

International Bulldawg Newsletter

October 2006

Volume 1, Issue 1

Welcome from the Center

Aretha Jones – Cook Associate Dean and Director

Welcome to the very first issue of the International Bulldawg Newsletter. In this edition of the newsletter students have written a variety of articles about their countries. This newsletter and future newsletters will serve as a learning resource for students and staff. We want to make you aware of the rich cultural traditions, history and backgrounds of the international students we serve at Mississippi State University. MSU students represent more than 60 countries from around the globe. Holmes Cultural Diversity Center is very proud of the richness the students bring to the campus and the Starkville Community.

I hope that this student driven and informative newsletter will spark an interest or enlighten your knowledge about other cultures. We invite you to attend the many programs and events that are planned monthly by the staff of the Center. This is a great opportunity to enhance your interactions with other cultures from around world. Have a great semester!



Nigeria

Located just above the equator with a coastline stretching over 800 miles, Nigeria is one of the few countries in the world where such ecosystems as the mangrove and rain forests of the south, rich savannah plains in the middle and brown sand dunes of the Sahara in north can be seen in a day. With a population of almost 140 million people comprising of over 250 ethnic groups, Nigeria is a blend of exciting cultural diversity that has produced a land of unparalleled opportunities with warm, friendly people. Major ethnic groups are Hausa-Fulani (29%) predominantly in the North, Yoruba (21%)-South West and Ibo (18%)-South East. Other ethnic groups are Kanuri (4%) Ibibio (3.5%), Tiv (2.5%). It is estimated that about half the population are Christian and half Muslim, though many maintain traditional beliefs. After a century of British rule which ended on October 1, 1960, Nigeria gained independence, and is governed by a democratically elected government headed by President Olusegun Obasanjo. Her monetary unit is the Naira and she boast of a literacy rate of about 70%. Notable cities include Lagos (12 million); Kano (3.5 million); Ibadan (3.2 million); Kaduna (1.5 million); Port Harcourt (1.2 million). Nigeria is also rich in natural resources such as natural gas, petroleum, tin, columbite, iron ore, palm oil, rubber, cocoa and wood.

Here at MSU, Nigeria is equally represented both as faculty and students. Some Nigerian landmarks at MSU are Falilatun Ogunkoya (MSU Sport Fall of Fame; First Lady Bulldog track athlete to earn individual track medal at Olympics 1996); Jude Monye 400m (record 45.04secs 1995); Festus Igbinochere (MSU long and triple jump record).

The African Student Association (ASA) is the umbrella body for all African students represented at MSU. It currently has a student membership of about 27 and at least four Faculty members of both African and American origin. Student members hail from seven African countries: Cameroun, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia, and one Caribbean country, Jamaica. ASA opens its doors to all MSU students interested in Africa and wish to know more about Africa.

Compiled by: Chike Monwube (ASA Publicity Secretary, ckm49@msstate.edu)

Zambia



The territory of Northern Rhodesia was administered by the [British] South Africa Company from 1891 until it was taken over by the UK in 1923. During the 1920s and 1930s, advances in mining spurred development and immigration. The name was changed to Zambia upon independence in 1964. Zambia is located in Southern Africa east of Angola.

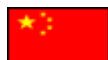
Special Days for the Month

October 2006						
S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- Oct 1 Nigeria Independence Day
- Oct 1 Republic of China National Day
- Oct 3 Germany Unity Day
- Oct 10 Fast- a- Thon
- Oct 11 Moon Festival
- Oct 21 Deepotsav - Diwali Festival
- Oct 23 Eid-UI-Fitr
- Oct 24 Zambia Independence Day
- Oct 29 Turkey Independence Day
- Oct 31 Halloween

Halloween is celebrated in much of the Western world, though most common in Canada, the United States, Puerto Rico, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and with increasing popularity in Australia and New Zealand. Halloween originated in Ireland as the pagan Celtic harvest festival, Samhain. Irish, Scots and other immigrants brought older versions of the tradition to North America in the 19th century. Most other Western countries have embraced Halloween as a part of American pop culture in the late 20th century.

The National Day of the People's Republic of China

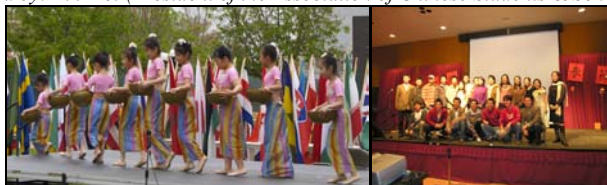


On December 3rd, 1949, the Chinese Government passed the "Resolution of the National Day of People's Republic of China" after accepting the proposal from the National Committee. The People's Republic of China declared its independence on October 1 and called it the National Day.

