



# INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

## FEBRUARY 2011

### 2.1 Heroes' Day

**Abolition of Slavery Day** – established in 1835

**Federal Territory Day** - commemorates the date in 1974 when Kuala Lumpur was ceded by the state of Selangor to the federal government of Malaysia. It also marks the date in 1984 when Labuan joined Malaysia and the date in 2001 when Putrajaya became the third federal territory

**Demise of Prophet Mohammed**

**Confederation Agreement Day** - marks the date in 1982 when the confederation between Senegal and its neighbor Gambia came into existence following an agreement between the two countries signed on December 12, 1981. The federation was intended to promote cooperation between the two countries

**San Cecilio** - the feast day of San Cecilio, Granada's patron saint

**St. Brigid's Day** - the feast day of St. Brigid, an Irish Roman Catholic nun and patroness of dairy maids, infants, midwives, blacksmiths, poets, nuns, and students. The day is customarily celebrated with crosses woven from rushes which are blessed then hung on the front doors and left in place all year. They are burned and replaced with a newly-woven cross on the next St. Brigid's Day

**Trifon Zarezan** (Wine-grower's Day) - a celebration for Saint Trifon, the patron saint of wine

Rwanda

Mauritius

Malaysia

Iran

Senegal

Spain

Montserrat

Bulgaria

<b>2.2</b>	<b>Chinese New Year's Eve</b> – celebrated the last day of the last month on the Lunisolar Chinese calendar	Taiwan*
	<b>Lunar New Year</b> – celebrated the first day of the first month on the Lunar calendar	South Korea*
	<b>Groundhog Day</b> - according to folklore, if it is cloudy when a groundhog emerges from its burrow on this day, it will leave the burrow, signifying that winter will soon end. If on the other hand, it is sunny, the groundhog will supposedly "see its shadow" and retreat back into its burrow, and winter will continue for six more weeks.	US
	<b>Imbolc</b> - a celebration of light and the coming of spring; one of the “Greater Sabbats” during the Wiccan year	Pagan (Northern Hemisphere only)
	<b>Martyrdom of Imam Reza</b>	Iran
	<b>Candlemas</b> – a celebration of the baby Jesus, the Christian’s Savior, in the Temple of Jerusalem 40 days after his birth	Christian
	<b>Imbolc</b> – a day to celebrate the goddess Brighid, and the end of winter	Pagan
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<b>2.3</b>	<b>Chinese New Year</b> (Lunar New Year) – celebrated the first day of the first month on the Lunisolar Chinese calendar	International*
	<b>Setsubun-sai</b> (Beginning of spring) - a festival held the day before the start of spring according to the Japanese lunar calendar. Rituals are performed with the purpose of chasing away evil spirits including the ritual of throwing roasted beans around one’s house and at temples and shrines	Shinto*
	<b>Tết</b> (Lunar New Year) – Vietnamese New Year marking the arrival of spring	Vietnam*
	<b>Heroes' Day</b> - marks the anniversary of the assassination of Eduardo Mondlane, President of the Mozambican Liberation Front from 1962 until his death in 1969	Mozambique, São Tomé e Príncipe
	<b>Suyapa Day</b> – honors the Virgin of Suyapa, patron saint of Honduras	Honduras
	<b>Foundation of the Vietnamese Communist Party</b> – commemorates the founding of the party by Ho Chi Minh and other exiles at a conference in Hong Kong in 1930	Vietnam

