

# The Continent

with Mail & Guardian

Photo:  
Sumy  
Sadurni



**'They come with  
teargas, we come  
with God'**

**On the road with Bobi Wine**

## And that's a wrap! (Well, almost ...)

This is the final business-as-usual edition of *The Continent* for 2020. It has been a long year for all of us – at times exhilarating, at times terrifying, at times exhausting – and we are so grateful to each of you for taking this journey with us. Thank you for taking the time to read and share this newspaper, and for all your support as you did so. We'll be taking this Detty December (see p14) to rest and recuperate, and will be back in action again on 23 January 2021.

But you haven't quite heard the last of us for this year. Look out for our special Africans of the Year edition in two weeks' time (and if you know anybody who should be on this list, please send us your nominations at [thecontinent@mg.co.za](mailto:thecontinent@mg.co.za)).

We will also be asking our journalists to reflect on their 2020, and give us a glimpse at what 2021 has in store.



**COVER STORY:** On Tuesday, gunshots were fired at Bobi Wine's vehicle. The Ugandan opposition leader's supporters are describing it as an assassination attempt. *The Continent* was on the road with him when it happened (p7)

## Inside:

- **Southern Africa's busiest border post** is ready for the Christmas rush (p6)
- **Welcome to Yaoundé!** Cameroon's not-so-glamorous City of Seven Hills (p11)
- **Meet the women** who led the #EndSARS protests (p15)
- **I'm young, fit and healthy.** Covid nearly killed me (p22)
- **Books:** Travelling while black – it's complicated (p25)
- **21st century propaganda:** Ethiopia leads the way (p27)
- **Bad neighbours:** Kenya and Somalia's latest spat (p29)

# The Week in Numbers

## DRAW RESULTS

01 DECEMBER 2020

Winning Numbers



PowerBall



## 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

The winning numbers on South Africa's National Lottery on Tuesday. The unusual sequence sparked accusations of fraud, but an investigation found nothing suspicious. Twenty people shared the jackpot, each taking home R5.7-million (\$380,000).

## 57

The number of people executed by the government of Egypt during October and November this year, in what Amnesty International described as "a horrifying execution spree ... putting scores of people to death, in some cases following grossly unfair mass trials".

## 20 years

The length of time that terrorism is likely to persist in Nigeria, according to army boss Lieutenant General Tukur Yusuf Buratai. His comments came in the wake of a Boko Haram attack this week that killed at least 43 farmers in Zabarmari in Borno State.

## 7

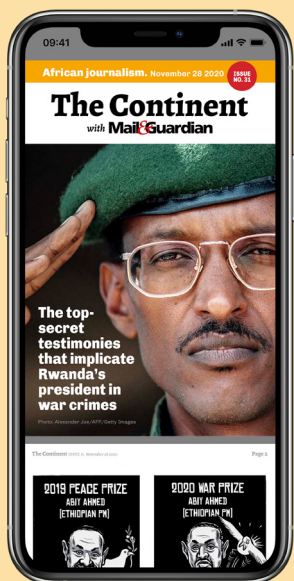
The number of African governments using Circles, an Israeli cyberespionage program, to spy on the private communications of their citizens, according to a new report by the Citizen Lab. The countries are Botswana, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Zambia. The program gives governments access to mobile phone calls, texts, and locations.

## 85%

The percentage of the vote won by ruling party candidate Adolf Hitler in local elections in Ompundja in Namibia. "As a child I saw it as a totally normal name," he said. "It wasn't until I was growing up that I realised: This man wanted to subjugate the whole world ... I have nothing to do with any of these things."

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# South Sudan

## Jamming in Juba traffic

David Mono Danga

**S***ika Gudele*, by DJ Cent Mister No Rest, is the hottest song in Juba right now. But this is no ordinary pop song.

The song is about the poor state of the titular Gudele Road, a highway just outside the South Sudanese capital; about its cracks and potholes; and about the Kuburi-Abuba Bridge that causes traffic jams lasting several hours, even when it is not rush hour.

In fact, the song is about the poor state of South Sudan's roads more generally. And this may explain its popularity: it is a subject to which everybody can relate.

"Whatever I sung in the song is what is happening in the country, it's not like something that's not there. It's there! Even right now if you try to go to that side of Gudele you will spend like three hours before you reach your place," DJ Cent – real name Daniel Mboyonyesi Loustico – told *The Continent*.

Before writing the song, he spent three months driving across the country to see how the poor quality of roads affects everyday life. "I went to Yei, we have



enough food in Yei; also, the same thing in Western Equatoria state. And in Bor, we have so many fish. But people who live in the capital, we are suffering from hunger ... the issue is we don't have good roads which connect Juba to those states," he said.

**"Whatever I sung in the song is what is happening in the country"**

DJ Cent also sings about social and cultural issues like relationships and marriage. His other big hits are *Num Bet Maria*, which criticises men who leave their families; and *In-law, Why Are You Beating My Sister*, which is self-explanatory. ■

# Zimbabwe

## Southern Africa's busiest border post opens for Christmas

**Kudzai Mashininga**

**Z**imbabwe opened its side of the Beitbridge Border Post to general travellers on Tuesday, just in time for the anticipated Christmas rush. The South African side of the border has been open since 1 October, but until now Zimbabwean authorities have only been letting through commercial cargo.

Passengers travelling in private cars can now pass through, but buses remain banned.

In preparation for the reopening, all border workers were tested for Covid-19 and results for eight Zimbabwe Revenue Authority workers were found to be positive.

Usually, by this time of year, there are long queues of people at the border – mostly Zimbabweans who work in South Africa returning home from the holidays, but also Zambians and Malawians who transit through Zimbabwe. This year,

however, traffic remains relatively light, though it is expected to increase as Christmas nears.

Reuben Muleya, a vendor near the border, has been selling fruits and South African SIM cards to travellers for eight years now. He has never witnessed such low volumes of traffic.

“I think the requirement for people to get tested first – the cost ranges from \$25 to \$60 – is discouraging people from using the border. Some are resorting to border jumping which is dangerous, especially now when it's the rainy season. There is a video that circulated over the weekend in Beitbridge showing a man who was killed by a crocodile while crossing the Limpopo River,” he said.

Botswana also reopened its borders this week, for the first time since March. To avoid delays and the corruption associated with Beitbridge, many Zambian travellers are choosing to go via Botswana, even though the journey is significantly longer.

To prevent further loss of traffic – and revenue – Zimbabwean authorities have awarded a \$172-million contract to South African company Raubex to totally overhaul its side of the border crossing. ■

*This story was produced in partnership with BeitBridge24 ([www.beitbridge24.com](http://www.beitbridge24.com)), a community media house*

# Uganda



## Bobi Wine and Goliath

**Dodging bullets and tear gas on the campaign trail with Museveni's opponent**

**REPORT**  
**Liam Taylor**

**B**obi Wine, the pop star who would be president, is standing on his porch being anointed with a bottle of olive oil. It is the fourth week of election campaigns in Uganda, and he needs all the help he can get. A preacher promises him

protection from evil. Then Wine turns to the supporters in his garden. “They come with bombs and teargas, but we come with God,” he sings in Luganda, punching the air. “Even David beat Goliath because he trusted in God.”

Wine – real name Kyagulanyi Ssentamu Robert – styles himself as the David in this story; the Goliath is Yoweri Museveni, president since 1986. And so far, says Wine, the journey has “been hell”.

In Hoima, the police and army surrounded his hotel, blocking a scheduled radio appearance. In Migyeera, he slept in his car because, he claims, the police told hotels not to let him in. In Luuka, he was arrested for violating Covid-19 restrictions, sparking nationwide protests



### Early riser: Bobi Wine takes breakfast with supporters

(Photo: Sumy Sadurni/AFP)

in which the state shot scores of people dead.

Now it is 1 December, a Tuesday, and Wine is on the trail again, with an entourage of old friends. Dan Magic, his music producer. Eddie Mutwe, his barrel-chested bodyguard. Francis Zaake, a 29-year-old MP, on crutches after beatings from police. There are fans too. A group of young women in red gowns tell stories of toiling as housemaids in Saudi Arabia. “[Wine] has been in the ghetto,” says one. “He knows the life of the person below.”

And when Wine sets off, waving from his sunroof, it is the “people below”, the abantu bawansi, who line the roads to greet him. They holler from shopfronts and run through banana gardens. Men break branches from trees to wave in welcome. Mothers clutch babies with one hand and punch the air with the other. Schoolchildren dash from their classroom and gape at the cavalcade in awe.

