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Independence Day

On June 19th, the U.S. celebrated Juneteenth, a holiday that commemorates the freedom of emancipated slaves. Two weeks later, on July 4th, the U.S, will celebrate its secession from Britain. As Black Americans and America celebrate their independence, other countries will be doing the same. Here are seven predominantly Black countries that celebrate their independence throughout July.

The Republic of Liberia
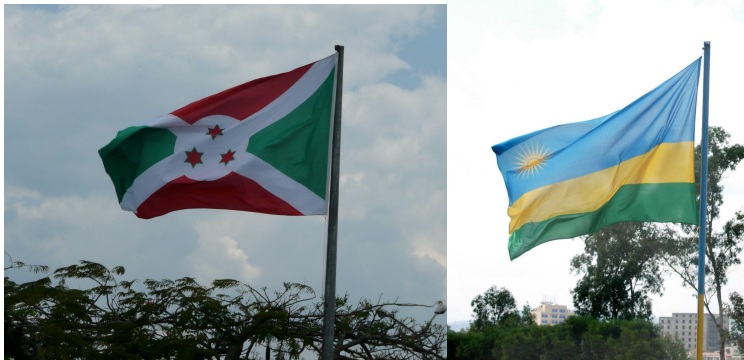On July 26, 1847, Liberia gained independence from the U.S.

As the number of freed Black people grew in the U.S., white Americans felt the need to remove them. In 1821, the American Colonization Society founded Liberia as a place for freedmen and recaptured slaves to go. In 1847, the country constituted itself as an independent republic making it the first in Africa to do so.

Somalia
On July 1, 1960, Somalia gained independence from Italy.

In the 19th century, Britain, Italy and Ethiopia established trade treaties with Somali chiefs. Britain took over the North, Italy took over the South and Ethiopia took over the West. From 1899 to 1920, the Somali people led an uprising against Ethiopia and Britain which resulted in British victory. Italy and Britain continued to rule the two areas into World War II. In 1960, after 10 years, northern Somalia gained independence from Britain. On July 1, southern Somalia gained independence from Italy and the two nations united making modern-day Somalia.

Burundi and Rwanda
On July 1, 1962, Rwanda and the Republic of Burundi gained independence from Belgium.

From 1894 to 1918, the two countries were controlled by Germany, making them a part of the German Protectorate of East Africa. After Germany's loss in World War I, Belgium was awarded control of Burundi and Rwanda up until their independence. After years of political unrest and the Rwandan Revolution in 1959, the motivation for independence grew for both countries. July 1st marks the two countries' 63rd year of freedom.

Malawi
On July 6, 1964, Malawi gained independence from Britain.

In 1891, Britain established the Nyasaland Districts Protectorate. Under British rule, the African majority was treated poorly and the country failed to develop. This unrest inspired a nationalist

movement that gained fervor in the 1950s and reached its pique in 1958. In 1963, the federation was dismantled and the nation gained independence in 1964.

The Bahamas

On July 10, 1973, The Bahamas gained independence from Britain.

Even though Bahamians had substantial control over their affairs, their economy, workforce and business were still governed by the British and British descent Bahamians. In 1953, Bahamians of African descent created the Progressive Liberal Party to further fight for majority rule. In response, the British Bahamian politicians created the United Bahamian Party. The PLP was able to win the majority in the general elections which pushed for the country's independence in 1973.

South Sudan

On July 9, 2011, Sudan gained independence from South Sudan.

From 1955-1972, South Sudan experienced an armed struggle against Sudan. It was a devastating civil war, but it ended with South Sudan being allowed to govern itself within Sudan. However, in 1983, another armed struggle occurred. These conflicts caused the creation of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement. The group wanted to establish a democracy, but they were challenged by the Sudanese army. In 2005, northern Sudan reached a negotiation that stifled

South Sudan's autonomy for five years in hopes of unifying the nation. Finally, in 2011, South Sudan was allowed to vote for independence through a referendum and has been independent since.