<b>2.3</b>	<b>San Blaise</b> - the feast day of St. Blaise, physician, bishop, and patron saint of Paraguay	Paraguay
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Day of the Fallen</b> (Day of the Armed Struggle) – marks the date of the armed struggle against Portuguese colonial rule	Angola
	<b>National Day</b> – independence from Great Britain in 1948	Sri Lanka
	<b>Second Day of Chinese New Year</b>	International*
	<b>Farmer's Day</b> – marks the beginning of spring	Taiwan
<b>2.5</b>	<b>Constitution Day</b> - marks the adoption of a national constitution in 1917	Mexico
	<b>Anniversary of the Liberation of the Republic</b> - commemorates the liberation of the Republic of San Marino from Cardinal Giuio Alberoni's occupation in 1740	San Marino
	<b>St. Agatha's Day</b> - the feast day honoring the “co-patron” of the city	San Marino
	<b>Chama Cha Mapinduzi Day</b> - honors the ruling political party of Tanzania which was established in 1977	Tanzania
	<b>Unity Day</b> – first celebrated in 1992 with hopes of bringing unity between the Hutu and Tutsi tribes	Burundi
	<b>Constitution Day</b> - marks the adoption of a national constitution in 1917	Mexico
	<b>President's Day</b> – to honor past presidents	Congo
<b>2.6</b>	<b>Waitangi Day</b> - commemorates the signing of the Treaty at Waitangi in 1840 between the English settlers and the native Maori chiefs	Nuie, New Zealand
	<b>Bob Marley Day</b> - marks the birthday of Robert Nesta Marley, a native of Nine Miles, Jamaica and perhaps the greatest legend of Reggae music	Jamaica

**2.6 Sami National Day** - commemorates the date in 1917 when the first Sami congress was held in Trondheim, Norway. This congress was the first time that Norwegian and Swedish Sami came together across their national border to work together to find solutions for common problems

Finland,  
Norway &  
Sweden

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**2.7 Independence Day** – this day in 1974, Grenada declared its independence from the British and adopted a modified Westminster parliamentary system based on the British model

Grenada

**Green Monday** - formerly the first day of Lent for the Greek Orthodox Church, traditionally Cypriots clean the houses from top to bottom, ensuring there's no meat in the house, and then go on a picnic with their extended family

Cyprus\*

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**2.8 Saraswati Puja/Vasant Panchami/Basant Panchami** - festival celebrating Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge, music and art

Hindu\*

**Preseren Day** (Slovenian Cultural Holiday) - marks the date Slovenia's most celebrated poet, France Preseren, died in 1849

Slovenia

**Nirvana Day** – commemorates the death of the historical Buddha and his entry into Nirvana

Buddhism

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**2.9 Feast of St. Maroun** - honors the saint considered to be the father of the Maronite Catholic Church

Lebanon

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**2.10 Bhanu Saptami** – a day dedicated to Lord Surya, the Sun God

Hindu\*

**St. Paul's Shipwreck** - on his return from the Holy Land in AD60, Saint Paul was shipwrecked on the island of Malta. Saint Paul is considered the Patron Saint of Malta and the anniversary of the shipwreck is celebrated as a public holiday