After two hours Wine reaches Kayunga, the town where he is due to address his first rally of the day. Suddenly

there is tear gas everywhere. Wine is bent forward, coughing. One car has stopped, white gas billowing from its open window. Young men melt away between the tin-roofed houses, skipping over panicked chickens. Then they run back, cheering as loudly as before.

The procession is on the backroads now, tumbling through startled villages in a cloud of dust. Wine is trying to get back to the highway, but police trucks block his way. He starts walking, then leaps on the back of a motorbike. The police, outfoxed, let the cars through.

Back in his car, Wine reaches town. More delirium. More tear gas. He stops to remonstrate with police. Then there is a loud bang and a cloud of smoke as a tear gas grenade explodes behind him (police will later claim that it was thrown by one of Wine’s own associates, despite video evidence to the contrary).

Dan Magic is hit in the mouth, either with a rubber bullet or a fragment from the blast; Wine gets in the ambulance beside him. A police officer assigned to accompany the candidate is also hurt.

They drive to a nearby health centre, where police fire down the road to clear the crowd. On benches outside, waiting patients cower in fear; a mother pulls her daughter close. Wine, his hair fringed with dust, is visibly distressed about his producer. “His face is shattered; his teeth have come out,” he says, as medics bustle behind him. “They’re targeting our lives.”

But Wine continues onward. His aim now is Jinja, the city at the source of the Nile. The procession is building: motorbikes and land cruisers and police



pick-ups and media vans, careering down both lanes. There is a man sitting on the roof of a car in a kayak, a beer in his hand. There is a man splayed motionless on the tarmac after an accident, a bike in a ditch.

From the crest of a hill, the magnificent new Source of the Nile Bridge comes into view, its supporting cables spread like two inverted fans. This image is a favourite in the Museveni scrapbook, alongside pictures of smooth roads and shiny aircraft and industrial parks. But Wine is being driven onto the old bridge, along the top of a dam, a crossing normally used by the boda-boda motorbike riders deemed too scruffy, too disordered, to be allowed on the new one. Briefly, there is calm. A rainbow shimmers in the spray thrown up beneath the turbines.

Wine is on the outskirts of the city now, but still he is being pushed away, along dirt roads, past maize gardens and behind the notorious police station where, a fortnight ago, he was detained after his latest arrest. He reaches a clearing. Soldiers stand in a churchyard. Police guard a flimsy metal railing, which blocks a right turn into town.

Some of Wine's supporters approach the railing; there is a scuffle. "We are fighting for freedom," sings a recording of Wine, blasting from speakers in his convoy. The car turns. Then gunshots. Bullets go through the tyres, the wheel rim. Another bullet flies through the top corner of the windscreen. Zaake, sitting in the passenger seat, is frozen in silence. It has missed him by inches.

Wine will go no further today. Standing beside his battered car, he



**Injured: Producer Dan Magic was struck by either a rubber bullet or teargas canister fragment during the police response in Kayunga.**

(Photo: Sumy Sadurni/AFP)

calls a temporary halt to his campaign. Tomorrow he will go to the Electoral Commission and complain about his treatment. A police spokesman will condemn his "continued acts of impunity and lawlessness" which are "in total breach of the Electoral Commission guidelines aimed at preventing the spread of Covid-19".

It is true that Wine shows little concern for Covid-19 these days. True, too, that he has a performer's instinct for theatre. But perhaps there is no other way for an opposition candidate to campaign – in this country, in this year – than by exposing through his own struggle the violence of the state.

After eight hours on the road, Wine has been unable to address a single voter.

"Who is in charge of this election?" he asks. "Is it the military and the police, or is it the Electoral Commission?" A ring of journalists is gathered around him. And beyond them, watching silently, stand the men with guns. ■

# Uganda reacts to 'assassination attempt'

The deadly force used against Bobi Wine's retinue has further polarised Ugandan politics

NEWS ANALYSIS  
Andrew Arinaitwe

The violence meted out towards Bobi Wine and his supporters has dominated the news agenda in Uganda this week. “[It was] an assassination attempt, period,” said Nicholas Opiyo, a human rights lawyer who has previously represented Bobi Wine, referring to the gunshots fired at Bobi Wine’s vehicle on Tuesday. “[President Yoweri] Museveni and his [party] folks have taken a war posture and are treating the people power campaigns as an insurrection.”

Canon Justice James Ogoola, the former principal judge of the high court of Uganda, told *The Continent* that he was concerned about the credibility of the upcoming election, scheduled for 14 January 2021. “This is not the way elections were meant to be,” he said. “Instead they have tears, blood running in the street, lives lost, limbs mutilated. Elections have now become a tool for spreading the virus and a tool for killing

and maiming the citizenry.”

Police spokesperson Fred Enanga has defended the actions of the security forces. “Our role in this electoral period is to ensure that we maintain law and order and also ensure the safety and security of all stakeholders especially in light of the fact that we are operating under the Covid-19 environment,” he said. Police have repeatedly accused opposition parties of flouting Covid-19 restrictions.

Last week, however, Security Minister General Elly Tumwine – famed for firing the first bullet in the bush war that brought President Museveni to power – struck a different tone. “Police has a right to shoot you and kill you if you reach a certain level of violence,” he said.

Ramathank Ggoobi, a lecturer at Makerere University Business School, said that the levels of anger from younger people towards the government “could be perhaps due to the bad economy affecting the young people especially. These are broke and jobless and it has been worsened by Covid-19”. He added, however, that the ruling party “has transformed this country, even those opposing it now”. ■



**Tough blue line: Uganda police disperse crowds in Kayunga town.**  
(Photo: Sumy Sadurni/AFP)

(Photo: Prevoist  
Vincent/hemis.fr)



# Welcome to Yaoundé!

This week, journalist **Daniel Ekonde** gives us a glimpse of the raw 'Cameroon-ness' of Yaoundé, the country's capital and second-largest city.

## Vibe check

Cameroon's political capital is fondly referred to as La Ville aux Sept Collines – the City of Seven Hills. Other cities famous for also having seven hills: Paris, Rome, Lisbon, Washington DC and Pretoria.

In Yaoundé, however, forget about romance and glamour. Any average Cameroonian you meet on the streets of Yaoundé always mutters the phrase "Ici c'est Yaoundé", a conscious reminder of the difficulty navigating

the town, the buzz created by jam-packed cars and the gregarious nature of the people you find hawking or providing quick services. It is like an ant hill where everyone is working to earn something.

## Getting around town

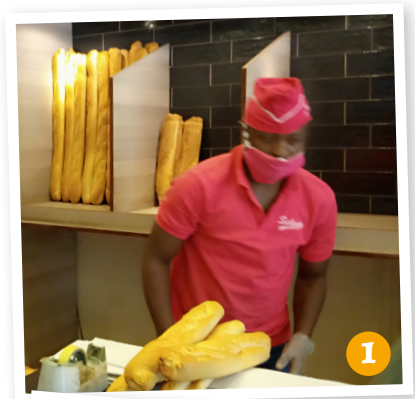
The first thing you notice when entering town from the Yaoundé Nsimalen International Airport is traffic. Of course – ici c'est Yaoundé! There is no metro system and no tram

– just taxis and motorbikes that are restricted from running in the city centre. Nearly all 3.5-million people depend on roads for transportation. I leave early in the morning to dodge the traffic. The normal fare into town is 250 francs (about \$0.45) but it could increase to 600 francs (about \$1), depending on your journey.

### Bakeries and restaurants

Two things dominate the menu in Yaoundé – French bread and bobolo made from cassava roots. Even outside the numerous bakeries in the city, bread is found in every nook and cranny. People eat it with meat, fish and with various fillings. I like buying French bread from **Selecte (1)** because it is always hot and it's delicious with butter – the pastry shop is in central Yaoundé and is open 24/7. Instead of buying a piece of bread for less than half a US dollar (FCFA 100), buy a bigger chunk for 500 francs (just under \$1). Selecte also has tasty ice cream **(2)**, which you can get for about 850 francs or less than \$2. If you are looking for pastries and baked goods, then Casino Supermarket, just on the other side of Selecte, will satisfy your craving.

In restaurants, I enjoy tropical dishes and tasty vegetables. Flavors and Kazoo are my favourite joints. Flavors has great taste and details for Cameroonian delicacies such as Eru (wild spinach eaten with garri), Ekwang (ground cocoyam wrapped



in leaves) and Ndole (stewed nuts and vegetable eaten with plantains) that a shallow purse can get for 2,000 francs or about \$4 each. For heavenly grilled chicken with fried plantains and Cameroonian jollof, Kazoo is the place. A plate there won't cost less than 3,000 francs (about \$6).

