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African continent splitting into two parts – 14th May 2026

Level 0

A big part of East Africa is breaking away from the African continent. There is a long, deep crack in Zambia. The crack is called a rift. Scientists said there was evidence that the rift is active and that other rifts are too. This may be a sign of the break-up of sub-Saharan Africa.

Land on Earth is always moving. Three hundred million years ago, there was one supercontinent. Over millions of years, it broke up to become today's continents. Rifts are one reason why continents split apart. The rift in Zambia is moving very slowly. It will take millions of years for Africa to split in two.

Level 1

A big part of East Africa is breaking away from the African continent. Scientists studied a long, deep crack in Zambia. The crack is called a rift. A geologist is studying it. He believes it shows that a giant piece of land is breaking away. He said there was evidence that the rift is active and that other rifts are too. He warned that this may be an early sign of the break-up of sub-Saharan Africa.

The land on Earth is always moving. Three hundred million years ago, there was one supercontinent. Over millions of years, it broke up. Giant areas of land moved across the oceans to become today's continents. Rifts are one reason why continents split apart. The rift in Zambia is part of a 2,500-kilometre-long crack. It is moving very slowly. It will take millions of years for Africa to split in two. In 200 million years, there could be just one supercontinent again.

Level 2

There are signs that a big part of East Africa is breaking away from the African continent. Scientists studied a deep crack that runs along a large part of Zambia. The crack is called a rift. It is a fault in the rock under Earth's surface. A geologist from Oxford University is studying it. He believes it shows that a giant piece of land is breaking away. He wrote: "There is evidence that the fault... is active and therefore the Southwest African Rift Zone is too." He warned that this may be an early sign of the break-up of sub-Saharan Africa.

The land on Earth is always moving. Three hundred million years ago, there was one supercontinent, called Pangea. Over millions of years, Pangea broke up. Giant areas of land slowly moved across the oceans to become the continents we know today. Rifts are one reason why land masses split apart. The rift in Zambia is part of a 2,500-kilometre-long crack. The rift is moving at a rate of about 4.7 mm per year. At this rate, it will take millions of years for Africa to split in two. Scientists believe that in 200 million years, there could be just one supercontinent again.

Level 3

There are signs that a huge part of East Africa is starting to break away from the African continent. Geologists (people who study the Earth and its land and rocks) studied a deep crack that runs along a large part of Zambia. The crack is called a rift. It is a major fault in the rock that covers Earth's surface. Geologist Mike Daly of the University of Oxford is studying Zambia's Kafue Rift. He believes there is activity in the rift that suggests a giant piece of land is breaking away. He wrote: "There is evidence that the fault boundary of the Kafue Rift is active and therefore the Southwest African Rift Zone is too." He warned that this "may be an early indication of the break-up of sub-Saharan Africa".

The land on Earth is constantly moving. Three hundred million years ago, there was just one huge supercontinent. It was called Pangea. Over millions of years, Pangea broke up. Giant areas of land slowly moved across the oceans to form the continents we know today. This movement is called continental drift. Rifts are one reason why land masses split apart. The Kafue Rift in Zambia is part of a 2,500-kilometre-long rift zone stretching from Tanzania to Namibia. The rift is moving at a rate of about 4.7 mm per year. At this rate, it will take millions of years for Africa to split in two. Scientists believe that in 200 million years from now, there could be just one supercontinent again.