

# INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS



## APRIL 2011

**4.1 April Fool's Day** - a day of practical jokes and high humor; its origins are probably in France in 1582 when the change to the Gregorian calendar moved New Year from March 25 to January 1; those who forgot were April fools International

**Captain Regents' Day** - every six months the Great and General Council of San Marino elect two Captain Regents to be the heads of the state and serve a 6-month term; the investiture of the Captain Regents takes place on April 1 and again on October 1 San Marino

**Greek Cypriot National Day** - commemorates the start of the guerrilla campaign on this day in 1955 when EOKA targeted British military and civilian installations on the island Cyprus

**Islamic Republic Day** - commemorates the day the country became a theocratic Islamic Republic state in 1979 following the triumph of the Islamic Revolution led by the Ayatollah Khomeini Iran

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**4.2 International Children's Book Day** - celebrated on the birthday of Hans Christian Andersen to inspire a love of reading and to call attention to children's books International

**Malvinas** (Veteran's Day) - a tribute to Argentina's fallen soldiers in the Falklands War, which began with the Argentine occupation of the islands on this day in 1982 Argentina

**National Picnic Day** Iran

4.3	<b>Sizdebedar</b> (Nature Day) - a day to celebrate people's friendship with nature	Iran*
	<b>Mothering Sunday</b> –this day is set aside to celebrate motherhood; celebrated on the 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent	UK, Scotland*
	<b>Festival of Horses</b> (Ghode Jatra) – horse races and other sports take place on this, one of the most exciting festivals of Kathmandu; various deities are carried shoulder-high on palanquin (khat) to the accompaniment of traditional music	Nepal
	<b>A Drop of Water is a Grain of Gold Day</b> –this day is set aside to recognize the value of water; celebrated the first Sunday of April	Turkmenistan*
	<b>Declaration of the Second Republic "Power Taken by the Military</b> - marks the day in 1984 when CMRN troops lead by then-Lt. Col. Lansans Conte seized power and announced the establishment of the Second Republic	Guinea
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4.4	<b>Declaration of the Second Republic "Power Taken by the Military"</b> - marks the day in 1984 when CMRN troops lead by then-Lt Col Lansans Conte seized power and announced the establishment of the Second Republic	Guinea
	<b>Women's Day &amp; Children's Day</b>	Taiwan
	<b>Independence Day</b> - anniversary of achieving sovereignty in 1960	Senegal
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4.5	<b>Nyepi Day/Hindi-Telugu</b> (Hindu New Year) – a quiet day of personal reflection	Hindu*
	<b>Death of Imam Khomeini</b> – honors the Founder of the Islamic Republic	Iran
	<b>Peace and Reconciliation Day</b> - commemorates the signing of the agreement between the Angolan government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola; the agreement ended decades of civil war in Angola	Angola
	<b>Hansik (Cold Food Festival) &amp; Arbor Day</b> – spring festival; an ancient tradition of only eating cold foods; trees and shrubs are also planted	South Korea, North Korea*

- 4.5 Qingming Festival** (Tomb Sweeping Day) - on this day the families clean the graves of their ancestors or relatives Taiwan, China, South Korea, Hong Kong\*
- Shyunki Taisai** – the doors of the inner shrine are opened, food offerings are made, and prayers are offered by the Shinto priests for everyone’s health, happiness, safety and mutual prosperity Shinto\*
- Mikael Agricola Day** - to honor a prominent proponent of the Protestant Reformation in Sweden and the father of the Finnish written language Finland\*
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- 4.6 Chakri Memorial Day** - a national holiday honoring King Rama I, who in 1782 founded the Chakri dynasty (which still rules the country) and established Bangkok as the country’s capital Thailand\*
- Uprising Day** - anniversary of the bloodless coup of 1985 that deposed Gaafar Mohammed Nimeri after tensions erupted over economic troubles and Nimeri’s imposition of strict Islamic law and attempts to make Sudan a formal Islamic state Sudan\*
- Matsya Jayanti** - the day when the first incarnation or avatar of Lord Vishnu, Matsya Avatar, is believed to have appeared on the earth Hindu\*
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- 4.7 Women's Day** - celebrated on the anniversary of the death of Josina Machel, a gallant fighter who died in armed combat against Portuguese oppression; Women’s Day is a day to celebrate women’s achievements and reflect on their fight for equal rights Mozambique
- Motherhood & Beauty Day** - an official holiday dedicated to women in which each woman is celebrated as beautiful in her own way Armenia
- National Mourning Day** (Genocide Remembrance Day) - anniversary of the 100-day Rwandan genocide which took place in 1994; During the 100 days up to 800,000 Tutsis were killed by Hutu militia Rwanda
- World Health Day** - on this day events are held around the globe to mark the importance of health for productive and happy lives International