### Bars and tea-drinking

If you haven't drunk chy or even heard of it, then you are definitely not



familiar with this city. Chy **(3)** is made from boiled cloves, mixed with limes, mint and sugar. A \$1 bill will allow you to savour a cup or two.

Pubs are everywhere. From the shanty neighbourhoods of Mokolo Elobi and Briqueterie to affluent places like Bastos and Mballa II.

A hot syrup and strawberry cocktail (\$10), along with views of the city, make the bar Black and White a

personal favourite.

### Sightseeing

One imposing structure is the Reunification Monument. It was constructed in the 1970s to unify the French and British systems Cameroon inherited in the colonial era. Less than \$5 will get you around the edifice.

### A song that represents the city

Yaoundé is dominated by young people who increasingly express themselves through fast-changing arts and culture, and so they don't really stick to the enduring local bikutsi genre. A recent youth favourite is *Le Nyama* by Aveiro Djess, an eloquent response to their life struggle. It's now a public anthem.

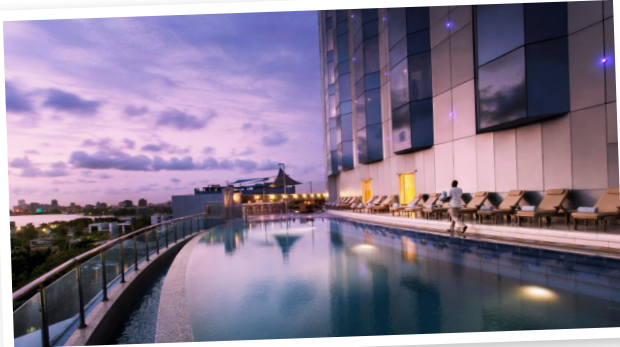
### Best time of the year

We like December! It's the time for Ya-Fe: Yaoundé en Fête! This is a month-long festival that takes place at the Yaoundé International Conference Centre. Cafes, drinking spots, playgrounds for kids, beach games and barbecues all merge here and people stream in from near and far to enjoy. It's really more of an amusement park. A ticket is \$1 and another \$10 will afford you a fair amount of fun.



**Do you want to show us around your town or city?**

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**High life: The rooftop bar at the Lagos InterContinental**

## In Lagos, a December that's a little less 'detty'

**This festive season may be more muted than usual**

**Timileyin Omilana**

**L**agos, the commercial capital of Nigeria, can be an enigmatic place. The hustle, bustle, and constant energy that crackles in the air leaves many people swirling. However, as the year winds down, the city wears a different toga. It becomes fun, hospitable, and exciting; a spiritual resting place where people from all walks of life look to unwind after a long year of hard work. In typical Lagos talk, they seek to “detty” the December.

Detty December means basking in end of year celebrations; partying at nightclubs; attending concerts and shows;

and taking in as much booze as you can. The idea is to have as much fun as you can. Musicians headline huge concerts for their fans, and companies put on lavish end of year parties for staff and customers. Many faith-based organisations host musical experiences for their faithful.

And, of course, there is the annual influx of the IJGBs: I Just Got Back, the term used to describe the return of Nigerians who live abroad, but come home to splash their forex at concerts, restaurants and bars.

This December might be a little less “detty” than usual, however, thanks to the pandemic and the accompanying recession. Disposable income has shrunk. Social distancing measures are encouraged. And tensions remain heightened following the #EndSARS protests which rocked the city in October. Even the IJGBs are mostly staying at home this year, discouraged by quarantine regulations.

But even if it's not quite as “detty” as usual, Lagosians will still take a break this December. After this year, they need one – don't we all. ■

# The women who led the protest against police brutality

Women have long defined the shape of protest action in Nigeria

**Bolu Akindele & Ope Adedeji**

**W**hen Rinu Oduala, 22, saw viral videos of abuses by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad – the now infamous rogue police unit, SARS – she just wanted the government to take action. So she mobilised, encouraging other young people to join a 72-hour demonstration at the Lagos police headquarters. She hoped it would show the government that, unlike previous protests, they were no longer accepting promises.

**'Moe's Law': Modupe Odele provided legal aid to protesters facing criminal charges**

All illustrations by sef Adeola



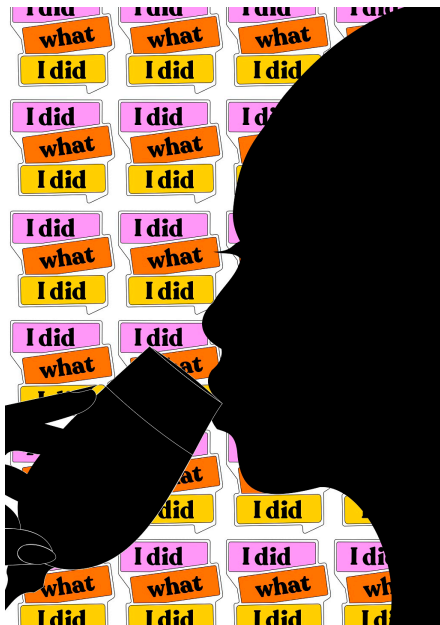
The #EndSARS protests which date back to 2017, had one key ask: the disbandment of the SARS unit that is known for illegal arrests and detentions, extrajudicial killings, sexual harassment of women, and brutalising of young Nigerians. Nigerians.

On October 9, when popular podcaster Feyikemi Abudu found out that protesters at the House of Assembly had stayed for yet another night, while being harassed by security officials, she sent out a tweet asking for donations to provide support for them.

The donations were initially targeted at providing breakfast. However, when the money didn't stop coming, Feyikemi Abudu decided to provide other forms of support from first aid kits to drinks and toiletries.

Then the Feminist Coalition stepped in. The brainchild of Dami Odufuwa, 30, and Odun Eweniyi, 26, the Feminist Coalition was formed in July 2020 with one goal: to champion the equality of women in Nigeria. As the protests began to gain momentum, the group decided to step in, making it their first major project as an organisation.

Understanding they couldn't combat some of these battles on their own, Odufuwa and Eweniyi joined forces with other young feminists with a similar ambition of making Nigeria better for women. In just a few days of fundraising, Feminist Coalition raised N20,188,280 (approximately \$52,000) which went into providing food, water, medical aid, security and legal aid for protesters across the country.



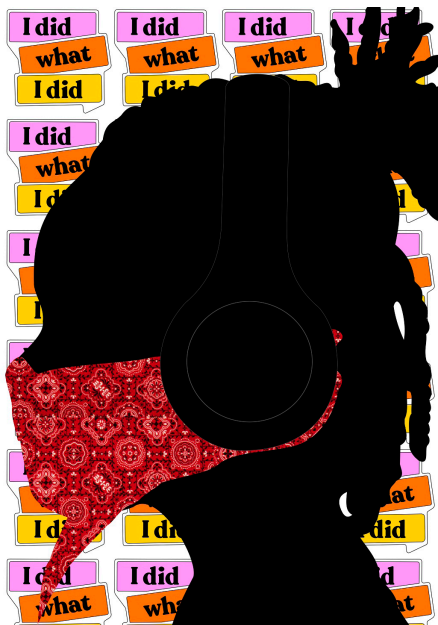
**'FK the whole establishment':**  
Podcaster Feyikemi Abudu raised funds to feed the protesters, and was soon overwhelmed with donations

**When podcaster Feyikemi Abudu found out that protesters had stayed another night, while being harassed by security officials, she sent out a tweet asking for donations. The money didn't stop coming**

**On the front lines**

This support made a huge difference on





**'Switch on the Nigeria army':  
Obianuju Catherine Udeh, aka  
DJ Switch, broadcast the Lekki  
shootings to the world**

**It should come as no  
surprise that Nigerian  
women are on the  
frontlines of political  
change. Nigerian women  
have a long history of  
mobilising for protests  
and demonstrations**

the ground. On October 11, the third day of the protests in Abuja, police officers attacked protesters as they marched

towards the police headquarters. Before writer Martha Sambe could run away, police officers — three of them, she says — hit her with their batons. This led to a crack in her skull. Her medical insurer refused to pay for healthcare because her injuries were sustained during a protest. That's when the Feminist Coalition intervened, helping Sambe to cover her bills. "They were very responsive," she says. "It was very surreal".

It should come as no surprise that Nigerian women are on the front lines of political change. In many ways, this is history repeating itself. From the Agbaja protest of the 1910s to the Calabar Women Protest of 1924; from the Aba Women's Riot of 1929 to the Abeokuta Women's Tax Riot (also called the Egba Women's Tax Riot) of the 1940s, Nigerian women have a long history of mobilising for protests and demonstrations.

