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## Woman with 11 husbands stoned to death by Al-Shabab in Somalia



the southern Sablale town. Al-Shabab practises a strict interpretation of Sharia law.

The militant group controls large swathes of Somalia and often conducts raids and attacks in its attempt to overthrow the central government based in the capital, Mogadishu.

Mohamed Abu Usama, al-Shabab's governor for the Lower Shabelle region, told Reuters: "Shukri Abdullahi and nine husbands, including her legal husband, were brought at the court, each saying she was his wife."

A woman has been stoned to death in Somalia after a court run by al-Shabab convicted her of having several husbands, the militant group says. Shukri Abdullahi Warsame was accused of marrying 11 times, without divorcing her previous husbands.

She was buried neck-deep and pelted to death with stones by al-Shabab fighters, say residents of

According to Islamic law, polyandry - a woman having more than one husband - is illegal but men are allowed to marry up to four wives.

Divorce is allowed for both partners but while men can separate from their wives, the woman has to seek the husbands's consent. If denied, she can go to religious court to get the approval.

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## Black Canadian airbnb guests face U.S. racist police horrors



Three Black Canadians have been speaking of their horrible experiences not as airbnb guests but as visible minorities harassed by police reckoning of them as suspects.

Feeling racially profiled, they said their Realto, California travel experience was traumatic when police descended on them as they tried to leave an airbnb two-night lodging. Nigerian-born Ottawa resident and artist Komi-Oluwa Olafimihan said someone in the neighbourhood had seen them load-

ing their car with their luggage on the street harbouring the airbnb resident where they were vacating. The person, Olafumihan said, called the police to report that three black people were thieves. "A neighbour across the street saw 3 black people packing luggage into their car and assumed we were stealing from the house. She then called the police," Olafumihan writes in his Facebook page, adding that "The cops admit that the woman's reason for calling the police was because we didn't WAVE to her as she looked at us putting our luggage into our car from her lawn".

Olafumihan, who was in the company of two female artists, said the ordeal lasted about 45 minutes, noting they were essentially detained. In addition, he said, they were further detained at the airport. "This is insanity," he writes. By Peter Uduehi

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## Will Pele's prediction come true in Russia next month?



The world's most prestigious sporting event, Fifa World Cup, the world's most prestigious sporting event, takes place in Russia next month, but the question is: is this the year an African nation wins the trophy for the first time?

If it does, Brazil's Pele, the legendary football star's prediction of an African country lifting the trophy would have come true. The football king made the prediction 20 years ago after brilliant perfor-

mances from African sides who dazzled spectators with memorable skills for the ages. Who would forget the dancing footwork of Cameroon's Roger Miller in 1990, or the heel-over passes and dribbles of Nigeria's Jay-Jay Okocha in 1994, or Tunisia's and Morocco's inspiring outings in 1978 and 1986, respectively? With star-studded teams from Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt participating in this year's event, Pele's predictions may well happen.

By Peter Uduehi

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# Assignment: Climate-smart technologies could pay off for the African farmer

By Dr. Caroline Mwongera

When Ugandan farmer Eveline Aryemo first tried the NABE 15 improved bean variety, she did not know that this seed contained superior abilities to not only tolerate drought conditions and diseases common in her farm but also triple yields.

The seed was promoted by the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and Uganda's National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) together with partners. A truly "climate-smart" technology, the drought tolerant variety has helped Eveline meet market demands and to farm in challenging climate conditions.

NABE15 cooks faster than most of the other commercial varieties and thus requires less firewood, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and saves time for women to engage in other activities. When grown in drought-stressed environments it is more productive compared to other varieties, which assures women farmers of a surplus for sale and hence income for home expenses such as purchase of other food items to diversify the family meals. Farmers in Africa - big and small - know they need to get climate-smart in this way. Hunger still stalks the continent, and climate change is a key culprit for low productivity. Africa's ability to feed itself hinges on investment in adapting to these conditions, and minimizing agriculture's own contribution to climate change, as Eveline has done.

