

friMag

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[あふりまぐ]

宮城アフリカ協会



Special Feature

RIFU - SWESCO Cultural Exchange

宮城県利府町
ガーナ SWESCO
文化教育交流



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Welcome, dear readers, to our historical showcase, where we pay homage to remarkable figures who shaped the African continent. In this edition, we turn our spotlight on iconic individuals whose legacies continue to inspire generations. Let's dive into the history and explore the lives of these extraordinary leaders.



Miriam Makeba

Miriam Makeba (1932–2008)

Known as “Mama Africa,” Miriam Makeba used her powerful voice to fight against apartheid through music. Her songs carried messages of freedom and resistance, making her a global ambassador for African culture and a symbol of resilience.



Thomas Sankara

Thomas Sankara (1949–1987)

Known as the “African Che Guevara,” Thomas Sankara was the revolutionary leader of Burkina Faso. His presidency focused on anti-corruption, education, women’s rights, and self-sufficiency, leaving a lasting legacy despite his assassination.



Kofi Annan

Kofi Annan (1938–2018)

A Ghanaian diplomat, Kofi Annan served as the Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1997 to 2006. He played a crucial role in global peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and development, earning the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001.



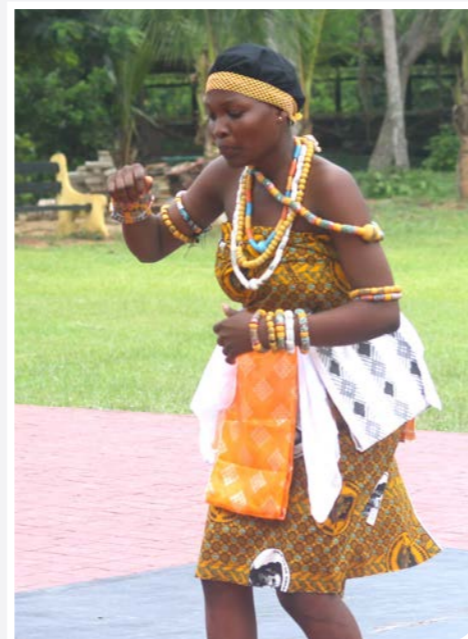
Akinwumi Adesina

Akinwumi Adesina (born 1960)

A Nigerian economist and the President of the African Development Bank, Adesina has played a crucial role in promoting agricultural transformation, food security, and economic growth across Africa. He received the World Food Prize in 2017 for his contributions to ending hunger.



RIFU & SWESCO Cultural Exchange



The Japan-Ghana partnership has advanced with a cultural and educational exchange program between Rifu Town in Japan and Swedru Senior High School (SWESCO) in Ghana. Part of the larger [Expo International Exchange Program] led by the Japanese government, the initiative fosters mutual understanding and strengthens bilateral ties through people-to-people connections, setting a model for future exchanges based on mutual growth and cultural appreciation.

Objectives and Activities

Conducted with the African Association of Miyagi (AFAM), the program aimed to promote cross-cultural dialogue, educational opportunities, and long-term cooperation.

Key activities included:

- Delegation Visit to Ghana
- Online Student Exchange
- Institutional Visits
- Industry and Trade Engagement

Achievements and Future Prospects

This successful cultural and educational exchange will be featured at the Ghana Pavilion of the 2025 Osaka Expo. Going forward, we aim to strengthen diplomatic ties through a student exchange program that fosters mutual understanding in education, technology, and society — a first step toward lasting cooperation and a brighter future.



Students Modeled Traditional Costumes from Various Regions of Ghana



Online Exchange with Junior High School Students in Rifu Town



Warmly welcomed with "AKWAABAA!" (Welcome!)



Introducing Nigeria

THE CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS! - LAGOS, NIGERIA

The Giant of Africa

Welcome to Nigeria! Land of diversity and opportunity. A country where over 250 ethnic groups coexist, where vibrant cities pulse with energy, where art, music, and food are celebrated with passion. Known as the most populous country in Africa, Nigeria is a land of contrasts, offering both modern cities and traditional villages, rainforests, and savannahs.