More recently, there have been the "Bring Back our Girls" movement of 2014, the Market March of 2018, #ChurchMeToo and #SayHerNameNigeria of 2019, and the March against Rape of June 2020 that led to Nigerian governors declaring the state of emergency against rape. In many ways, women have determined the shape of how Nigerians protest.

But political action can be dangerous. The #EndSARS protests took an ugly turn on October 20, when the Nigerian army allegedly opened fire on peaceful protesters at the Lekki Toll Gate in Lagos.

The first that most people heard about the shooting was when Obianuju Catherine Udeh, better known by her stage name DJ Switch, live-streamed the

shootings on Instagram. “I didn’t want us to die in vain,” she said later.

The livestream was watched in real time by hundreds of thousands of people, and it has now become crucial evidence in the commission of inquiry into the violence.

### ‘We are also fighting men’

While leading a protest in Lagos, Tife Soloye, a media and communications professional, was harassed by another protester.

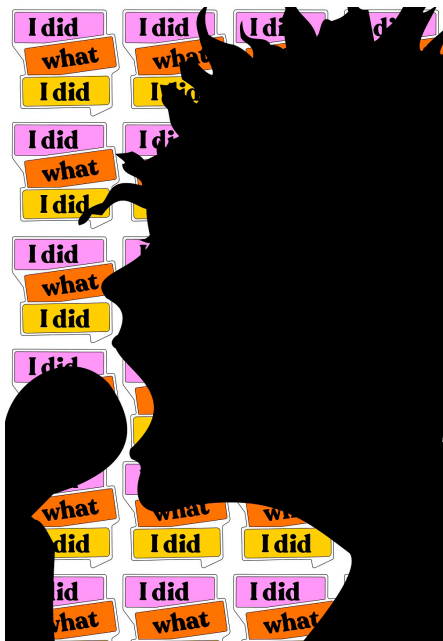
“His movement was kind of defined, and I felt his crotch behind me. I felt his hands on me, I realised he was basically molesting me,” she said.

“At every point in time, [women] are not only fighting the main oppressor, we are also fighting the people who are supposed to be on our side — the men in the crowd, the men on the road, the men!” Soloye said.

Several women involved in the protest have been listed in a recent lawsuit, in which they were charged with encouraging unrest that led to the loss of lives and properties.

Modupe Odele, who led the #EndSARS Legal Aid – a network of legal professionals – was prevented from travelling as she had her passport seized. The passport was returned a few days later.

Rinu Oduala’s bank account, along with some other protesters, was frozen by the Central Bank, which claimed they may be linked to “terrorist activities”, and there have been reports that Nigerian internet service providers have barred users from accessing the Feminist Coalition website.



**‘Savvy Rinu’:** Rinu Oduala organised a 72-hour protest in Lagos

**“We are also fighting the people who are supposed to be on our side – the men!”**

DJ Switch, fearing for her safety, left Nigeria and has sought political asylum in Canada. “I don’t know what will happen to me. I don’t know what will happen to my career,” she said in a CNN interview.

“I do hope the Nigerian government stops targeting [the women behind the #EndSARS protests] so they can breathe,” said Sandra Ezekwesili, a broadcast journalist at NigeriaInfo FM. ■



# SO, YOU THINK YOU'RE A REAL PAN-AFRICAN?

Take this quiz to find out how well you really know our continent

- 1.** Where are the African Union's headquarters?
- 2.** Is the mosque pictured above the Great Mosque of Porto-Novo in Benin or the Great Mosque of Djenné in Mali?
- 3.** Who was the Senegalese football player – nicknamed "Wardrobe" – who passed away last week?
- 4.** Which country is legendary supermodel Iman from?
- 5.** The largest population of elephants resides in which country?
- 6.** Yorubaland today would straddle which three modern-day countries?
- 7.** Did European traders call the eastern or western coast of Africa the "Pepper Coast"?
- 8.** Makossa music is affiliated with which country?
- 9.** Which country's capital is named Niamey?
- 10.** Which country's flag features a red background with a green pentagram in the centre?
- 11.** True or false: Lingala is a dialect of Bangala.
- 12.** What is Madagascar's official language?

## How did I do?

WhatsApp 'ANSWERS' to +27 73 805 6068 and we will send you the answers immediately.

**0-4**

"I think I need to start reading more newspapers."

**5-8**

"I can't wait to explore more of this continent."

**9-12**

"The AU HQ is wherever I am."

# Rate my Ruler: Who's whom in the Zoom?

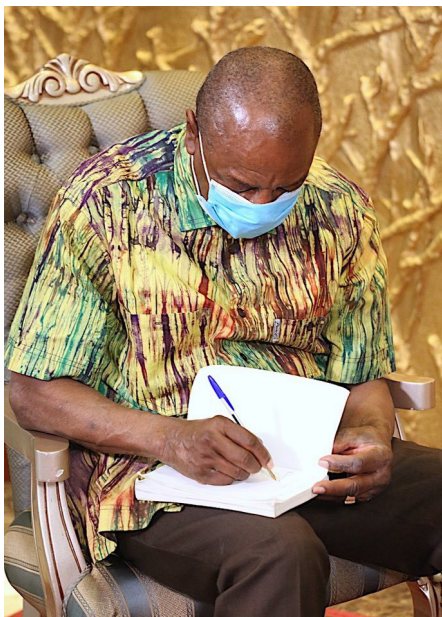
Samira Sawlani

If 2020 has taught us anything, it's that the superficial beauty of the rich and famous just won't cut it anymore.

What matters is what's inside. And by "inside", we don't mean inside your heart – we mean inside your house. Because with all the celebrity guests having to call in remotely to chat shows, Zoom has become the new *MTV Cribs*.

Who doesn't love peeking over their shoulder to rate their leader's room? Although it does make us wonder what's just out of frame. Do you suppose presidents Museveni and Kiir have a walk-in wardrobe just for hats? Is President Mnangagwa's home filled with cute little porcelain crocodiles? And has President Obiang held on to the 1970s décor of his home in Equatorial Guinea the way he's held on to power for 41 years?

In Guinea, President Alpha Condé's taste in interior design has drawn a devastating critique from the opposition and civil society coalition FNDC, who remarked that he will never be able to "sit in peace in his blood-stained chair". Then they called for protests on the 15th of December, when he is due to be sworn in for his third term. They *could* have just called an upholsterer, but in



**Seat of power: Guinea's President Alpha Condé won't stand for this!**

furniture as in politics it's tricky to unseat a sitting president. They simply won't stand for it.

Blood stains are tricky to remove, but wine is even more stubborn – as President Yoweri Museveni is discovering. In addition to his side hustles as a

personal trainer, an influencer and a food blogger, the Ugandan prez has lately become obsessed with scrubbing out such spills and blemishes from the cushions, curtains and general fabric of society. But here's a tip: If you're sick of having to deal with the mess, then maybe stop trying to restock your wine cellar? Or "jail", as some like to call it.

Just a thought.

Possibly sprucing up his digs for a bit of a party is President Idriss Déby of Chad, who this week marked his entry into the "Dirty Thirties" – three decades since taking office. Alas, he may have trouble finding a DJ for the party, seeing as private radio stations in the country are going silent for the "Democracy Day" anniversary event, in protest against the arrest of journalists during a radio training session last week.

Or maybe having musicians in your cellar is just *en vogue* this season? Bobi Wine in Uganda, that thing with Tshala Muana in DRC the other day. Might explain why in Côte d'Ivoire this week the musicians Yodé et Siro were detained after performing a song in which they took issue with public prosecutor Richard Adou, following violence related to the October elections that saw President Alassane Ouattara secure a third term.

In Togo, meanwhile, musicians like King Mensah are much too busy to be thrown into jail, what with being the official ambassador for... \*checks notes\* ... uh, the National Agency for the Promotion and Guarantee of Financing of Small to Medium Enterprises?



### **Pulling the plug: Yodé et Siro in concert before being detained**

Apparently! So authorities there have had to make do with arresting opposition figures Gérard Djossou and Brigitte Kafui Adjamagbo-Johnson instead, accusing them of plotting to destabilise the country.

Destabilising a country is a very serious business, but critics of President Faure Gnassingbé insist it's not even a small to medium enterprise in Togo, and have called for the government to send Djossou and Adjamagbo-Johnson home.