But where will this investment come from? Impacts from climate change on people in sub-Saharan Africa are expected to be some of the greatest compared to other regions by 2100, yet the continent currently only receives 5 per cent of climate funding.

The answer is to identify the technologies that are actually going to pay off for African farmers - quite literally. By analysing what will work in which region, we can remove the risk that makes investment in African agriculture so daunting.

Scientists at the International Center for Tropical Agriculture have led an effort to produce detailed guides on the status of and opportunities for investment in climate-smart agriculture (CSA) in fourteen African countries. These profiles provide, for the first time, a scientific framework to guide future CSA financing in Africa and de-risk investment in the sector.

We not only analysed the approaches that will work in each country, but also provide recommendations on how to develop the technical, policy and investment conditions to achieve sustainable agricultural development for food security under climate change.

In addition to on-farm interventions like Eveline's super bean, options exist to make

entire food systems more climate-smart and profitable at the same time.



Take the dairy industry, for example. As temperatures rise, quality sources of animal feed decline. But scientists have found that improved feed, such as the drought-tolerant brachiaria grass have an additional benefit of boosting milk production by up to 40 per cent. When animals are more productive, the carbon emissions associated with their production of a unit of meat and milk go down. The business of producing brachiaria grass in South America is worth US\$ 600 million. We are now working towards bringing commercial production of the grass to Africa, starting in Zambia. This will not only provide a huge economic opportunity, but also contribute to food security and climate change targets.

The provision of services such as weather information and insurance programs are also being shown to pay off.

ACRE (Agriculture and Climate Risk Enterprise) is the largest agricultural insurance program in sub-Saharan Africa. ACRE's offers a wide range of products, including insurance linked to agricultural credit from Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs), and a product that links insurance to a replanting guarantee by a seed company. The insurance premium is incorporated into the price of a bag of maize seed. Each bag contains a scratch card with a code that is texted to ACRE at planting time to start coverage against drought. Each farm is monitored using satellite imagery for 21 days. If the index is triggered, farmers are automatically paid via the M-Pesa

mobile phone platform. The indexes that ACRE uses for its insurance projects are based on several data sources including solar powered automated weather stations, satellite rainfall measurements, and government area yield statistics. ACRE has 200,000 farmer clients in Kenya, Tanzania and Rwanda. Insured farmers have invested 19 per cent more in farm productivity, resulting in 16 per cent more earnings compared to their uninsured neighbours.

The bottom line of our research is that no matter how big or small agricultural enterprises in Africa are, they are businesses. Just as with all business expansion plans, a risk analysis must be performed before investment can be increased.

Our CSA profiles provide the science to give donors the confidence to invest in African agriculture, demonstrating the best bets for a pay-off - not just in terms of increased profits for farmers but in terms of climate change adaptation and mitigation as well.

We believe that if new investment can be unlocked for African agriculture, the continent can be on its way to being both future-proof, and food secure.

*Dr. Caroline Mwongera is a farming systems and climate change scientist with the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT).*

## Election Day is Coming.

**Election Day is June 7, 2018.**

**Polls are open from 9:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. ET / 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. CT.**

To vote in this election, you must be:

- 18 years of age or older on June 7, 2018; **and**
- a Canadian citizen; **and**
- a resident of Ontario.

To find out where you vote, visit [elections.on.ca](http://elections.on.ca), check your Voter Information Card or call us at **1.888.668.8683** (TTY: 1.888.292.2312).

Each voting location will have magnifiers, Braille ballot templates and other tools to help you vote.

Don't forget to bring your ID and Voter Information Card when you go to vote.

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## Panama Papers exposed scams on West African countries

The international coalition of journalists which pioneered reporting on the "Panama Papers" has teamed up with West Africa's Norbert Zongo Cell for Investigative Journalism (Cenozo)\* to expose the tax avoidance, financial crime and corruption which siphon money out of the region, hindering development.