<b>4.8</b>	<b>Birthday of the Sultan of Johor</b>	Malaysia
	<b>Toussaint L'Ouverture Day</b> - commemorates the death in 1803 of Toussaint L'Ouverture, an important leader of the Haitian Revolution	Haiti
	<b>Flower Festival</b> (Hana Matsuri) - a festival to celebrate the birth of Buddha	Japan*
	<b>Fast &amp; Prayer Day</b> - a day set aside to mobilize national prayer for the spiritual cleansing and healing of the nation which came out of the political crisis between Liberia and Sierra Leone in the mid 1800s. Observed the second Friday of April	Liberia*

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<b>4.9</b>	<b>Martyr's Day</b> - honors and commemorates those who fought for freedom against French rule, which resulted in independence in 1956	Tunisia
	<b>Baghdad Liberation Day</b> – anniversary of the fall of Baghdad and the regime of Saddam Hussein in 2003	Iraq (Kurdish region only)
	<b>Memorial Day</b> (National Unity Day) - commemoration of the April 9, 1989 tragedy when young Georgians in Rustavelis Gamziri, Tbilisi were killed by Soviet soldiers	Georgia
	<b>Araw Ng Kagitingan</b> (Valour Day) - commemorates the battle of “Sardar Post” on the Gujarat border in 1965 when two companies of CRPF repulsed a brigade level attack by Pakistan	Philippines

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<b>4.11</b>	<b>Battle of Rivas</b> (Juan Santamaría's Day) - anniversary of the battle between Costa Rican militia under General Mora and the Nicaraguan forces of William Walker in 1856. Juan Santamaria is officially recognized as the national hero of the Republic of Costa Rica	Costa Rica
	<b>Chaite Dashain</b> – a festival that celebrates the victory of good over evil; Goddess Durga, who helped Rama (an incarnation of Vishnu) slay the demon king Ravana, as offered animal sacrifices (water buffaloes and goats) at the temples dedicated to her	Hindu*

<p><b>4.12 Cosmonaut's Day</b> - commemorates the first manned earth orbit on this date in 1961 by Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin aboard the spacecraft Vostok 1</p>	Russia
<p><b>National Redemption Day</b> - anniversary of the coup in 1980</p>	Liberia
<p><b>Yuri's Night</b> - an international celebration to commemorate two separate space exploration milestones—the launch of the first human into space, Yuri Gagarin, on this date in 1961, and the launch of the first Space Shuttle, STS-1, on this date in 1981</p>	International
<p><b>Vaisakhi/Baisakhi</b> – a festival to celebrate the Sikh New Year and the founding of the Khalsa Panth</p>	Hindu, Jain, Sikh*
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<p><b>4.13 Cambodian New Year</b> (Chaul Chnam Thmey)</p>	Cambodia
<p><b>Songkran Days</b> - a celebration of the new year which coincides with the new year of the Dai calendar</p>	Thailand
<p><b>Sinhala &amp; Tamil New Year</b></p>	Sri Lanka*
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<p><b>4.14 Pan-American Day/Bastilla's Day</b> - a celebration in the 21 North, Central, and South American countries making up the Organization of American States, established in 1890</p>	Latin America
<p><b>Youth Day</b></p>	Angola
<p><b>Orange Day</b> - a day for couples to confirm their love by exchanging oranges or orange-colored gifts</p>	Japan
<p><b>Day of the Americas/Pan American Day</b> – to recognize the unity and strong bond of the American continent</p>	Honduras
<p><b>Navabarsha</b> (New Year's Day) – celebrated by cleaning their homes and making designs on the floors and outside the doorway with flour and rice to welcome the New Year</p>	Nepal
<p><b>Baisakhi</b> - the anniversary of the establishment of the Khalsa order for the Sikhs; a traditional harvest festival in many northern states of India; the beginning of the new year for the people of Nepal and Indians in West Bengal</p>	Sikh, Jain*