Which is of course where the heart is meant to be. But our hearts keep breaking. It's a problem. Or if they're still working, then they go out. To those unfairly imprisoned. To those for whom life is a never-ending procession of violence. To those for whom home is no longer any kind of refuge at all. To the more than 45,000 Ethiopian refugees fleeing to Sudan from Tigray. And to the Eritrean refugees still in Tigray, which the UN says is likely to have run out of food by now.

If 2020 has taught us anything, it's the importance of staying home.

If you still have one. ■



## ‘This thing almost killed me’

**Daniel Ominde** is young, fit and healthy. He thought he would be safe from Covid-19. He was wrong. This is his story.

**W**hen watching the news and seeing statistics about the coronavirus pandemic, it’s easy to just view them as numbers. That was me before 17 October, when I started exhibiting acute Covid-19 symptoms. Before that, I’d had mild signs that I initially dismissed as fatigue from working long hours the previous weekend. A lingering headache, general body pains and a slight cough that I ignored for three days. On the fourth day, I developed a mild sore throat that I self-medicated with antibiotics — but I got worse instead of better.

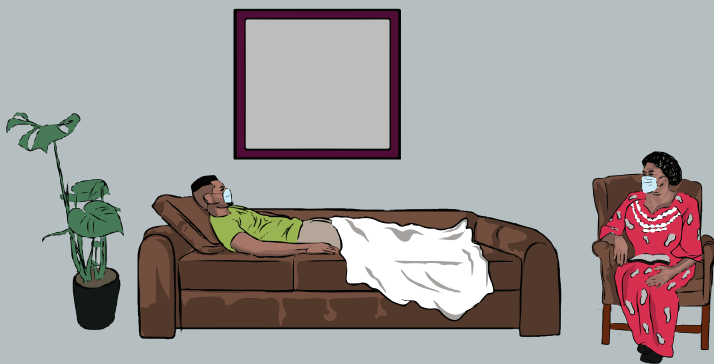
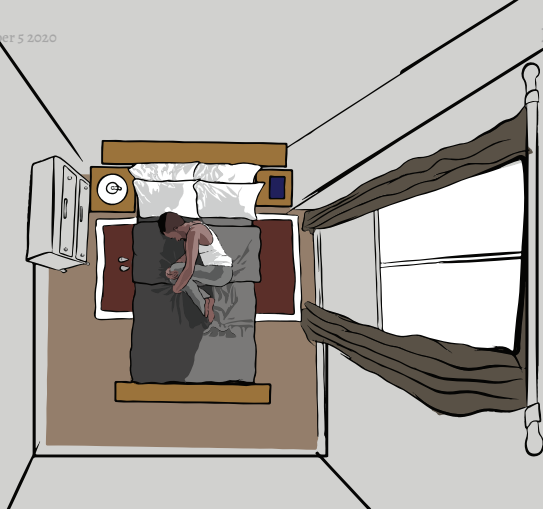
By the time I got to the hospital in Kisumu, Kenya that evening, I had a severe headache, my body temperature was at 39.5 degrees and my blood pressure

was dropping, but they would not admit me without a confirmed diagnosis.

The morning after, there wasn’t a single part of my body that was not in pain. I remember calling my sister and telling her: “This thing is killing me.”

I honestly thought I was going to die. I was having difficulty breathing, with severe headaches and a very high fever. My brother and his wife, who are both medics, rushed to my house in the company of my sister and mother. They found that my blood pressure was extremely low. I believe that their quick action saved my life.

By then, we still were not sure if it was Covid-19, but we took all the necessary precautions. Other than painkillers and



fluids to manage the fever and blood pressure, I was also put on zinc tablets to strengthen my lung muscles, steroids and vitamin C supplements.

My positive diagnosis came four days later.

Covid-19 is a very lonely disease, especially when you live alone. During my

home-based isolation, I had no personal interaction with people other than the neighbours I occasionally chatted with when I went outside the house for some sunlight. There were days I cried. There were days I was scared.

My family were the biggest source of support during this time. At some point,



## Covid-19 is a very lonely disease, especially when you live alone

I was scared that I had exposed them, especially my mother who not only is at an advanced age but is also both diabetic and hypertensive. One morning she called and told me to stop worrying and concentrate on getting better.

On Monday, 2 November, I ventured out of the house for the first time since I began my self-isolation.

I had been discharged from home-based care a few days earlier, though I was still advised to limit my interaction with people for another seven days. After being indoors for so long, it was refreshing to see people and life. It was also scary to see how casually people were treating this virus on Kisumu's streets. People went about their business like the disease was no longer there.

The day I got my diagnosis, Kisumu



county recorded 30 new cases. That was coincidentally the day Kenyatta and former prime minister Raila Odinga brought Kisumu to a standstill when they hosted political events attended by thousands of residents who paid little attention to social distancing or the wearing of masks

Since then, the situation in Kenya has deteriorated rapidly. In the first two weeks of November, more than 15,000 cases of Covid-19 were confirmed. ■

*This story was produced by Debunk Media and illustrated by Capu Toons. It has been edited for length*

**DEBUNK**



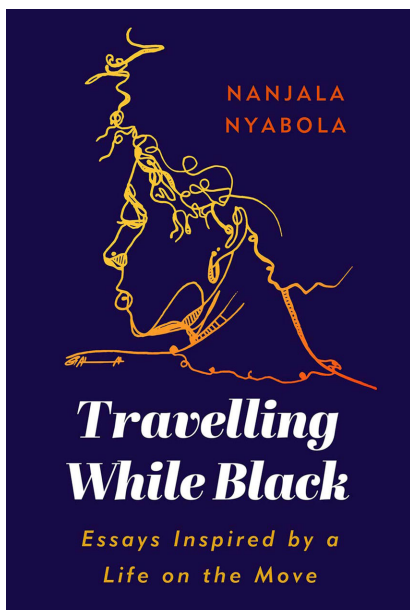
# There and black again: The world shows its true face in the space between places

What does it feel like to move through a world designed to limit and exclude you? In her latest book, *Travelling While Black*, author and political analyst **Nanjala Nyabola** answers this question. This excerpt explores the ways black movement is constrained.

One month after I finished the first draft of this essay collection, many of the assumptions about how the world works—particularly in the context of travel—were challenged by the arrival of Covid-19.

Because the outbreak began in China, many racist assumptions about Chinese diets and lifestyles have been rehashed around the world since the start of 2020. People were quick to ostracise Chinese and East Asian individuals and eateries, and there were a spate of verbal and physical attacks on people of Asian descent across Europe and North America—on buses, in the street, online.

Even the US president and his ambassadors invited people to call Covid-19 “the Wuhan virus” or “the Chinese Flu”. However, the disease quickly moved to Europe and took root there, killing thousands within weeks, and suddenly the realities of privilege and



race in travel were laid bare. Countries scrambled to close their borders as an

emergency measure, but in a world built for the free circulation of wealthy people, the idea of locking a disease into a single geography proved hollow.

The coronavirus galloped through rich nations and forced poorer ones to examine some of the presumptions that dictate who gets to travel freely. After decades of shoring up Fortress Europe against imagined threats of invasion from Africa and Asia, suddenly it was African and Asian countries imposing travel bans on Europeans.

Yet some habits proved harder to break than others. By March 2020, even though Africa was the part of the world least affected at the time, the spectre of anti-black racism had reared its head.

In China, landlords summarily evicted African tenants while local stores banned Africans from entering. In the US and the UK, hospitals turned away black people presenting with symptoms of the disease only to have them die later at home—a recurring problem of disbelieving black pain when it is presented in hospitals.

Travel from African countries was banned long before rich countries shut down travel from fellow wealthy nations. On the high seas of the Mediterranean and in camps near borders, European countries used the disease as a pretext for refusing to admit refugees.

This pandemic, grafted onto centuries of bias and exclusion, has contributed to a disproportionate impact of the disease on non-white populations everywhere, ravaging already-disenfranchised communities. Beyond lockdowns and quarantines, we have always known what

it means for our movements to be unfree. Uprooting, dislocation and restriction reach deep into the places we call home, particularly when our societies become the terrain for other people's wars.

Even as the coronavirus has brought a real prospect of permanent changes to the way we travel, for those of us accustomed to the rough edges of human mobility, our concern is that the system will simply find new ways of pathologising our movements.

Yet 2020 was the year that hundreds of thousands—perhaps even millions—of people around the world braved a pandemic to remind their political leaders that, despite centuries of state-sanctioned violence, institutional racism and exclusion, black lives do in fact matter.

