to visit one of the voting centers in Lokiliri where we could not find when we approached from the road Juba-Nimule on 31 December. The pass was dotted here and there with the remains of burned vehicles, the traces of the internal conflict between the Sudan government and the SPLA.



Today's visit was joined by the team leader who appeared in the photos with the staff leader of a voting center and with some kids at the location where the voting registration had previously taken place.



Talking about the toilet, this is always an issue in the field. Although we need to be mindful to take enough water so that to avoid heat disorder, drinking too much water at the same time brings us a problem. With the landmines still remain on the ground, not all the area serves our open-air toilet. We thus have to resort to what villages offer – one of the two we came across today was really modern, as you see!

