Holiday List for SLC Refugee Communities

Nepal/Bhutan:

Bhutanese Winter solstice- Nyinlong or Nyilong (Dzongkha: ཉིན་ལོང་, Wylie: nyin long "return of the sun"), the winter solstice celebration, is a public holiday falling on 2 January every year.¹ Nyinlog is considered the most auspicious day of the year. It is celebrated like New Year among some western Bhutan, though more so in the central and eastern regions, where the shortest day of the year is marked with archery and feasting. Farmers, on the other hand, may feel some chagrin as the solstice signals longer and longer work days ahead.

Losar- (Dzongkha རྡོ་གསར், Wylie: lo gsar), the New Year, is celebrated between February and March, officially on the 1st month, 1st day of the calendar. Festivities last 15 days, ahead of which people spend much time preparing food and alcohol and cleaning their homes of old and unused objects. In Bhutan, different communities celebrate Losar at slightly different times and refer to the holiday by particular local names. The common Losar greeting is "tashi delek."

Dashain- the main Nepalese (and Hindu festival, falls on October 6. During this holiday, houses are cleaned and plastered, gifts are exchanged, and families gather. Dashain has been a public holiday in Bhutan.

Movable Buddhist holidays and festivals are observed.

East / Central Africa:

Burundi

Unity Day, FEBRUARY 5

Unity Day is a public holiday in Burundi- In the late 1950s, Burundi sought to separate itself from Belgium. During the independence movement, members of the Hutu and Tutsi tribes clashed in neighboring Rwanda, spilling over into Burundi. This sparked decades of large-scale conflict between members of the two tribes. With focus on a new constitution of unity in 1992, Unity Day was born in Burundi and celebrated for the first time with hopes of finally bringing the tribal conflict to an end.

Democratic Republic of Congo

YOUTH DAY: FEB 8
Republic of Congo, or simply the Congo, celebrates Youth Day every 8th of February each year. The Youth Day is celebrated to recognize the role of the youth in nation building and serves as a reminder for the government in their responsibility to securing the safety of children and in making sure that their rights are not violated.

Republic of Congo’s Youth Day also helps build awareness on the cultural and legal issues surrounding the youth particularly within the region.

The celebration of Youth Day in Republic of Congo is similar to how other nations celebrate Youth Day. State-sponsored concerts, cultural events, and workshops take place around Republic of Congo’s capital. Small cities and communities around the country with the participation of private and public agencies and youth organizations and individuals conduct concerts, games and other exciting activities in support of the holiday.

**Middle East** (Changes with the lunar calendar each year)

Ramadan May 27-June 25--The annual 30-day fast when adherents do not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset. There is a large family meal each night at sunset and they usually last all night!

June 25 Sunday Eid al-Fitr Public Holiday-- important religious holiday celebrated by Muslims worldwide that marks the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting. Celebration includes charitable giving, community prayer, elaborate feasts, and gift-giving from parents to children

Sep 1 Friday Eid al-Adha Public Holiday (Marks the Holy Pilgrimage to Mecca, Haji)

**Burma/Malaysia/Thailand**

Thingyan New Year’s Water Festival is a national holiday celebrated in April. Water symbolizes renewal — washing away the worries of last year and starting anew. Formerly the dates of the Thingyan festival are calculated according to the traditional Myanmar lunar calendar but now have fixed Roman calendar (13 to 16 April) equivalent - it often coincides with Easter. The dates of the festival are observed as the most important public holiday throughout Myanmar and are part of the summer holidays at the end of the school year. Water-throwing or dousing one another from any shape or form of vessel or device that delivers water is the distinguishing feature of this festival and may be done on the first four days of the festival. However, in most parts of Burma, it does not begin in earnest until the second day. Thingyan Festival is comparable to other New Year festivities in Theravada Buddhist areas of Southeast Asia such as Lao New Year, Cambodian New Year and Songkrann Thailand.
Kayin New Year Day Dec. 29th- National Holiday for Karen, the 3rd largest ethnic population in Burma

Burma Independence Day- January 4th, marks independence from Britain in January 1948.

**China** (Changes with the lunar calendar each year)

Chinese New Year The standard public holiday for (Mainland) Chinese is the 7 days from Chinese New Year's Eve to day 6 of the lunar calendar new year (**January 27 – February 2, 2017**). Chinese New Year 2017 begins a year of the Rooster. It's considered a bad year for "Roosters": people born in a Rooster year. Chinese New Year was set to coincide with the slack time just before a new year of farm work begins, as a **time of preparation**. To celebrate fireworks set off each night to scare away bad spirits and fake money burned for ancestors.

**South Sudanese**

Jan 8 Friday Coptic Christmas Public Holiday

May 1 Sunday Coptic Easter Public Holiday

Jun 30 Thursday Revolution Day Public Holiday

**Sudanese / Somali**

Jun 25 Sunday Eid al-Fitr Public Holiday

Sep 1 Friday Eid al-Adha Public Holiday

Oct 3 Monday Muharram Public Holiday

Dec 12 Monday The Prophet's Birthday Public Holiday