In this book, I try to expand and deepen this reckoning through some uncomfortable stories of being on the move. I am not an expert in the study of race. I am a traveller. I travel a lot, for work and for myself; and I spent many years studying human mobility.

Human mobility can strip both visitor and host society of many of the superfluous bells and whistles that normally keep us in denial about how kind, hospitable or just we are. ■



*This is an edited extract from Travelling White Black: Essays Inspired by a Life on the Move by Nanjala Nyabola (Hurst). It can be ordered directly from Hurst Publishers, and is available at Prestige Books in Nairobi.*

# A glimpse into the future of government propaganda

**By creating its own 'fact-checking' unit, Ethiopia has positioned itself as the only arbiter of accurate information**

**Samuel Gebre and Claire Wilmot**

**S**hortly after announcing the beginning of its military operation against Tigray last month, the Ethiopian government launched a new information service. It was called Ethiopia State of Emergency Fact Check (@SOEFactCheck on Twitter), and it purported to provide independent “fact-checking” of information about the conflict.

A communications blackout imposed on Tigray meant that reliable information was very hard to come by. But far from making things clearer, @SOEFactCheck only muddied the waters.

“It’s good for them to have something on record but they are also hijacking something that should be a function of the press to keep them [the government] in check,” said Eric Mugendi, former

managing editor of PesaCheck, East Africa’s first independent fact-checking site. “What these governments, or bad actors as I like to call them, are trying to do is put the media in a fix; what ends up happening is no one really knows where to look for credible information.”

In the absence of credible information, social media discourse on the developing situation in Tigray became increasingly polarised and partisan. Anti-government community leaders, particularly in the diaspora, encouraged their followers to create new Twitter accounts, spread hashtags, respond to content, and tweet at influential accounts. The result has been a significant increase in the number of single-issue accounts tweeting about Ethiopia, and a very high volume of anti-government tweets.

A sample of 90,000 tweets about Tigray and Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed between November 3 and 10 showed that accounts created in 2020 were responsible for 30% of the discourse. Over a quarter of these tweets were from accounts created in October and November, and were overwhelmingly anti-government.

@SOEFactCheck went for quality rather than quantity. One tweet in particular went viral, and managed to be heard above all the social media noise. It read: “We have received credible intelligence that TPLF operatives have infiltrated refugees fleeing into Sudan to carry out missions of disinformation. We caution media entities & international

organisations to thoroughly investigate & verify information they receive.”

The tweet seemed designed to undermine one of the last reliable sources of information about the conflict – the eyewitness accounts of refugees. It was sent on 24 November, and was subsequently retweeted by Prime Minister Abiy, his press secretary Billene Aster Seyoum, and other prominent government accounts. It was then retweeted by an independent “influencer” account, with over half a million followers. It was soon seen by over a million people, and it continues to spread, according to data provided by a human security research organisation based in London.

“What they’ve managed to do is lay the groundwork to potentially undermine all accounts coming from refugees fleeing the region, by suggesting that they have ‘evidence’ or ‘credible evidence’ that the TPLF has seeded refugees with disinformation actors,” said Dr Alexi Drew, a research associate at the King’s College London’s Policy Institute, who analysed the impact of the tweet.

Ethiopia is not the first government to recognise the political power of fact-checking claims. In November of 2019, the press office for the UK Conservative Party changed its Twitter handle to “@factcheckUK” during the debate between its party leader Boris Jonson and Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn – a move that sparked widespread condemnation. The Conservative Party remained unapologetic, and revived the fact-checking brand a month later to



### Checked facts: Examples of the Ethiopian state's 'fact checks'

celebrate Johnson's victory.

Also in 2019, the Mexican government hijacked the Verificado Notimex, a brand used by independent fact-checking organisations designed to “debunk false news on social media as well as to fact-check dubious content published by traditional media outlets”.

In Czechia, a prime ministerial candidate created his own fact-checking site in 2017. Other examples abound, from Turkey's @FactCheckingTr twitter account, to India's government-run fact-checking unit.

“This will be the future of government propaganda, because at some level the government is trying to plant a seed of doubt in any information that they don't like,” said Mugendi. “It's becoming less viable to shut down the internet. This is the next best thing.” ■

# Kenya and Somalia's volatile relationship boils over – again

There is a long history of tension between these two neighbouring countries

Patrick Gathara

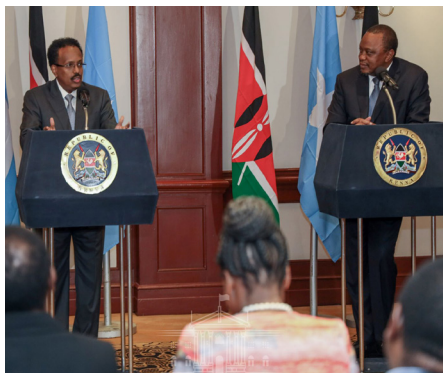
**S**omalia and Kenya are at it again. The former has recalled her ambassador and kicked the Kenyan envoy out of Mogadishu, accusing Kenya of interfering in her internal affairs – a cardinal sin in African diplomacy. This comes nearly two years after Kenya did the same, at the time accusing Somalia of auctioning off oil and gas blocks in disputed territorial waters in the Indian Ocean.

While both deny the respective accusations and pledge their commitment to good neighbourliness, the regular bust-ups point to failures to resolve the deeper issues, born of history, that afflict their relationship.

Opposites attract, goes the saying, and Kenya and Somalia are proof of this. Kenya is considered one of the continent's most stable states, while Somalia was for a long time the poster child for state failure.

Where Kenya is ethnically riven – with at least 44 officially recognised, colonially-created ethnicities each speaking its own or a variety of tongues – Somalia at independence was considered to be perhaps the most ethnically homogeneous country in sub-Saharan Africa, according to the *Economist*.

Kenya is a majority Christian country



**Awkward: Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi 'Farmajo' visits his Kenyan counterpart Uhuru Kenyatta in Nairobi in 2019.**

(Photo: State House Kenya)

while Somalia is almost exclusively Muslim. Yet, throughout the colonial period and beyond, their fates have been intertwined. Colonial gerrymandering shifted ethnic Somali populations between the two states such as in 1924, when Britain ceded the northern portion of the Jubaland region to what was then Italian Somaliland as a reward for Italian support in World War I.

The two fought a proxy war in the first decade of independence over the desire of Kenya's Somali population, in what was then the Northern Frontier District, to

secede and join their brethren in Somalia.

As Somalia dissolved into anarchy and humanitarian tragedy at the end of the 1980s, it was to Kenya that many fled, with the largest refugee camp in the world – and at one point Kenya's third largest town – established at Dadaab, close to the border. And even as Somali money and entrepreneurs, as well as international humanitarian agencies and NGOs flooded into Kenya, boosting its economy, Somalia remained the largest market for Kenyan khat, the leafy narcotic.

## **Somalia has recalled her ambassador and kicked the Kenyan envoy out of Mogadishu, accusing Kenya of interfering in her internal affairs**

Kenya was not only a beneficiary of Somalia's troubles; it also paid a price for them. Terrorist attacks killed hundreds of Kenyans in 1998 and 2002, showing that terror networks like Al Qaeda sought to exploit the vacuum left by the collapsed state in Somalia. Kismayo in the south also became an important port for smuggling goods, especially sugar, into Kenya.

During the years of anarchy in Somalia, Kenya continued to be involved not just in the search for peace but also in providing funding and a safe haven for some of the combatants. Many of the negotiations and conferences to re-establish the Somali state were hosted in Kenya.

Throughout all this, fundamental issues related to territory and influence

remained unresolved. Kenya was still suspicious of Somali intentions with regard to its Northern Frontier District, while Somalia remains concerned about Kenyan influence on its southern Jubaland region – concerns that have only been intensified by the Kenyan invasion and occupation of the region in 2011.

Against Mogadishu's wishes, Kenyan troops brought former Al Shabaab ally, Ahmed Madobe, to power as president of the newly created Jubaland State administration. The country ignored a resolution of the Somalia parliament calling for its troops to leave. Instead, the Kenyan forces have been accused of engaging in illegal trade in charcoal and sugar, trade which enriches the very terror group they are meant to be fighting.

Somalia is also opposed to Kenya's redrawing of the marine border to grab a portion of its territorial waters, suspected to contain rich oil and gas deposits. Its filing of a case on the issue at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) precipitated a campaign of pressure from Kenya, including threats to kick out the refugees in Dadaab and force flights from Mogadishu to Nairobi to first land in the north-eastern town of Wajir for "security checks", a massive, hours-long inconvenience for travelers.