In what the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) calls West Africa's largest-ever journalism collaboration, reporters from 11 countries have revealed the financial secrets of some of the region's most powerful politicians, moguls and corporations.

Will Fitzgibbon, the ICIJ's Africa partnership coordinator, says the consortium chose to focus on West Africa because "its 367 million people are some of the most disadvantaged in the world, and its position as the tax-avoidance center of Africa means those people are being hit harder still."

Experts say gross domestic product per capita would be 15 percent higher across Africa if money had not been siphoned from the continent, the ICIJ adds.

## EU tells Sudan no death penalty for Nourah, no matter what

Khartoum — The European Union Heads of Mission and the Norwegian and Swiss ambassadors to Sudan have expressed their concern about Noura Hussein, who has recently been sentenced to death for killing her husband after being forced into marriage, and allegedly being raped.

In a press statement released today, the EU heads of missions recall their "firm opposition" to the death penalty: "whatever the place and circumstances".

The concerns follow the conviction of 19-year-old Noura Hussein in Sudan on Thursday. The Central Omdurman Court in the twin city of Khartoum sentenced her to death by hanging for murdering her husband. Hussein has claimed that she refused to consummate the marriage after which her husband's relatives held her down while he raped her.

In response the EU officials stated that they "remain fully committed to the universal abolition of this cruel and inhumane punishment,

which is a serious violation of human rights and human dignity".

The heads of mission also recall the principle of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights stating that "marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses".

The Sudanese No to Suppression of Women Initiative has launched a campaign against the ruling. Internationally, the case of Noura Hussein has raised attention to the issues of forced marriage and marital rape in Sudan. The legal age of marriage is 10 and marital rape goes unpunished.

With the hashtag #JusticeForNoura and #SaveNoura many rights activists have expressed their condemnation of the unjust punishment. Amnesty International's Seif Mungano told CNN that "The death penalty is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment and to apply it to a rape victim only highlights the failure of the Sudanese authorities to acknowledge the violence she endured".

## WHO seeks urgent action against chronic diseases in Africa

A new report from the World Health Organization (WHO) Independent High-level Commission on Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) calls for urgent action to address chronic diseases and mental health disorders. It demands high-level political commitment and the immediate scaling up of actions to address the epidemic of NCDs, the world's leading causes of death and ill health.

Collectively, cancer, diabetes, lung and heart diseases kill 41 million people annually, accounting for 71% of all deaths globally, 15 million of which occur between the ages of 30 and 70 years. The report focuses attention on growing, but often neglected, challenges like mental disorders and obesity.

President of Uruguay, Dr Tabaré Vázquez, called on world leaders to "redouble efforts" to meet the Sustainable Development Goals target to reduce premature death from NCDs by one-third by 2030 and to promote mental health and wellbeing: "Preserving and improving people's quality of life is a way of enhancing human dignity in order to make progress in terms of economic growth, social justice and human coexistence," said Dr Vázquez, who presented the report to WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus in Geneva today. "Health is essential for peace and democracy. It is not a matter of spending a lot, but of making good investments."

The Commission makes six recommendations in its report:

1. Heads of State and Government should take

responsibility for the NCD agenda, rather than delegating it to ministers of health alone, as it requires collaboration and cooperation across many sectors.

2. Governments should identify and implement a specific set of priorities within the overall NCD and mental health agenda, based on public health needs.

3. Governments should reorient health systems to include NCDs prevention and control and mental health services in their universal health coverage policies and plans.

4. Governments should increase effective regulation, appropriate engagement with the private sector, academia, civil society, and communities.

5. Governments and the international community should develop a new economic paradigm for funding actions on NCDs and mental health.

6. Governments need to strengthen accountability to their citizens for action on NCDs and simplify existing international accountability mechanisms.

"We know the problem and we have the solutions, but unless we increase financing for NCDs, and demand all stakeholders be held responsible for delivering on their promises, we won't be able to accelerate progress," said Commission Co-chair Dr Sania Nishtar. "The NCDs epidemic has exploded in low- and middle-income countries over the last two decades years. We need to move quickly to save lives, prevent needless suffering, and keep fragile health systems from collapsing."