- 4.15 Day of the Sun/Kim Il-sung's Birthday** - commemorates the birth on this day in 1912 of Kim Il-Sung, leader of North Korea from its founding in 1948 until his death in 1994 North Korea\*
- Bangla New Year** Bangladesh\*
- Declaration of Melakka as Historical City** – in 1989 Malaysia
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- 4.16 José de Diego Day** - commemorates the birth on this day in 1866 of Dr. Jose de Diego y Benitez, statesman, journalist, poet, and advocate for Puerto Rico's independence from Spain and from the USA Puerto Rico
- Queen Margrethe's Birthday** - commemorates the birth of Queen Margrethe on this day in 1940, a week after German totalitarian lead Adolf Hitler invaded Denmark Denmark
- Mahavira Jayanti** – celebrates the birth of Mahavira, the last Tirthankara; lectures are held to preach the path of virtue; people meditate and offer prayers Jain\*
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- 4.17 FAO Day** – recognize the works of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in eliminating world hunger Iraq
- Independence Day** - honors independence from France on this date in 1946 Syria
- Women's Day** - a day to promote the end of violence against women Gabon
- Palm Sunday** – commemorates the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem in the days before his Passion Christian
- Bak Full Moon Poya Day** – commemorates the day Lord Buddha second visit to Sri Lanka Sri Lanka\*
- Hanuman Jayanti** - commemorates the birth of Hanuman, the symbol of strength and energy; Hanuman is worshipped as a deity with magical powers and the ability to conquer evil spirits Hindu\*

<p><b>4.18 National Health Day</b> - a sports day on which competitions (soccer, volleyball, softball, boxing, basketball and cycling) are coordinated by the Health Department</p>	Kiribati
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<p><b>4.19 Landing of the 33 Patriots</b> - the anniversary of the landing of the 33 Orientals in 1825, who then began a campaign leading to Uruguay's independence</p>	Uruguay
<p><b>Independence Day</b> - a celebration of the end of white minority rule in 1980 and the formation of the republic; the country was formerly known as Rhodesia</p>	Zimbabwe
<p><b>Birthday of Sultan of Perak</b></p>	Malaysia
<p><b>Movimientos Precursores a la Independencia</b> - commemorates the 1810 coup and start of the Venezuelan Independence</p>	Venezuela
<p><b>Dia do Indio</b> (Day of the Indian) - a celebration of the rich cultural heritage that stems from the indigenous peoples of Brazil</p>	Brazil
<p><b>Pesach</b> (Passover) – celebrates the birth of the Jewish nation</p>	Judaism*
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<p><b>4.21 Kartini Day</b> - commemorates Kartini's contribution to women's rights</p>	Indonesia*
<p><b>Tiradentes Day</b> - honors Joaquim Jose da Silva Cavier, who lead a revolt against the Portuguese in 1789. He was a dentist and nicknamed Tiradentes, which means “tooth-puller”</p>	Brazil
<p><b>National Tree Planting Day</b> - on this day people often plant palm trees and coconut trees along the Pacific Coast that borders the East coast of Kenya</p>	Kenya
<p><b>International Creativity &amp; Innovation Day</b></p>	International
<p><b>Queen's Birthday</b> - marks the birthday of Queen Elizabeth II</p>	Falkland Islands
<p><b>Kindergarten Day</b> - celebrated on the birthday of Friedrich Froebel who started the first Kindergarten in Germany in 1837</p>	Germany
<p><b>Maundy Thursday</b> (Holy Thursday) – commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus Christ with his Apostles</p>	Christian*