It is within this context that the latest quarrel between the two capitals takes place. With Somalia holding elections in February, and its president wanting to look like the tough guy who can stand up to Kenya, and with the oral proceedings in the ICJ case starting a month later, more friction is probably to be expected. ■

(Photo: Maija  
Tammi /Finnish  
Red Cross)



## 'They said they were going to kill us.'

### Burundian refugees face increasing dangers from Tanzanian authorities

*This op-ed is available in Swahili on p31.*

#### Mausi Segun

**É**variste Ndayishimiye's first foreign visit as the president of Burundi was nothing if not symbolic. He chose Kigoma, a town in northwestern Tanzania, near which about 154,000 Burundian nationals continue to seek protection from the previous administration's abuses.

But the dangers they face in Tanzania are also all too real. Since October 2019, Human Rights Watch has documented how Tanzanian police and intelligence agents, in some cases collaborating with Burundian authorities, arbitrarily arrested, forcibly disappeared, tortured and extorted Burundian refugees and asylum seekers, and forcibly returned at

least eight to Burundi.

Most cases followed a similar pattern: Tanzanian police entered refugee camps in Kigoma region in the middle of the night and took people away. In some cases, Burundians disappeared without a trace. The abuse is not only shocking in its brutality: it exposes that Tanzanian police and intelligence are working with Burundian authorities to target people the Tanzanian government is bound by international law to protect.

The most egregious case was of a group of eight Burundian refugees and asylum seekers who were detained at a Tanzanian police station in Kibondo for several weeks in July. There, Tanzanian police and intelligence officers held them in abysmal conditions, allegedly torturing them and attempting to extort them, before handing them over to Burundian

intelligence. “They used bike spokes to pierce our genitals and rubbed chili on them,” a 35-year-old Burundian told us. “They said they were going to kill us.” When given the “choice” between remaining in detention in Tanzania or being handed over to Burundian authorities, he said he begged to return to Burundi.

After the group’s forced return, Burundian authorities took them to Muramvya and Bubanza prisons, where they remain today. Their family members at least know where they are. In other cases, Burundians who went missing from the camps in similar circumstances have not been heard from again.

## **Since October 2019, Human Rights Watch has documented how Tanzanian police and intelligence agents arrested, tortured and extorted Burundian refugees**

Some who were tortured at the Kibondo police station said that Tanzanian police and intelligence officers told them that Burundian authorities had passed on information about them.

Historically, Tanzania and Burundi have had a close relationship – former Tanzanian president Julius K Nyerere led the peace negotiations that resulted in the 2000 Arusha Accords, which helped to end years of conflict in Burundi

which left an estimated 300,000 dead. But a protracted crisis in Burundi since 2015 has sent hundreds of thousands of Burundians fleeing to Tanzania. Now pressure has been mounting on them to return home.

In December 2019, we found that the fear of violence, arrest and deportation was driving many Burundian refugees and asylum seekers in Tanzania to return home under a tripartite agreement among Burundi, Tanzania and the United Nations refugee agency.

Yet, in Burundi, serious human rights violations against real or perceived opposition supporters, including returning refugees, put them at risk. The UN Commission of Inquiry on Burundi reported in September that some returnees continued to face hostility from local officials and the ruling party’s youth wing, the Imbonerakure, and that some have been forced to go back into exile.

A clear commitment to uphold international law by Tanzanian authorities would give vulnerable groups and Tanzanians additional protection. Tanzanian authorities should stop arbitrarily arresting and unlawfully sending back Burundians.

Tanzania’s regional and international partners, including the East African Community, the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights and the African Union, should publicly urge Tanzania to investigate these abuses and to stop forcibly returning asylum seekers or refugees to Burundi. ■

*Mausi Segun is the Africa director at Human Rights Watch.*



# 'Walisema wanaenda kutuua'



(Photos: Maija Tammi/  
Finnish Red Cross &  
Daniel Hayduk/AFP)

*This op-ed is available in English on p29.*

## Mausi Segun

**S**afari ya kwanza nje ya nchi ya Évariste Ndayishimiye kama rais wa Burundi ilibeba ujumbe. Alichagua Kigoma mji uliopo kaskazini magharibi mwa Tanzania mahali ambapo ni karibu na raia wa Burundi wapatao 154,000 bado wanaendelea kutafuta ulinzi kutoka unyanyasaji uliokuwa ukifanywa na utawala uliopita.

Lakini hatari wanayokumbana nayo Tanzania bado ni kubwa vile vile. Tangu mwezi Oktoba 2019, shirika la Human Rights Watch limenukuu namna ambavyo maofisa wa polisi na ujasusi wa Tanzania, na nyakati zingine wakishirikiana na mamlaka za Burundi, wamekuwa wakiwakamata kiholela, kuwapoteza kwa nguvu, kuwatesa, na kuwalazimisha malipo wakimbizi na watafuta hifadhi kutoka Burundi, na kuwarudisha Burundi wakimbizi wapatao nane

Mara nyingi visa hivi vilikuwa vinafanana: Askari polisi wa Tanzania wanaingia katika makambi ya wakimbizi Kigoma usiku wa manane na kuondoka na watu. Nyakati zingine, Warundi walipotelea pasipojulikana. Unyanyasaji huu si tu kwamba unatisha kwa namna ulivyo wa kikatili; unaibua namna ambavyo maofisa wa polisi na ujasusi wa Tanzania wanavyoshirikiana na mamlaka za Burundi kuwalenga watu ambao serikali ya Tanzania ina wajibu wa kulinda kwa mujibu wa sheria za kimataifa.

Kesi iliyo mbaya kupindukia ilikuwa ya kundi la wakimbizi na watafuta hifadhi wa Kirundi wanane ambao waliwekwa kizuizini katika kituo cha polisi cha Tanzania kilichopo Kibondo kwa wiki kadhaa mwezi Julai 2020. Mahali pale, maofisa wa polisi na ujasusi waliwashikilia katika mazingira mabaya, wakishutumiwa kuwatesa na kujaribu kuwatoza fedha kilaghai, kabla ya kuwakabidhi kwa idara ya ujasusi ya Burundi.

“Walitumia spoku za baiskeli kutoboa

sehemu zetu za siri, na kuzipaka pilipili,” alituambia Mrundi mwenye umri wa miaka 35. “Walisema wataenda kutuua.” Walipopewa ‘chaguo’ kati ya kubakizwa katika mahabusu Tanzania au kukabidhiwa kwa mamlaka za Burundi, alisema aliwasihia wamrudishe Burundi.

Baada ya kurudishwa kwa lazima na kundi lile, mamlaka za Burundi ziliwachukua na kuwapeleka magereza za Muramvyu na Bubanza ambapo hadi wakati wa uandishi wa ripoti hii ndipo walipokuwa. Angalau wanafamilia wao wanajua mahali walipo. Katika visa vingine, Warundi waliopotea katika mazingira yanayofananana na hayo hawajulikani walipo.

Baadhi waliokuwa wameteswa katika kituo cha polisi cha Kibondo walisema kwamba maafisa wa polisi na ujasusi wa Tanzania waliwaambia kwamba mamlaka za Burundi zilikuwa zimewapa taarifa zao.

Tanzania na Burundi wamekuwa na uhusiano wa karibu wa kihistoria – rais wa zamani wa Tanzania Julius K Nyerere aliongoza mazungumzo ya amani yaliyosaidia kupatikana kwa Makubaliano ya Arusha yaliyosaidia kumalizika kwa miaka mingi ya vita Burundi iliyosababisha vifo vya watu takribani 300,000. Lakini mgogoro mrefu wa Burundi ulioanza mwaka 2015 umesababisha mamia ya maelfu ya Warundi kukimbilia Tanzania. Na sasa, ushawishi umeendelea kuongezeka kwa wakimbizi hao kurudi nchini kwao.

Mwezi Disemba 2019, tuligundua kwamba hofu ya unyanyasaji, kukamatwa na kurudishwa kwa nguvu nyumbani ilikuwa inawasukuma wakimbizi na

watafuta hifadhi wengi wa Kirundi kurudi nyumbani kwao chini ya makubaliano ya pande tatu, Burundi, Tanzania na shirika la Umoja wa Mataifa la Wakimbizi (UNHCR).

Wakati huo huo Burundi kumekuwa na ukiukwaji mkubwa wa haki za binadamu dhidi ya wapinzani na wale wanaoshukiwa kuwaunga mkono wapinzani, ikiwa ni pamoja na wakimbizi wanaorejea nyumbani, wote wamekuwa hatarini. Kamisheni ya Umoja wa Mataifa juu ya Burundi iliripoti kwamba mnamo mwezi Septemba baadhi ya waliorudi waliendelea kukumbana na ukatili kutoka maafisa wa serikali na vijana kutoka kambi ya chama tawala, wajulikanao kama Imbonerakure, na wengine wamelazimika kurudi uhamishoni.