Fulfilling the promise of universal health coverage, to ensure all people everywhere can access quality health services without suffering financial hardship, is one of WHO's top priorities. The Commission's report will help guide countries as they make progress toward health for all and tackle both NCDs and infectious killers.

"WHO was founded 70 years ago on the conviction that health is a human right to be enjoyed by all people, and not a privilege for the few," WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "The recommendations of this report are an important step towards realizing that right by preventing the suffering and death caused by noncommunicable diseases."

By calling on Heads of State and Government to take ultimate responsibility for NCDs, the report, which was also published simultaneously in the medical journal *The Lancet*, recognizes the need to ensure that health ministries have the influence they require to ensure the issue is backed with the political will and funding it merits. Delivering the report to the WHO Director-General is the first activity of the Commission, which will continue to provide high-level support to the NCD community by catalyzing action and financing, especially in countries.



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# What twitter reveals about some African leaders

Burundi president Pierre Nkurunziza is the most shunned leader in East Africa while Yoweri Museveni of Uganda is likely the community's foremost champion, a review of data on twitter shows.

President Paul Kagame of Rwanda is the avid reader of all his regional peers considering the number of business pages and blogs he follows, but Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya tops them all as the busiest on social media engagement.

The twitter review also reveals interesting online interests pursued by the presidents, including which cabinet ministers and foreign dignitaries they are interested keeping tabs with.

But it is Mr Nkurunziza who takes the flak as a pariah leader -avoided online by all his colleagues and recording the least number of twitter followers since 2012 when he joined the forum.

The Burundian leader whose country is mired in political instability that has seen thousands of its citizens flee as refugees, is not followed on twitter by any of the EAC Heads of State.

Presidents John Magufuli (Tanzania), Uhuru Kenyatta (Kenya), Paul Kagame (Rwanda) and Yoweri Museveni (Uganda) follow each other. Nkurunziza only follows President Magufuli who has not reciprocated. South Sudan President Salva Kiir has no verified twitter account.

Nkurunziza who torpedoed the Arusha Peace Accord to controversially extend his reign for a third consecutive term, has only 124,000 followers on twitter, and follows 15 accounts users, mostly local.

Even Dr Magufuli who is new on twitter -having joined in 2015 when he was campaigning for the presidency, has more followers than Nkurunziza by almost four-fold with 425,000 followers. But at nine, the Tanzanian president follows the least number of people and organisations.

Both Kagame, Kenyatta and Museveni have been on twitter for at least eight years now but the Kenyan leader is by far the most active, tweeting 11,500 times to rake in the highest number of followers at 3.18 million.

Museveni comes behind Kenyatta in second position having sent 4,248 tweets but with 832,000 followers, he does not match Kagame's who has 1.81 million followers despite twitting only 2,733 times.

Kenyatta and Kagame were in 2012 named among Africa's top 10 tweeting politicians by the UK's Guardian.

Magufuli uses twitter the least, having sent just 191 tweets so far, the last being a birthday wish to former president Ali Hassan Mwinyi on May 8, 2018.

Favourite ministers?

A peculiar pattern of individual interests among the presidents show that only Nkurunziza follows more pages of his own government.

Interestingly, Magufuli, Kenyatta and Museveni each follow one minister in their respective cabinet. Magufuli follows Environment and Union Affairs minister January Makamba, Kenyatta follows his finance minister Henry Rotich while Museveni keeps an eye on his minister for ICT Frank Tamwebaze. Kagame follows no minister.

Except for Kenyatta who follows his deputy William Ruto, Magufuli does not follow Ms Samia Suluhu Hassan as is Museveni who does not follow his deputy Edward Ssekandi. Rwanda and

Burundi do not have vice presidents. Kagame served in that position from 1994 to 2000 when he abolished it.