<p><b>4.21 Festival of Ridvan</b> - a 12-day celebration commemorating Baha'u'llah's stay in the Garden of Ridvan. During this time, he made his declaration of his mission as God's messenger. Begins at sundown the previous day</p>	Baha'i*
<p><b>4.22 Good Friday</b> - commemorates the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross, the act that brought salvation to all who believe</p>	Christian*
<p><b>Earth Day</b> - first observed in 1970 to call attention to pollution in the environment and the need to conserve natural resources</p>	International
<p><b>Ethiopian Easter</b></p>	Ethiopia*
<p><b>4.23 Holy Saturday</b> – commemorates the day that the body of Jesus Christ was laid in the tomb</p>	Christian*
<p><b>Funafuti Bomb Day</b> – commemorates the bombing of Funafuti by Japan during World War II</p>	Tuvalu
<p><b>Peppercorn Day</b> - a holiday dating back to 1797, when officials use to collect one peppercorn as rent for the Old State House in Saint George</p>	Bermuda
<p><b>St. George's Day</b> - the feast day of St. George celebrated on the traditionally accepted date of his death in 303 A.D.</p>	International
<p><b>Aragon Day</b> - celebrates the residency of Katherine of Aragon at Ampthill Castle, while her marriage to Henry VIII was annulled</p>	Spain
<p><b>National Sovereignty &amp; Children's Day</b> - commemorates the first Grand National Assembly in 1923, and also honors youth as the symbol of modern Turkey</p>	Turkey
<p><b>Castilla y Leon Day</b> - the anniversary of the Battle of Billalar, in which Castillian rebels were dealt a crushing defeat by the forces of King Charles I in the Revolt of the Comuneros on this day in 1521</p>	Spain



<b>4.24</b>	<b>Armenian Martyrs' Day</b> (Genocide Memorial Day) - Commemorates the 1915 Turkish massacre of 1 million Armenians	Armenia
	<b>National Concord Day</b> - marks the 1995 agreement between the government and Tuareg groups	Niger
	<b>Genocide Memorial Day</b> – to remember the Great Calamity, the systematic and deliberate genocide of the Armenian people by the Ottoman Empire during and after World War I, resulting in 1,500,000 deaths	Armenia
	<b>Easter</b> (Western)/ <b>Pascha</b> (Eastern) – to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ	Christian*

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<b>4.25</b>	<b>Easter Monday</b> – secular celebrations with events including egg rolling competitions, dousing others with holy water	UK*
	<b>Family Day</b>	South Africa
	<b>ANZAC Day</b> - honors those who died in both World Wars as well as in the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Anzac stands for “Australia and New Zealand Army Corps”	Nuie, New Zealand, Samoa, Australia
	<b>Flag Day</b> – on this day in 1940 the BBC called on all Faroese to fly the Faroese national flag instead of the Danish flag	Faroe Islands
	<b>National Flag Day</b>	Swaziland
	<b>Horse Day</b> - in honor of the Akhalteke horse; celebrated the last Sunday in April	Turkmenistan*
	<b>Liberation Day</b> - commemorates liberation from German troops in 1945	Italy, Sinai
	<b>Foundation of the People's Army Day</b>	North Korea
	<b>Liberty Day</b> – commemorates the famous Carnation Revolution; a major feat in the revolution involved revolutionaries who managed to complete a victorious coup without shooting a single bullet	Portugal
	<b>Sham el-Nessim</b> - a day to celebrate spring; sham means “to breathe in” and nessim means “zephyr,” the spring breeze	Egypt
	<b>Sinai Liberation Day</b> - commemorates the return of Sinai to Egypt in 1982 as part of the 1978 Camp David agreement between Israel and Egypt	Egypt