Malta

<p><b>2.11 Youth Day</b> – a day on which various youth groups come together to organize workshops, parades, and other programs which points out to important issues for the youth</p>	Cameroon
<p><b>Kenkoku Kinen-no-Hi</b> (National Foundation Day) - commemorates the accession to the throne of the Emperor Jimmu Tenno in 660 B.C</p>	Japan
<p><b>Bhisma Ashtami</b> (Bhismashtami) – the day dedicated to the departure of Bhisma of Mahabharata’s soul</p>	Hindu*
<p><b>Victory of Islamic Revolution</b> – the final collapse of the provisional non-Islamist government when the Supreme Military Council declared itself neutral in order to put an end to disorder and bloodshed</p>	Iran
<p><b>Armed Forces Day</b></p>	Liberia
<p><b>Anniversary of Lateranensi Pacts</b> - marks the date in 1929 when the Vatican was set up as an independent state</p>	Vatican City State
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<p><b>2.12 Amazon Galapagos Day</b> - the discovery of the Amazon River headwaters by Spanish explorer Francisco de Orellana in 1542 and the incorporation of the Galapagos Islands in 1832</p>	Ecuador
<p><b>Lincoln's Birthday</b> – to honor the 16<sup>th</sup> president of the US</p>	US
<p><b>Union Day</b> (Pyidaungsa Day) - commemorates the conference in 1947 leading to the formation of the Union of Burma</p>	Myanmar, Burma
<p><b>Youth Day</b> - a holiday dedicated to the youths of the country. The holiday was created to commemorate all the teenagers above 12 years old who fought and died in the Battle of La Victoria, during the Venezuelan War of Independence in 1814</p>	Venezuela
<p><b>Oruro Local Festival</b> - declared one of Mankind’s Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2001, the city of Oruro hosts a distinctly Andean version of Carnival every February</p>	Bolivia
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<p><b>2.13 Mother's Day</b></p>	Norway*
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<p><b>2.14 Maha Shivaratri Day</b> – festival celebrated by offerings to the Lord Shiva, all day fasting and an all night vigil, performed in order to gain boons in the practice of Yoga and meditation, to reach the goal more swiftly and avoid rebirth</p> <p><b>St. Valentine's Day</b> - recognized the possible execution date around 270 CE of one of two Christian martyrs named Valentine. Legend says that one secretly performed marriages between young people in opposition to the Roman Emperor's ban on marriage; another had the power to patch up lovers' quarrels. Since the Middle Ages, this day has been dedicated to romantic love</p> <p><b>Birth of the Prophet Muhammad</b> – born in 570 CE in Mecca</p>	<p>Hindu*</p> <p>International</p> <p>Islam*</p>
<p><b>2.15 Susan B. Anthony Day</b> – to honor a prominent American civil rights leader who played a pivotal role in the 19th century women's rights movement to introduce women's suffrage into the United States</p> <p><b>Nirvana Day</b> – the day Buddha is said to have achieved Nirvana upon the death of his physical body</p> <p><b>President's Day Observed</b> – to honor past presidents of the US</p> <p><b>Constitution Day</b> – a day to celebrate their present constitution and a time for them to reflect on the many constitutions that the country proclaimed through their history</p> <p><b>Liberation Day</b> - a celebration of the date of the exit of the last Soviet soldier from Afghanistan in 1989</p> <p><b>National Flag of Canada Day</b> - commemorates the inauguration of the Canadian national flag</p> <p><b>National Lamb Day</b> - New Zealand has a very large lamb population and this date marks the anniversary of the first shipment of frozen meat from New Zealand to London</p> <p><b>Mawlid al_nabi</b> – birthday of the Prophet Muhammad</p>	<p>US</p> <p>Buddhism</p> <p>US, Puerto Rico*</p> <p>Serbia</p> <p>Afghanistan</p> <p>Canada</p> <p>New Zealand</p> <p>Islam*</p>

- 2.16 Day of Re-establishment of the State of Lithuania** - Lithuania  
commemorates the 1918 declaration of independence from Russia. In 1990, the country again declared independence from the Soviet Union
- Kim Jong-il's Birthday** - commemorates the birthday of North Korea  
North Korea's leader, born in 1941
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- 2.17 Lantern Festival** - marks the end of Chinese New Year  
celebrations and the appearance of the first full moon of the New Year Taiwan
- Death of Tsongkapa** (Butter Lamp Festival) - marks the  
anniversary of the death of Tsongkapa, the great reformer of Tibetan Buddhism & founder of the Gelukpa sect. In honor of his death houses, streets, and temples are lit by numerous lamps Tibet
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- 2.18 Rashtriya Prajatantra Divas** (National Democracy Day) Nepal  
- celebrates the 1951 overthrow of the Rana family, which had ruled since the mid-nineteenth century. Also a celebration of the 1952 adoption of a constitution
- Independence Day** - celebrates the anniversary of  
independence from Britain in 1965. A public vote in 1970 made the country a republic within the Commonwealth Gambia
- Purnima** – commemorates Buddha's birth, attainment  
of wisdom, and his attainment of Nirvana Hindu\*
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- 2.19 National Flag Day** – celebrated for the first time in  
1997 Turkmenistan
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- 2.20 Oruro Carnival** - its centerpiece is La Diablada, the  
'Dance of the Devils', an extraordinary parade that showcases demonic dancers in extravagant costumes; the parade climaxes with a series of dances that depict the ultimate battle between good and evil Bolivia
- Thaiposam Cavadee** - commemorates the occasion  
when Parvati gave Murugan a vel (spear) so he could vanquish the evil demon Soorapadman Mauritius