Kagame and Kenyatta are the only ones who follow Africa's richest businessman Aliko Dangote of Nigeria and former US President Barrack Obama who has African roots. Dangote has built a \$500 million (Over Sh1.1 trillion) in Tanzania.

The common interests for Magufuli, Kenyatta, Kagame and Museveni is the United Nations, World Bank's Vice President Makhtar Diop and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

US President Donald Trump is followed by Kagame and Kenyatta. Museveni who has publicly expressed admiration for the US leader is yet to follow him on twitter.

Museveni hailed Trump for speaking "frankly" to Africans, after the US president unleashed a storm by reportedly describing African nations as "shithole countries." Dr Magufuli and Nkurunziza do not have interest in Trump.

EAC enthusiasm

Only Museveni follows the EAC page which is @jumuiya. If this were the presidents' measure of affinity to the EAC, then, Museveni wins the highest score. Uganda's NEW Vision newspaper in 2010 described the Ugandan leader as "The strongest EAC Champion." The story pointed to Museveni's crusade for a political federation.

None of the presidents follows the community's Secretary General Liberat Mfumukeko who however follows them all.

Media relations

Only Kagame follows the twitter page of a regional newspaper. He follows The East African. Kagame also follows other publications such as The Economist, Forbes, Times Magazine, Nature Genetics and Times Magazine.

Kagame and Museveni follow top media personalities. Museveni follows Andrew Mwenda, a well-known journalist and publisher in Uganda while Kagame follows Christiane Amanpour, CNN Chief International Correspondent, Larry Madowo, the Business Editor of BBC Africa and David Smith, the Washington bureau chief of The Guardian.

First ladies

Uhuru Kenyatta and Magufuli do not follow their ruling party pages on twitter. The rest, do.

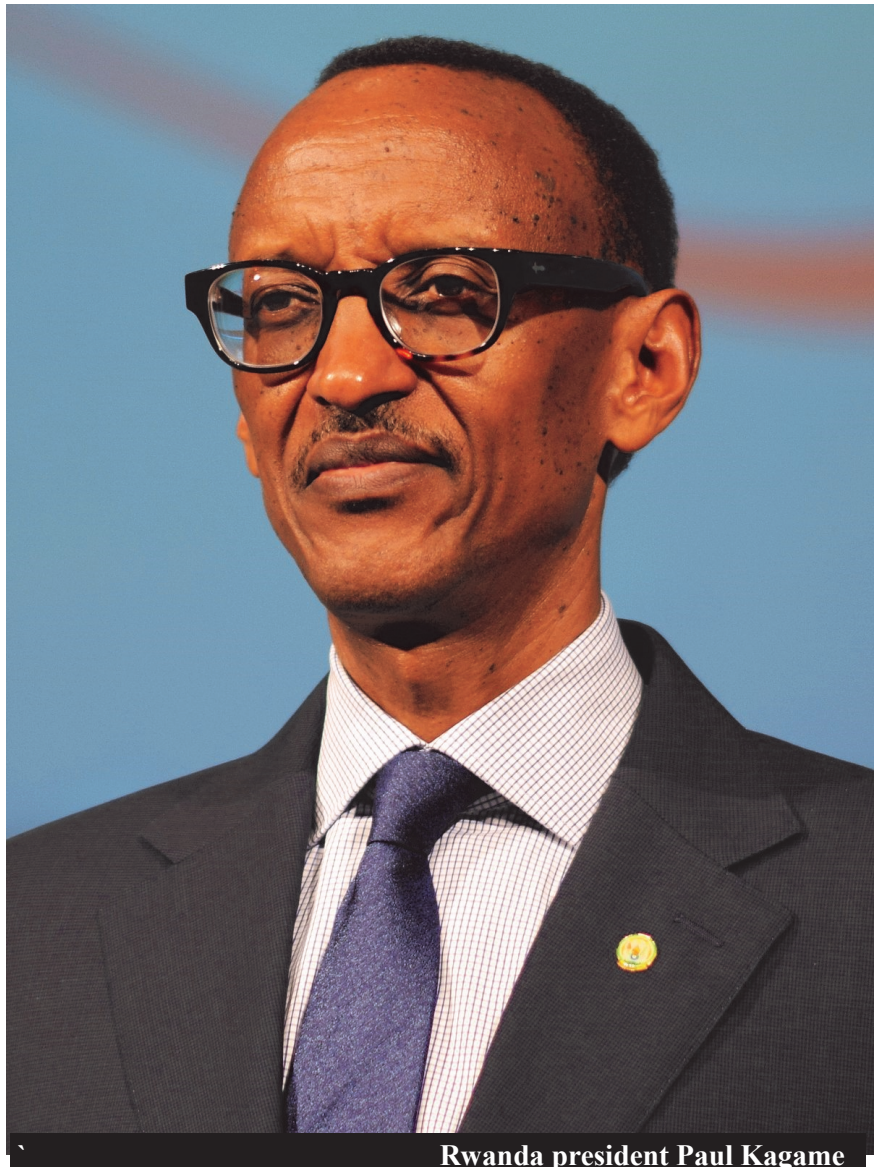
All EAC presidents follow respective First Ladies on twitter except for Magufuli whose wife, Janet, is not on twitter.