The National day is a feature of the modern nation-state. It took place at the same time as the modern nation-state was founded. It indicates the dependence of a nation, and reflects its constitution and government.

Once the National Day became a civil celebration, it bears the function of reflecting the coherence of the whole nation and the people. The grand ceremony on the National Day shows the force of the government. Its major three functions are manifesting the strength and enhancing the confidence of the country, representing the coherence of the people, and denoting the influence of the nation. This year we are celebrating our 57th National Day. MSU boasts over 300 students and faculty from China. The surrounding community would make the Chinese population over 500. Traditional celebrated at MSU are the Spring Festival and Moon Festival.

Compiled by: Bin Mei (President of the Association of Chinese Students & Scholars)



Germany Unity Day



This year, Germany is celebrating the 15th anniversary of German Unification. More than remembering the walls, fences and armed guards that separated East from West, this is a time to celebrate the peaceful resistance and determination with which GDR citizens overcame that separation after the Fall of the Wall on November 9, 1989.

Turkey



Modern Turkey was founded in 1923 from the Anatolian remnants of the defeated Ottoman Empire by national hero Mustafa KEMAL, who was later honored with the title Atatürk, or "Father of the Turks." Under his leadership, the country adopted wide-ranging social, legal, and political reforms. After a period of one-party rule, an experiment with multi-party politics led to the 1950 election victory of the opposition Democratic Party and the peaceful transfer of power. Turkey joined the UN in 1945 and in 1952 it became a member of NATO. In 1964, Turkey became an associate member of the European Community; over the past decade, it has undertaken many reforms to strengthen its democracy and economy, enabling it to begin accession membership talks with the European Union. At MSU we have over 25 students and faculty from Turkey. They bring with them a culture rich in food, diversity and traditions. They also head organizations like the Interfaith Dialogue Student Organization, Turkish Student Association and MSU's Ballroom Dancing Club.

Events and Announcements

Ramadan (Sept. 23- Oct 22, 2006)

This month is holy for the Muslims of the world. It was during the month of Ramadan that the verses of the Quran were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). It is a month of abstinence, forgiveness, charity, prayer, sharing and practicing self-control. The Muslim Student Association will be having their annual campus wide Fast-a Thon on Oct. 10, 2006 at Coskrey Auditorium, Memorial Hall at 6:00 P.M. This program is free and open to the public. They will serve delicious international food dishes followed by interfaith speakers.

Moon Festival

The Mid-Autumn Festival is one of the two most important holidays in the Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese lunisolar calendar. Traditionally, on this day, Chinese family members and friends will gather to celebrate the end of the summer harvesting season on this date. The traditional food of this festival is the moon cake, of which there are many different varieties. The Association of Chinese Students and Scholars will have their annual Moon Festival celebration at the Griffis Hall, Palmiero Center at 7:00 P.M. on October 11, 2006. This event is free and open to the public. This is a good chance to enhance the interaction between the Chinese culture and those from other countries.

Deepotsav (Festival of Lights)

Diwali the most important date of the Hindu calendar, occurs one day during October. Diwali is the Festival of Lights, and marks the defeat of the evil King Narakasura by the Lord Krishna. All over the world, Hindus celebrate this day as the triumph of light over darkness and of good over evil. It marks the new beginning for Hindu devotees, and is a great time of rejoicing and renewal. During this time, Hindu homes are lit with oil lamps and offerings of sweetmeats and garlands of jasmine are placed at the family altar. All of India is lit with little oil lamps hence the name 'festival of lights'. The Indian Student Association will have their annual Diwali Festival on Oct. 21, 2006 at Lee Hall starting at 6:00 p.m.

Eid-Ul-Fitr (Arabic: رطل ادي ع)

Eid is an Islamic holiday that marks the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting. *Fitr* means "to break" and therefore symbolizes the breaking of the fasting period and of all sinful habits. On the day of the celebration, a typical Muslim family gets up very early and attends special prayers held only for the occasion in mosques. Eid is a time to come together as a community and to renew friendship and family ties. This is a time for peace for all Muslims in the world to devote to prayers, forgiveness, brotherhood, unity, mutual well-being, moral victory and peace.

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