Where is Nigeria?

Nigeria is located in West Africa, along the Atlantic Ocean's Gulf of Guinea. Its capital city is Abuja, a city known for its modern architecture and political significance, while Lagos is the largest and most populous city, serving as Nigeria's economic and entertainment hub. Nigeria is often called the "Giant of Africa," It has the largest economy in Africa, a rich cultural heritage, vast natural resources, and a thriving film and music industry that influences the world.



Visit Nigeria

Lagos - The city that never sleeps!



Lagos is a fast-paced city of skyscrapers and nonstop energy. Home to Africa's longest canopy walkway, the Lekki Conservation Centre offers a thrilling treetop experience. Also, check Oshodi Market for fashion and delicious street food!

Enjoy Nigerian Food



Ever heard of jollof rice? It's a spicy, tomato-rich dish so good that there's a friendly rivalry between Nigeria and Ghana over who makes it best. Other must-tries include suya (spicy grilled meat) and pounded yam with egusi soup.

Benin City Museum



Before Nigeria existed, the Benin Kingdom was flourishing. The Benin Bronzes, magnificent 13th-century sculptures, showcase its rich history. Explore the National Museum of Benin to see this legacy up close!

Zuma Rock



A mountain with a human face! That's Zuma Rock, a massive rock formation near Abuja. Legend has it that warriors once took shelter inside it. Some people even say you can see a face carved by nature on its surface!

Nigeria

Food Culture

Jollof Rice is one of the most beloved dishes in Nigeria and across West Africa. Known for its rich tomato flavor and vibrant orange hue, this one-pot dish is a staple at parties and family gatherings. The exact recipe varies by region, but the Nigerian version is famous for its smoky aroma and bold spices.



Let's Cook Jollof Rice!

Ingredients for 4

【For the sauce】

Red Bell Pepper:	1/2
Tomato:	1/2
Onion:	1/2
Habanero:	1
Water:	Little amount

※use less if you don't like it spicy

【For the Jollof】

Oil:	2tbsp	Salt:	1/2tsp
Onion (Sliced) :	1/2	White Pepper:	To taste
Tomato Paste:	2.5tbsp	Bouillon Powder:	1/2tbsp
Garlic (Minced) :	2cloves	Rice(rinsed):	2cups
Ginger (Grated) :	1/2tbsp	Chicken Stock:	5tsp
Bay leaf:	1	Tomato (Sliced) :	1/2
Thyme:	1/2tbsp	Onion (Sliced) :	1/2
Curry Powder:	1/2tbsp	Butter:	1tbsp

Instructions

- 【Step 1】 First, make the tomato-based sauce by blending together the red bell peppers, tomatoes, onion, and habanero.
- 【Step 2】 Heat the cooking oil in a large pan over medium heat, then add the diced onions and let them cook for about 3 minutes or until they are soft.
- 【Step 3】 Next, add the tomato paste and fry for about 5 minutes. Then stir in garlic, ginger, and bay leaves—leave to cook for 2 more minutes.
- 【Step 4】 Add the blended sauce and allow the pepper to cook until the water is reduced and the sauce become thick —about 10 to 15 minutes.
- 【Step 5】 Season with thyme, curry powder, bouillon cubes, salt, and pepper to taste. Cook for another 2 to 5 minutes.
- 【Step 6】 Add the rinsed rice to the sauce and stir until it is well coated with the sauce. Then add the chicken stock, stir briefly, cover with a tight-fitting lid, and bring to a quick boil over high heat.
- 【Step 7】 Once it begins to boil—after about 3 to 5 minutes, reduce the heat immediately to low and steam until the rice is done—about 30 minutes.
- 【Step 8】 Add the butter, sliced tomato, and onions, stir together briefly and turn off the heat. Cover it immediately so that the heat remaining in the rice can steam up the vegetables a little.
- 【Step 9】 Serve with sweet fried plantains, roasted chicken, or salad.

KidsStory

The False Lion King



Hera was a mighty lion king. Shero pretended to be like him, but he failed miserably till something happened that changed his life forever.