<p><b>4.25 African Liberation Day</b> - began in 1958 and marks the progress made each year in the liberation movement</p>	<p>Ghana</p>
<p><b>4.26 Union Day</b> - marks when mainland Tanganyika and the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba joined in 1964</p>	<p>Tanzania</p>
<p><b>4.27 Freedom Day</b> - commemorates the day in 1994 when all people were allowed to vote regardless of race of heritage</p>	<p>South Africa</p>
<p><b>Danbala Wedo</b> – a Vodou celebration</p>	<p>Vodou*</p>
<p><b>Independence Day</b> - Togo severed its constitutional ties with France in 1960, shed its UN trusteeship status, and became fully independent under a provisional constitution with Olympio as president.</p>	<p>Togo</p>
<p><b>Independence Day</b> – from Britain in 1961</p>	<p>Sierra Leone</p>
<p><b>Resistance Day</b> - commemorates the establishment of Slovenia’s Liberation Front in 1941 to fight the occupying forces of nearby European countries such as the Germany, Italy, and Hungary</p>	<p>Slovenia</p>
<p><b>4.28 National Heroes Day</b> - celebrates the life and achievements of 10 of its most notable citizens: Grantely Adams, Errol Walton Barrow, Sir Garfield Sobers, Sir Frank Leslie Walcott, Sir Hugh Springer, Clement Osbourne Payne, Charles Duncan O’Neal, Samuel Jackman Prescod, Sarah Ann Gill, and Bussa</p>	<p>Barbados</p>
<p><b>Revolution Day &amp; Loss of the Muslim Nation</b> - commemorates the day when the Afghan mujahideen overthrew the Russian-backed regime in Afghanistan in 1992</p>	<p>Afghanistan</p>
<p><b>4.29 Showa-no-Hi</b> (Showa Day) - a day to commemorate the birth of Emperor Hirohito Michi-no-Miya (1901-1989)</p>	<p>Japan</p>

<b>4.29 Casse Canarie</b> (Breaking the Jugs) – a day associated with releasing and honoring the dead; Vodou practitioners break jugs to send the souls of those who have died in the past year to the land of the dead	Vodou*
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<b>4.30 Liberation Day</b> - commemorates the fall of Saigon on this date in 1975, which marked the end of the Vietnam War and the start of a transition period leading to the formal reunification of Vietnam under communist rule	Vietnam
<b>Children's Day</b> - a day for the Mexican people to honor their children	Mexico
<b>Walpurgis Night</b> (Witches' Night) - a celebration named after Saint Walpurga	International
<b>Koninginendag</b> (Queen Juliana's Day) - celebrates former Queen Juliana's 1909 birthday and Dutch National Day	Netherlands
<b>King's Birthday</b> - marks the birth of Carl XVI Gustaf, king of Sweden since 1973	Sweden
<b>Queen's Birthday/Rincon's Day</b> - a celebration to reintroduce Bonaire's youth to its rich history	Bonaire
<b>Maidyozarem Gahambar</b> – mid-spring festival	Zoroastrianism
<b>Mange-les-Mort</b> (Feeding the Dead) – a day for feeding the dead, the family ancestors whose spirits reside in govis	Vodou*
<b>Queen's Birthday</b> - sports competitions, kite flying contests and fun-filled activities are held in honor of Queen Beatrix	Aruba
<b>Beltane</b> - the last of the three spring fertility festivals celebrated halfway between Vernal Equinox and Summer Solstice	Celtic, Pagan

Information from [www.earthcalendar.net](http://www.earthcalendar.net), Wikipedia, [www.worldtravelguide.net](http://www.worldtravelguide.net), [aglobalworld.com/holidays-around-the-world](http://aglobalworld.com/holidays-around-the-world), About.com, [pluralism.org](http://pluralism.org), [www.schooloftheseasons.com](http://www.schooloftheseasons.com), and [www.hindu-blog.com](http://www.hindu-blog.com).  
Some information adapted from Honoring Differences 2011 calendar, available at <http://www.diversitycalendar.com/Home.html>.