

Climbing Trees To Find Clues On Warming

Trying to Grasp Carbon Storage in Amazon

By MAX BEARAK

AMACAYACU NATIONAL PARK, Colombia — With the help of a small rope tied around his ankles, Eugenio Sánchez, lithe at age 50, shimmied himself all the way up a towering tree like a human inchworm, his chest heaving from the exertion, just to pick a few leaves.

The leaves, found only on the highest branches, would help the scientists waiting below identify the species. And that, along with the tree's exact size (or at least as close as one can approximate a tree's size) would tell them something very important: how much carbon it contained.

The team, wearing gumboots caked with mud, were at the beginning of a months-long process of painstakingly measuring pretty much every woody plant growing on this patch of Amazon rainforest in Colombia, one by one. A census of all 125,000 individual plants with a trunk size at least a centimeter in diameter.

It is part of a new, multimillion-dollar effort in dozens of patches of forest across the world that's aimed at figuring out, to an unprecedented degree of precision, the extent to which forests perform an epic service to humanity by capturing and locking away huge amounts of carbon dioxide, the main planet-warming greenhouse gas.

The Amazon is vast. Nearly 10 Texases would fit in it. Amid that emerald expanse, this infinitesimal patch, less than a tenth of a

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Eugenio Sánchez, top, scaling a tree in a patch of Amazon rainforest in Colombia. Scientists are trying to figure out the extent to which forests capture and lock away carbon dioxide. Along the way, the team has also discovered rare species, above.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FEDERICO RIOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

China's Women Look to Reclaim Rightful Payout

By VIVIAN WANG

GUANGDONG PROVINCE, China — The women came from different villages, converging outside the local Rural Affairs Bureau shortly after 10 a.m. One had taken the morning off from her job selling rice rolls. Another was a tour operator. Yet another was a recent retiree.

The group, nine in all, double-checked their paperwork, then strode in. In a dimly lit office, they cornered three officials and demanded to know why they had been excluded from government payouts, worth tens of thousands of dollars, that were supposed to go to each villager.

"I had these rights at birth. Why did I suddenly lose them?" one woman asked.

That was the question uniting these women in Guangdong Province, in southern China. They were joining a growing number of rural women, all across the country, who are finding each other to confront a longstanding custom of denying them land rights — all because of whom they had married.

In much of rural China, if a woman marries someone from outside her village, she becomes a "married-out woman." To the village, she is no longer a member, even if she continues to live there.

That means the village assembly — a decision-making body technically open to all adults, but usually dominated by men — can deny her village-sponsored benefits such as health insurance, as

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In Tajikistan, Punished for Beards and Hijabs

By VALERIE HOPKINS

DUSHANBE, Tajikistan — People in Tajikistan were expecting a government crackdown after Tajik men were arrested and charged with a terrorist attack on a Moscow concert hall in March.

But it still seemed excessive to Nilufar, a 27-year-old education professional, when she saw local authorities with scissors outside a K.F.C. in Dushanbe, Tajikistan's capital, trimming beards that were deemed too long.

Excessive, but not so surprising. In the span of a month, Nilufar

Push to Stop Extremism After Russia Attack May Foment It

herself had been stopped three times by the authorities for wearing a hijab in public.

"Nowadays, as soon as you go outside, you can actually feel how the raids have intensified," Nilufar said in an interview in Dushanbe, providing only her first name because of fear of retribution.

With a population of 10 million, the vast majority of whom are Muslim, Tajikistan has many challenges that counterterrorism experts say make it an incubator for extremism: poverty, poor education, high unemployment and grievances against an autocratic government that severely restricts the practice of religion.

In the face of these challenges, critics say, Tajikistan has continued to restrict how Islam can be taught and practiced and increasingly implemented superficial policies regulating head scarves

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Musk's Ability To Sway Trump Carries Pitfalls

This article is by Ryan Mac, Theodore Schleifer and Maggie Haberman.

In a live-streamed conversation on X with former President Donald J. Trump last month, Elon Musk raised the idea of a "government efficiency commission." Such a council could ensure that taxpayers' money was "spent in a good way," Mr. Musk said during their more-than-two-hour talk.

"I'd love it," Mr. Trump replied.