With five former presidents alive, three in Tanzania and two in Ken-

ya, only Jakaya Kikwete has a verified twitter account with 1.08 million followers and he is followed by Magufuli.

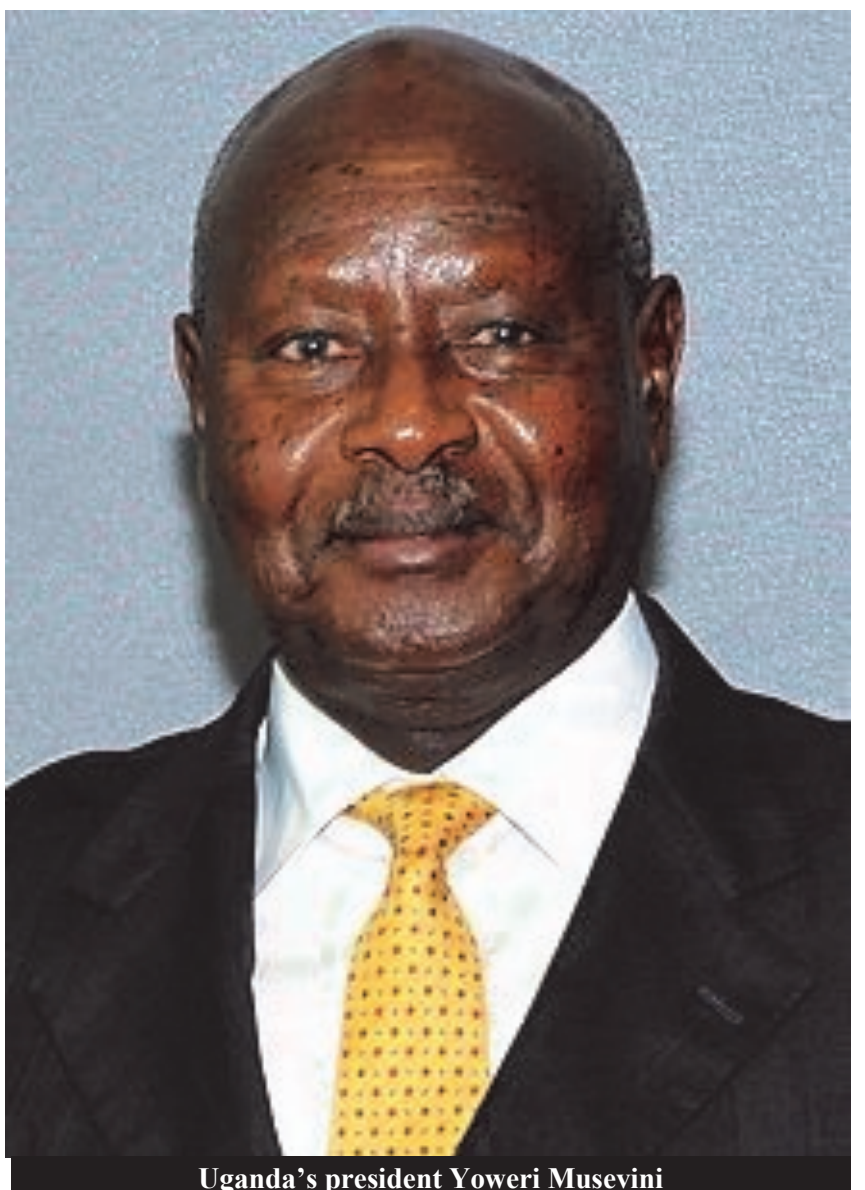
Opposition

Opposition leaders Raila Odinga of Kenya, Kizza Besigye of Uganda and Freeman Mbowe of Tanza-



Rwanda president Paul Kagame

nia are not followed by their respective presidents or the other EAC leaders.



Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni



## Ethiopia reassures Egypt over the Nile

The leaders of Egypt and Ethiopia say they have made progress in their talks on sharing the waters of the Nile River.

The two countries have been trying for months to settle a dispute over the dam Addis Ababa is building on the Nile River that Cairo fears will threaten its water supplies.

Ethiopia's Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, estimated to cost at least \$4 billion, will be Africa's largest hydroelectric dam.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed assured Cairo on Sunday the dam would not reduce Egypt's share of Nile waters.

Addis Ababa has "no desire or idea to harm the Egyptian people. We believe that we should benefit from this river, the Nile, but when we benefit we should not do harm to the Egyptian people," Ahmed said Sunday at a news conference alongside Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi in Cairo.

"We will take care of the Nile and we will preserve your share," Ahmed said.

The three nations most dependent on the Nile — Egypt, Sudan and Ethiopia — have been holding negotiations for months on the shared use of the water after the massive dam is built.

Egypt has been particularly concerned that the dam, which is being built on the river's main tributary, will divert too much water and place pressure on its fresh drinking-water supply, agriculture and industry.

Under a decades-old agreement, Egypt has received what neighboring countries perceive as more than its fair share of the water.