Once upon a time, in the vast savannah of Africa, there lived two lion kings named Hera and Shero. Hera was known far and wide for his majestic appearance, thunderous roar, and remarkable leadership skills. Shero, on the other hand, was not so impressive. He had a scrawny mane, a squeaky voice, and a knack for getting into comical situations.

Hera ruled over his kingdom with utmost dignity and respect. The other animals in the savannah admired him and looked up to him for guidance. Shero, however, was passionate about one thing – pretending to be as mighty as Hera. He spent his days wandering around, imitating Hera’s roar and exaggerating his own importance. The other animals found his antics amusing and often indulged him.

One sunny day, an urgent message spread through the savannah that a pack of hyenas was causing chaos near the river. Without hesitation, Hera, accompanied by a group of loyal followers, marched swiftly to confront the threat.

Shero, eager to impress, decided to join as well.

Upon reaching the river, Hera bellowed his deafening roar, shaking the ground and sending trembles into the hearts of the hyenas. They cowered before the mighty king. Shero, not to be outdone, puffed out his chest and let out a shrill screech that only succeeded in startling a nearby flock of birds.

The hyenas, having regained their composure, couldn’t help but burst into laughter. Their leader, Hank the Hyena, approached Hera and Shero, struggling to keep a straight face.

“Oh, mighty Hera, I see you’ve brought your very own jester,” Hank said, pointing mockingly at Shero. “Tell me, what tricks has he learned today?”

Shero, always displaying a calm demeanour, simply smiled, while the other animals stifled their laughter. Shero, however, was determined to prove himself worthy. He puffed up his chest again and announced, “I, Shero the lion, am just as mighty as King Hera!”

The hyenas burst into a fit of laughter once more, rolling around on the ground and wiping away tears. Shero turned red in embarrassment but refused to back down.

“In fact,” Shero continued, “I am much more powerful than Hera. Watch this!” With a mischievous gleam in his eye, he lunged towards a nearby termite mound and promptly tripped, landing face-first in the dirt.

The hyenas couldn’t contain themselves any longer, laughing uproariously. Even Hera, usually composed, let out a chuckle.

As the sun began to set, the hyenas took their leave, now thoroughly entertained by Shero’s ridiculous attempts at being king. Hera, with a hearty laugh, turned to Shero and said, “My friend, you may not have my power or regal demeanour, but you bring joy and laughter to this kingdom in your own unique way.”

Shero grinned, realizing that being the “fake” lion king had its own value. From that day forward, Shero embraced his role as the kingdom’s jester, providing endless laughter and light-heartedness amidst the daily struggles of the savannah.

And so, the lion kings, Hera and Shero, ruled side by side – one with might and power, and the other with humour and silliness, proving that both might and mirth are significant to rule the kingdom.



“**True strength isn’t just about power and dominance. It also comes from embracing one’s unique qualities.**”

AFRICA'S AMAZING TAPESTRY



The cultural practices in Africa are just as diverse and interesting. Music and dance are very important in everyday life and special ceremonies. For example, the Maasai people of Kenya and Tanzania are famous for their jumping dance, called «adumu,» which they perform during important events. In West Africa, the griots are storytellers and musicians who keep the history and music of their people alive by passing them down through generations.

African art and crafts are beautiful and varied. The Ndebele people in South Africa are known for their detailed beadwork, the Kente weavers in Ghana create colorful fabrics, and the Makonde people in Tanzania make intricate carvings. These artworks are not only pretty to look at but also have special meanings and are often used in rituals and ceremonies.

African festivals are great ways to see different customs and beliefs. The Omo Festival in Nigeria, the Timkat Festival in Ethiopia, Turkana Lake festival in Kenya and the Durban July in South Africa are events that bring people together to celebrate with music, dance, food, and traditional clothes. These festivals show the strong community spirit and cultural pride of African people.

The diversity of Africa is also seen in its food. Each region has its own flavors and cooking styles, using local ingredients and influences from history. From the spicy stews of North Africa to the hearty grains and vegetables of West Africa, and from the savory dishes of East Africa to the barbecues (called braais) of Southern Africa, African cuisine is delicious and diverse.