On Thursday, Mr. Trump followed up on Mr. Musk's suggestion. In a speech at the Economic Club of New York, Mr. Trump said he planned to appoint Mr. Musk, who leads Tesla, SpaceX and X, as the head of a new government efficiency commission if he was elected president in November.

The commission would audit the "entire federal government" and "make recommendations for drastic reforms," Mr. Trump said.

The announcement capped weeks of discussions between Mr. Trump and Mr. Musk, who have bonded over a mutual hobbyhorse of eliminating wasteful spending, three people close to the men said. Mr. Trump has told Mr. Musk that he wants the tech entrepreneur to slash the federal government's costs, just as he did at his social media company X, one of the people said.

Mr. Musk, the world's richest man, has started to influence Mr. Trump as the Republican presidential nominee heads into November's election. That the

POLL FINDS RACE FOR WHITE HOUSE IS NECK AND NECK

A TIMES/SIENA SURVEY

Voters Still Unsure About Harris, but Trump's Base Holds Firm

By JONATHAN WEISMAN and RUTH IGELNIK

Former President Donald J. Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris enter the homestretch of the campaign in a tight race, and with their only scheduled debate looming on Tuesday, Ms. Harris faces a sizable share of voters who still say they need to know more about her.

A national poll of likely voters by The New York Times and Siena College found Mr. Trump leading Ms. Harris, 48 percent to 47 percent, within the poll's three-percentage-point margin of error and largely unchanged from a Times/Siena poll taken in late July just after President Biden dropped his re-election bid. Mr. Trump may have had a rough month following the president's departure and amid the burst of excitement that Ms. Harris brought Democrats, but the poll suggests his support remains remarkably resilient.

The national results are in line with polls in the seven battleground states that will decide the presidential election, where Ms. Harris is tied with Mr. Trump or holds slim leads, according to New York Times polling averages. Taken together, they show a tight race that remains either candidate's to win or lose.

Only a little over eight weeks remain in the shortest presidential election in modern American history. Both candidates have scant opportunity to shift the electorate, but for Mr. Trump, opinions are largely fixed. Ms. Harris is still unknown to many.

In that sense, the new poll underscores the risks and potential rewards, particularly facing Ms. Harris, on Tuesday night, when she and Mr. Trump will face off on ABC News. The survey found that 28 percent of likely voters said they felt they needed to know more about Ms. Harris, while only 9 percent said they needed to know more about Mr. Trump.

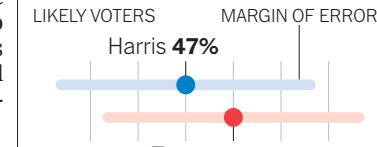
These voters, when taken with the 5 percent of voters who said they were undecided or did not lean toward either major-party candidate, paint a portrait of an electorate that could be more fluid than it seems. Some who are considering Ms. Harris said they still hoped to learn more before solidifying their decision, and two-thirds of those who want to know more said they were eager to learn about her policies, specifically.

"I don't know what Kamala's plans are," said Dawn Conley, a 48-year-old small-business owner in Knoxville, Tenn., who is leaning

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THE NEW YORK TIMES / SIENA COLLEGE POLL Sept. 3 to 6

If the 2024 presidential election were held today, who would you vote for if the candidates were Kamala Harris and Donald Trump?



Source: Based on a New York Times/Siena College poll of 1,695 voters nationwide conducted from Sept. 3 to 6. The margin of error is plus or minus 2.8 points.

THE NEW YORK TIMES



KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Winning, and Dashing American Hopes

No. 1 Jannik Sinner after beating Taylor Fritz in the U.S. Open men's final on Sunday. Page D4.

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INTERNATIONAL A4-10

Maduro Rival Flees to Spain

Edmundo González, who is widely considered to have won Venezuela's disputed presidential election, was facing an arrest warrant.

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NATIONAL A11-16

Fighting Wildfires With Fire

In California, intentional burns have been shown to reduce the risk of blazes and more should be done, experts say. But real barriers remain.

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BUSINESS B1-5

An A.I. Test for iPhones

On Monday, Apple will introduce smartphones with features that could take the technology mainstream or sow fresh doubts about its viability.

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Pachyderms for Sale

"The Great Elephant Migration," a touring public-art installation of more than 100 life-size animal models, raises funds for conservation.

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Cass R. Sunstein

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