

No. 16 8 January 2011

Finally, the voting will start tomorrow. Preparation is being underway around the clock at the voting centers. The staff will arrive at 6 am, well ahead of the opening scheduled at 8 am.



Our team is also working hard to make us well prepared for tomorrow.



Who will visit which voting centers is decided by rock-paper-scissors. Fair enough!



Well... finally the big day is at the corner!

Reported by Ms. Ogawa

No. 17 9 January 2011

Today, at 8 am, the voting started. At the tomb of John Garrang which served as a voting center, some people were reportedly waiting in line as earlier as two o'clock in the morning.

President of the South Sudan, Salva Kiir casted his vote, followed by thousands of voters.



About one and a half hours away from Juba, villagers seemingly came to vote once they became free from their daily chores. At 5 pm, the center closed its door and the ballot materials were all locked into the warehouse. In this way first day of voting, which would continue 7 days, has ended.

Good work for all the staff at the voting centers who worked all the day through under the heat!

Reported by Ms. Terawaki



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

In contrast to Juba, national/international observers outnumber the voters at the voting centers.



Nevertheless, the atmosphere at the voting centers is pretty relaxed and the staff receives the voters gently. The photo shows the staff picking up a ballot paper which was dropped from a small narrow gap between two desks, which looked to the voter rather a slit of a ballot box. This kind of mishap seemingly occurs quite often.



With the help of our driver and assistant, we continue our running-around the town!

Reported by Mr. Adachi, Mr. Yamano, and Mr. Kawanishi

No. 19 11 January 2011

The 3rd voting day. Here is one of the voting centers in Juba.





Although it depends on voting centers, less people wait in a line than the first day. While the air of excitement may have dashed, all the voters cast their ballots following the guide provided by the staff at the voting center. After 3 days of work, the staff seemingly got good at providing guidance, they perform their work at ease. The voting will continue 4 more days.

Reported by Mr. Yamamoto

Yesterday, the 3rd day of voting, we have been to Juba Port to check to see if it is feasible to use a boat in order to reach some locations where the team could possibly carry out observation.

As we arrived at the port, we came across with some people who returned from Khartoum, carrying all of their belonging.



Having seen no small boat at the port, we have to move to Nyoka dock nearby the office of JICA. Many people were crossing the Nile River by foyboat. The voting enter we were trying to reach is located at Gondokoro, a 30-min. ride downstream, and what we needed was not really a foyboat but a motor boat. With luck we got one!

In order to be sure in advance for the safety, we negotiated with the boat owner for a trial ride by crossing the river to the other side which takes only 1 or 2 minutes. The ride turned out to be much harder than we thought. The wooden motor boat looked a bit immersed and could not reach to the shore, thus we all had to soak out feet down into the water before getting onboard. Dressed in the Indian-made one-piece which I had just bought in Juba, I managed to gather up the hem so that not to get wet like others who had to soak their pants. My sandals also bailed me out from taking off shoes and socks to be in bare feet in the water.

Despite all these hassles, we finally came to a conclusion that the boat was not safe enough and we had to give up the visit.

