



10 things about Africa



With the launch of the 27four Pangaea Africa Fund of Funds, here are a few interesting facts about Africa:

1. There is little agreement on the origination of the name "Africa". Some say it comes from the Latin word "aprica" meaning "the land of sun", and others from the Greek word "aphrike", meaning "without cold". Eritrea is mentioned in some Ancient Greek myths. What is certain is that Africa has been referred to since Roman times. Africa was called the "Dark land" as it was largely uncharted territory. The oldest Homo sapien (human) remains to have been found were in Ethiopia, over 200 000 years ago.
2. Africa, made up of 53 countries, is the second-largest of the Earth's seven continents and covers roughly 30,330,000 sq km, which makes up about 22 per cent of the world's total land area. Africa has a coastline of 30 500km.
3. The Republic of Sudan is the largest country in Africa, with a total area of 2,505,800 sq km. The Seychelles is the smallest African country, with a total area of 453 sq km. Cairo, Egypt, is the largest city, with an estimated population of 9.2 million.
4. With a population of more than 150 million, Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa and the 8th most populous country in the world.
5. There is a long list of famous artists to come out of Africa. To name only a few, there was: Freddie Mercury (Tanzania) who was lead singer and songwriter for Queen; Wilbur Smith (Zambia) Ben Okri (Nigeria), Chinua Achebe (Nigeria) and JRR Tolkien (South Africa) who are all novelists; William Kentridge (South Africa) is an artist, and; Charlize Theron (South Africa) and Omar Sharif (Egypt) are known for dazzling Hollywood.
6. Great inventions to come out of Africa include: the Kreepy Krauly, invented by Ferdinand Chauvier (DRC) in 1973; Pratley putty, invented by Monty Pratley (South Africa), was used by NASA in 1969 to hold bits of the Apollo XI mission to the Moon; the CAT scan was invented by Allan Cormack (South Africa) for which he won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1979.
7. Some other well known people to come out of Africa are: Chris Barnard (South Africa) who was the first doctor to ever successfully complete a heart transplant. Monty Jones (Sierra Leone) is a plant breeder and adapted a high protein rice to West African conditions. Professor Tobias (South Africa) is a palaeoanthropologist and one of the leading specialists on human evolution. Philip Emeagwali is a Nigerian scientist who discovered a way to program computers to do more than 3 billion calculations a second, on which the internet was, largely, built. Mark Shuttleworth (South Africa) is an entrepreneur and first African in space.
8. The only street in the world to house two Nobel Peace prize winners is in Soweto, South Africa. Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Desmond Tutu both have houses in Vilakazi Street.
9. Africa does a lot of trading with the rest of the world and exports coal, copper, wheat and corn, to name only a few. Africa also produces a large proportion of the world's gold and diamonds.
10. Interesting African phrases: The word "Crossword" in Kiswahili (Kenya) is "chemshebongo" which, when translated, means "boil brains". Walala Wasala in various African languages can basically be translated to mean "If you snooze, you lose". "Akili ni mali" is a Swahili (Kenya) proverb and translates to "Use of brains produces wealth".



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