<b>2.21 Family Day</b> - celebrates the importance of families and family life to people and their communities. Observed on the third Monday of February	Canada (Saskatchewan only)
<b>Father Lini Day</b> – honors Walter Lini, a former Anglican priest who became the first prime minister of the newly independent country of Vanuatu in 1980	Vanuatu
<b>International Mother Language Day</b> – proclaimed by the UNESCO in 1999 to promote the protection and preservation of languages spoken around the world	Bangladesh
<b>President's Day</b> – to honor past presidents of the U.S.	US, Puerto Rico*
<b>Shaheed (Martyr) Day</b> - honors martyrs who died in 1952 when disputes broke out over the proclamation of Urdu as the official state language	Bangladesh
<b>Birthday of King Harald V</b> - honors the birthday of King Harald V who became King in 1991 and is the first Norwegian-born prince in 567 years	Norway
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<b>2.22 Washington's Birthday</b> – to honor George Washington, the first president of the U.S.	US
<b>Independence Day</b> - commemorates the date in 1979 when St. Lucia achieved full independence from the United Kingdom	St. Lucia
<b>Abu Simbel Festival</b> - celebrates the two occasions in the year (the other is October 22) when the light of the rising sun reaches the 180-foot-deep innermost chambers of Abu Simbel, the great temple of Ramses II	Egypt
<b>Unity Day</b> – celebrates cooperation among Arab nations	Syria
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<b>2.23 Republic Day</b> (Mashramani) - commemorates the establishment of the republic in 1970	Guyana
<b>National Day</b> – gained their independence from Britain in 1984	Brunei Darussalam
<b>Defender of the Fatherland Day</b> - marks the date in 1918 during the Russian Civil War when the first mass draft into the Red Army occurred in Petrograd and Moscow. The holiday celebrates the soldiers of the Russian military as well as Russian men as a whole	Russia, Ukraine



<b>2.24 Independence Day</b> - celebrates independence from the Bolshevik Russia in 1918	Estonia
<b>Greek Independence Day</b> - marks Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire and the day of Angel Gabriel's announcement to the Virgin Mary of her conception of Christ	Cyprus
<b>Baire Proclamation</b> - commemorates the day in 1895 when the Cuban Independence Movement issued a proclamation of independence from Spanish occupation	Cuba
<b>Dia de la Bandera</b> (Flag Day) - marks the date in 1821 when all factions fighting in the War of Independence joined together to form the Army of the Three Guarantees. This was in response to the Plan de Iguala, which was signed by Vicente Guerrero and Agustin de Iturbide and officially declared Mexico an independent country	Mexico
<b>Dragobete</b> - known as "the day when birds get engaged" this holiday is considered the first day of spring	Romania

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<b>2.25 National Day</b> - commemorates the 1978 accession of King Shaykh Sir 'abdullah Al-Salim al-Sabah	Kuwait
<b>EDSA Revolution Day</b> (People Power Day) - commemorates the bloodless revolution in 1986 in which President Ferdinand Marcos was toppled from power	Philippines
<b>Ritual Feeding of the Springs</b> (manger tetes d'eau) - ritual feeding of the springs	Haiti*
<b>Revolution Day</b> – a military coup overthrew the democratic government and declared a Socialist Republic on this day in 1980	Suriname
<b>Ta'anit Ester</b> (Fast of Esther) - a Jewish fast from dawn until dusk on Purim eve. It commemorates the three day fast observed by the Jewish people prior to their deliverance from Haman's plot to annihilate them as recorded in the Book of Esther	Jewish

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<b>2.26 Liberation Day</b> - marks the end of the Iraqi occupation which began in August 1990 and ended on this date in 1991 when the invading Iraqi army was routed by the Operation Desert Storm troops	Kuwait
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- 2.26 Ayyam-i-Ha** (Intercalary Days/Days of Ha) - a time of rejoicing, generosity, and welcoming neighbors in preparation for the period of fasting from February 26 to March 1 Baha'i
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- 2.27 Independence Day** - marks the date in 1844 when the Dominican Republic gained its independence from Spain Dominican Republic
- Civicism and National Unity Day** - the anniversary of the Battle of Tarqui in 1822 Ecuador
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- 2.28 Peace Memorial Day** - commemorates the thousands of native Taiwanese killed on this date in 1947 by the then-ruling Chinese government Taiwan
- Andalusia Day** - a day to honor Andalusia, an autonomous community of Spain Spain
- Meak Bochea/Makha Bucha** - followers of Buddhism are reminded of Buddha and his teachings; the spiritual aims of the day are not to commit any kinds of sins and to purify one's mind Buddhism
- Independence Day** - commemorates independence from British rule established on this day in 1922 Egypt

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) 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>.