Past Egyptian leaders have threatened military action if there was any attempt to dam the Nile. El-Sissi has ruled that out.

But, at the end of the news conference, he asked for a stronger assurance. He asked Ahmed to swear to God that he would not hurt Egypt's share of the water.

"I swear to God, we will never harm you," Ahmed repeated the words in Arabic after el-Sissi.

## Kenya tops list of least toxic countries in the world

Nairobi — A latest research has named Kenya as the least toxic country, topping a list that takes account of air pollution, energy consumption and renewable energy production.

According to the study by International Energy Agency and World Health Organization, the cleanest countries were largely those from Sub-Saharan Africa, while countries in the Middle East dominated the other end of the list.

Maria Neira, WHO's public health chief, said the figures were indicative of a "major, major public health problem," stressing that public awareness of the issue needed to be raised. "We have a public

health emergency in many countries," she said. "Urban air pollution continues to rise at an alarming rate, wreaking havoc on human health. It's dramatic, one of the biggest problems we are facing globally, with terrible future costs to society."

"The cost for countries is enormous. Air pollution affects economies and people's quality of life. It leads to major chronic diseases and to people ultimately dying."

The report cited Saudi Arabia as the most toxic country.

The Eco Experts describe the results of the research as a warning that continued emissions of greenhouse gases could cause disastrous and irreversible damage to the planet.

Data released by WHO last year revealed that levels of air pollution had increased by 8 percent between 2009 and 2016.

The ranking did not include every country, with one notable omission being that of Iceland, which could have been lauded on the list.