Africa's diversity is something to be proud of and celebrated. The continent's many cultures, languages, and traditions create a rich and colorful tapestry. By learning about the customs and practices of different African communities, we can appreciate the wonderful complexity and vibrancy of this amazing continent.

Africa is a continent full of amazing diversity, with many different cultures, languages, and traditions. In this section, we'll celebrate the beauty of this diversity and learn about the unique customs and practices of various African communities.

One of the coolest things about Africa is its many languages. Over 2,000 languages are spoken across the continent! From Swahili in East Africa to Yoruba in West Africa, and from Zulu in the south to Arabic in the north, each language has its own special history. These languages are more than just ways to talk; they are part of what makes each group of people unique.



Festivals of Africa

Lake Turkana Festival - Kenya

Welcome to the world of African festivals! Across the continent, festivals bring people together to celebrate culture, history, and identity. These vibrant events serve as a bridge between generations, preserving age-old customs while embracing modern influences. They provide a platform for storytelling, artistic expression, and community bonding, making them an essential part of African life.

One such extraordinary event is the Lake Turkana Festival in Kenya—a colorful showcase of traditions, music, and dance from the communities living around the great Lake Turkana. Held annually in the remote town of Loiyangalani, this festival brings together over a dozen ethnic groups, including the El Molo, Rendille, Samburu, and Turkana, each displaying their unique customs and heritage.

Tradition in Motion: Dance and Music

Music and dance are at the heart of the festival. Each community performs its traditional dances, showcasing rhythmic footwork, colorful attire, and powerful drumming. The El Molo, Kenya's smallest ethnic group, perform ancient rituals near the lake, while the Samburu warriors display energetic jumps and chants in their famous warrior dances.

A Living Museum: Costumes, Crafts, and Cuisine

Beyond the performances, the festival is a feast for the senses. Stalls display handcrafted jewelry, intricate beadwork, and traditional garments that reflect the deep cultural roots of the region. Visitors also get to experience authentic local cuisine, such as roasted goat (nyama choma) and fish dishes prepared using age-old methods by the El Molo, who rely on the lake for their livelihood.

More Than a Celebration: A Symbol of Peace

The communities around Lake Turkana have a long history of inter-ethnic tensions, often caused by competition for water and grazing land. The festival serves as a platform for peace and unity, encouraging dialogue and mutual understanding among the different groups. It highlights the importance of preserving traditions while promoting cooperation in a rapidly changing world.

A Gathering of Cultures

The Lake Turkana Festival is a unique annual celebration held in Loiyangalani, a small town on the shores of Lake Turkana in northern Kenya. It brings together over 14 ethnic communities, including the Turkana, Samburu, El Molo, Rendille, Gabra, and Borana, among others. Each of these groups has a rich cultural heritage, and the festival provides a rare opportunity for them to share their traditions with the world.

Preserving Heritage for the Future

The Lake Turkana Festival is more than an event—it's a testament to the resilience of Kenya's diverse cultures. Through this festival, younger generations learn about their roots, ensuring that these ancient traditions continue to thrive.

So, whether you are drawn by the music, the dances, or the vibrant costumes, the Lake Turkana Festival is an unforgettable journey into the heart of Africa's cultural diversity. Let its rhythms inspire you, its stories educate you, and its unity bring hope for the future.

Noguchi Legacy in Africa



Dr. Hideyo Noguchi, a Japanese bacteriologist, is renowned for his research on yellow fever and other infectious diseases. His work in Africa, particularly in Ghana, has left a lasting legacy that continues to be remembered today. Noguchi's contributions, both in scientific advancements and in fostering international collaboration, have established him as a significant figure in the history of global health, particularly in Africa.

Dr. Hideyo Noguchi - Early Life and Career

Born in Inawashiro, Japan, in 1876, Hideyo Noguchi overcame numerous obstacles, including a debilitating burn injury in childhood, to become a leading figure in medical research. After studying in Japan, he moved to the United States, where he joined the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. His work on various infectious diseases, including syphilis and rabies, earned him international recognition. Noguchi's passion for studying tropical diseases, especially yellow fever, eventually brought him to Africa.