Ahadi ya wazi kutoka mamlaka za Tanzania kwamba zitaheshimu sheria ya kimataifa itatoa kinga ya ziada kwa makundi yaliyo hatarini lakini hata kwa Watanzania wenyewe. Mamlaka za Tanzania zinapaswa kukomesha ukamatwaji wa kiholela na kuwarudisha Warundi nchini kwao kinyume cha sheria

Washirika wa Tanzania wa kikanda na kimataifa, ikiwa ni pamoja na Jumuiya ya Afrika Mashariki, Kamisheni ya Afrika ya Haki za Watu na Binadamu, na Umoja wa Afrika, wanapaswa kuisihi Tanzania hadharani kuchunguza unyanyasaji huu na kuacha kuwarudisha kwa nguvu Burundi wakimbizi na watafuta hifadhi.



# What Google Trends tells us about Tanzania's election

Khamis Mutwafi

**H**ow can we get insights into elections and politics when there is systematic government censorship? Take the recent Tanzanian elections as an example. Following the country's decline into authoritarianism under President John Magufuli, there was unprecedented suppression of freedom of speech on both social and traditional media.

One answer is to look at alternative data sources that can provide a glimpse behind the "iron khanga" that has recently fallen on a number of African countries, such as Google Trends. This data collates the information that people search for, and provides a glimpse into, among other things, what has captured people's attention and what they intend to do in the future. It can therefore tell us important things about elections.

Where Tanzania is concerned, two particularly striking findings call into question the official account of the polls.

First, although the official results gave

him just 13% of the vote, in reality there was a great deal of public interest in the main opposition candidate, Tundu Lissu. Online interest in Lissu was considerable and grew throughout the election: by the end of the campaign he was receiving almost as much traffic as the president himself. While online interest does not translate into votes cast, this is a strong indication that in reality there was not a big gap between the two candidates.

Second, instead of a population excited to back President Magufuli, voter apathy was particularly high.

Remarkably few people searched for information about how to vote or where to vote in the run up to the election. Strikingly, the number of people who sought information on this was 47% lower in 2020 than for the previous election in 2015. This is despite the fact that internet access and smartphone access has increased significantly in the last five years.

Google Trends does have limitations – most obviously that many Tanzanians are not on the internet, especially in rural areas. Yet despite this, it represents a rich data source into the vastly under studied and shrinking democratic space of Tanzania. ■

*Khamis Mutwafi is a researcher interested in Tanzanian politics. This was produced in partnership with Democracy in Africa.*



# 'The very first thing is for this war to end'



(Photo: Marco Longari/AFP)

*Don Luiz Fernando Lisboa is on the front lines of the growing insurgency in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado. He is the bishop of Pemba, the coastal town where more than 100,000 internally displaced people are seeking refuge. The Catholic Church is leading humanitarian relief efforts there, bolstered by a \$120,000 donation from Pope Francis. The bishop spoke to **Luis Nhachote**.*

**O**n 5 October it was the third anniversary of the start of attacks on far-flung villages, which have then escalated. That year [2017] culminated with attacks on district headquarters, and since the beginning of this year, we've been seeing violent attacks against the population.

"The very first thing is for this war to end. The suffering meted out on the people is terrible. Because of the humanitarian crisis, the number of people affected has grown substantially, we need everything... Hence we have to help people all the time."

"That's why a lot of people walk the road from Mueda to Montepuez, which is over 200 km. Can you imagine walking 200 km on a potholed and secondary road? So whoever does not have money

for a passenger bus who takes the risk is in a dire situation."

"People have always arrived in Pemba from other parts of the province, but this last month the number has been very excessive ... This has overwhelmed all services in Pemba, which can no longer hold so many people together."

"We don't know exactly who's behind the attacks. Commentators and analysts have been saying it's a confluence of elements. It's difficult to know."

"[Civilians] all flee because of the attacks and some run away pre-emptively because they saw that other villages, islands and towns are being attacked, and they don't want to wait to be attacked ... It's best to lose everything than one's life. That's what they say." ■

# When life hands you lemons

## Despite Covid-19, South African and Egyptian citrus exports are booming this year

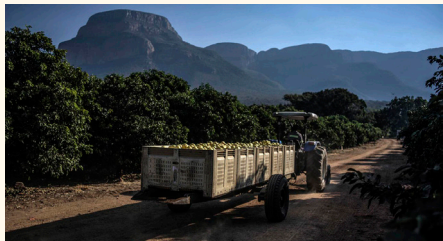
**Aaisha Dadi Patel**

**I**n South Africa, home to the world's second-largest citrus industry, farmers were uncertain about the impact of Covid-19 and the country's national lockdown earlier this year. They were worried about supply chain difficulties, including congestion at Cape Town and Durban's ports, uncertainty over regulations, and container shortages.

But the South African Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) formed a solutions response committee, developing guidelines for the labour-intensive industry's farmhouses to work safely and working with ports authorities to reduce delays. "What could have been a disastrous season turned into the best one we have ever had", says Justin Chadwick, chief executive of CGA.

South Africa exported 80-million cartons of oranges, 29.4-million cartons of lemons, 23.6-million cartons of soft citrus and 15.6-million cartons of grapefruit.

The CGA believes the spike in demand — which has seen additional United States ports of entry for citrus imports from South Africa open up, as well as the Philippines signing on after over a decade of negotiations — is in no small



**Oranges and lemons: A bumper crop for South Africa's citrus growers**  
(Photo: Mujahid Safodien/AFP)

part due to the belief that increased citrus consumption results in a higher vitamin C intake, which will serve consumers well in their fight against the coronavirus.

Despite no tangible proof that vitamin C — while essential to the human body's functionality — is an immunity booster, it hasn't stopped a global scramble for grapefruit, oranges and lemons.

It has also been a bumper year for Egyptian oranges. Egypt became the world's largest exporter of oranges by volume for the second consecutive year — surpassing South Africa and Spain — exporting 1.8-million metric tonnes of oranges. Egyptian citrus is grown mainly on sophisticated farms featuring hydroponic greenhouses operating on reclaimed desert land. ■

# Auditors under fire in Botswana

## PwC accused of unethical tactics by one of southern Africa's largest supermarket chains

**Joel Konopo**

**T**wo directors of retail giant Choppies Enterprises are suing auditing firm PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) for \$39-million for allegedly using unethical tactics to force the company to hire a director from the firm.

In papers filed in the Botswana high court in Gaborone, Choppies' chief executive officer, Ramachandra Ottapathu, and its executive director, Ismail Farouk, allege that PwC failed to complete an audit in order to pressurise Choppies to employ a PwC director, Rudi Binedell, as the head of its finance department.

They allege that the failure to release the audit results caused the Choppies' share price to collapse on the Botswana and Johannesburg stock exchanges, where the company is listed. They are suing the auditing firm and Binedell.

Choppies is one of the largest supermarket chains in southern Africa, operating in Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia, Mozambique, Tanzania and Kenya.

Choppies says in early 2018 it engaged PwC to assess a number of past accounting practices. The directors say PwC promised to be independent and professional and submit its findings in September 2018.

But according to the court papers, in March 2018 two members of Choppies' audit committee, Robert Neil Matthews and Sidney Allan Muller, solicited the employment of Binedell as Choppies' chief finance officer and asked that he be offered 50-million shares in the retailer under the employee option scheme as an incentive.

Ottapathu and Farouk say they found this request unethical, considering that Binedell was expected to audit the retailers' financials. They add that, after the refusal, working with PwC became difficult because PwC refused to sign off on the financials.

This PwC decision had a far-reaching consequence for Choppies. Ottapathu was suspended as chief executive, and Choppies lost around 75% of its market capitalisation between September and November 2018. The retail giant was only recently reinstated on the JSE.

PwC had not made public its responding affidavit at time of going to press. However, PwC director Binedell confirmed that PwC would defend itself in court. "Out of respect for the court's process we do not believe it appropriate to comment publicly on the matter," he said. ■

*This story was produced by the INK Centre for Investigative Journalism*



## The Big Picture

**Liberated:** On Monday, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania celebrated the 60th anniversary of its independence from France with a military parade in Nouakchott. The parade was attended by citizens in the capital, including these women draped in colours of the national flag. (Photo: John Wessels/AFP)

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