## Is Africa's iconic tree dying out?

It has been reported that nine of 13 Africa's oldest and largest baobab trees have died in the past decade. These trees, aged between 1,100 and 2,500 years, appear to be victims of climate change. Scientists speculate that warming temperatures have either killed the trees directly or have made them weaker and more susceptible to drought, diseases, fire or wind.

Old baobabs are not the only trees which are affected by climatic changes. Ponderosa pine and Pinyon forests in the American West are dying at an increasing rate as the summers get warmer in the region. In Hawaii the famous Ohi'a trees are also dying at faster rates than previously recorded.

There are nine species of baobab trees in the world: one in mainland Africa, *Adansonia digitata*, (the species that can grow to the largest size and to the oldest age), six in Madagascar, and one in Australia. The mainland African baobab was named after the French botanist Michel Adanson, who described the baobab trees in Senegal.

The African baobab is a remarkable species. Not only because of its size and lifespan but also in the special way it grows multiple fused stems. In the space between these stems (called false cavities) bark grows, which is unique to the baobab.

Since baobabs produce only faint growth rings, the researchers used radiocarbon dating to analyse samples taken from different parts of each tree's trunk and determined that the oldest (which is now dead) was more than 2,500-years-old.

They also have over 300 uses. The leaves, rich in iron, can be boiled and eaten like spinach. The seeds can be roasted to make a coffee substitute or pressed to make oil for cooking or cosmetics. The fruit pulp has six times more vitamin C than oranges, making it an important nutritional complement in Africa and in the European, US and Canadian markets.

Locally, fruit pulp is made into juice, jam, or fermented to make beer. The young seedlings have a taproot which can be eaten like a carrot. The flowers are also edible. The roots can be used to make red dye, and the bark to make ropes and baskets. Baobabs also have medicinal properties, and their hollow trunks can be used to store water. Baobab

crowns also provide shade, making them an ideal place for a market in many rural villages. And of course, the trade in baobab products provides an income for local communities.

Baobab trees also play a big part in the cultural life of their communities, being at the centre of many African oral stories. They even appear in *The Little Prince*.

Cultivating baobab

Baobab trees are not only useful to humans, they are key ecosystem elements in the dry African savannas. Importantly, baobab trees keep soil conditions humid, favour nutrient recycling and avoid soil erosion. They also act as an important source of food, water and shelter for a wide range of animals, including birds, lizards, monkeys and even elephants - which can eat their bark to provide some moisture when there is no water nearby. The flowers are pollinated by bats, which travel long distances to feed on their nectar. Numerous insects also live on the baobab tree.

Ancient as they are, baobab trees can be cultivated, as some communities in West Africa have done for generations. Some farmers are discouraged by the fact that they can take 15-20 years to fruit - but recent research has shown by grafting the branches of fruiting trees to seedlings they can fruit in five years.

Many "indigenous" trees show great variation in fruit morphological and nutritional properties -



and it takes years of research and selection to find the best varieties for cultivation. This process, called domestication, does not refer to genetic engineering, but the selection and cultivation of the best trees of those available in nature. It seems straightforward, but it takes time to find the best trees - meanwhile many of them are dying.

The death of these oldest and largest baobab trees is very sad, but hopefully the news will motivate us to protect the world's remaining large baobabs and start a process of close monitoring of their health. And, hopefully, if scientists are able to perfect the process of identifying the best trees to cultivate, one day they will become as common in our supermarkets as apples or oranges.

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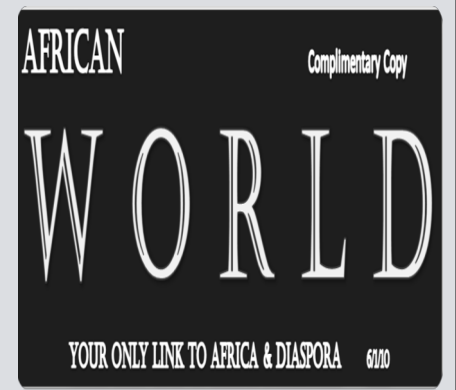
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