Noguchi Hideyo Memorial Hall (Fukushima Prefecture)

Noguchi's Mission in Africa

In 1927, Dr. Noguchi traveled to West Africa as part of his mission to investigate yellow fever, which was a significant public health problem at the time. Ghana, then the British colony known as the Gold Coast, was a focal point of his research. The Rockefeller Foundation sponsored his expedition, reflecting the global nature of his work and the importance of addressing diseases that affected both local populations and colonial interests.

Upon arriving in Accra, Noguchi began his research in earnest. He believed yellow fever was caused by bacteria rather than a virus, a misconception that persisted at the time. Noguchi conducted extensive investigations and sought to prove his theory by experimenting on mosquitoes and human subjects. However, during this research, Noguchi himself contracted yellow fever and tragically died in Accra in May 1928, becoming a victim of the very disease he was trying to eradicate.

Legacy in Ghana

Dr. Noguchi's death in Ghana cemented his place in the history of the country. In recognition of his contributions to medical research and his dedication to fighting yellow fever, the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR) was established in 1979 at the University of Ghana, with support from the Japanese government. The institute, named in his honor, is one of the leading research centers in Africa, focusing on infectious diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, and, more recently, COVID-19.

The NMIMR has played a critical role in advancing public health in Ghana and across Africa. It serves as a hub for training researchers, conducting cutting-edge scientific research, and collaborating with international organizations to tackle pressing health challenges.

International Relations and Cultural Impact

Noguchi's work in Africa also helped to strengthen ties between Japan and African nations, particularly Ghana. The Japanese government's continued support for the Noguchi Memorial Institute reflects the deep respect for Dr. Noguchi's legacy. His story is a symbol of dedication to scientific inquiry and the spirit of international cooperation.

Culturally, Noguchi is remembered both in Japan and Ghana. In Japan, his face appears on the 1,000-yen note, and his story is taught as one of perseverance and global citizenship. In Ghana, his contributions to the field of public health and his tragic death have made him an enduring figure. Every year, ceremonies are held in his honor at the institute in Accra, and his work continues to inspire scientists and health professionals in Africa.



Noguchi Advanced Research - Ghana



The Sweet Story of Ghana Chocolate in Japan

Once upon a time in Japan, there was a famous confectionery company named Lotte, known for making delicious treats. One day, the creative minds at Lotte had an exciting idea. They wanted to make a new type of chocolate that everyone would love, and they decided to call it “Ghana Chocolate”. But why Ghana, you ask? Here is the story.

Far away in West Africa lies a beautiful country called Ghana. Ghana is famous for its lush cocoa farms, where some of the best cocoa beans in the world are grown. These cocoa beans are the magical ingredient that makes chocolate so rich and tasty. Lotte knew that by using cocoa beans from Ghana, their chocolate would be of the highest quality, and they wanted everyone to know it.

In the 1960s, Japan was blossoming into a vibrant and modern country, and people were curious about the world beyond their shores. Lotte saw this as the perfect time to introduce their new chocolate. They chose the name «Ghana Chocolate» to highlight the exotic origin of their cocoa beans and to add a touch of adventure to their product. The name Ghana evoked images of distant lands and premium quality, making the chocolate even more appealing to curious and adventurous consumers.

The clever folks at Lotte were right. People loved Ghana Chocolate! The name itself made them think of faraway places and the finest cocoa beans. It wasn't just any chocolate; it was special, coming from a land known for producing the best ingredients. This made everyone eager to try it, and soon, Ghana Chocolate became one of Lotte's most popular treats.



By naming their chocolate after Ghana, Lotte not only told a story of quality and adventure but also created a brand that stood out in the busy world of sweets. It became a favorite for kids and adults alike, a delicious treat with a name that promised excellence and a hint of mystery.

And so, the story of Ghana Chocolate continues, reminding us that sometimes, a name can tell a wonderful story and make something as simple as a chocolate bar feel like an exciting journey to a far-off land.



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