Beat: Travel

Festival of lights in Thailand took place on November 28, 2012

Religious holidays in Thailand

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USPA NEWS - On the night of the 12th month, according to the traditional Thai lunar calendar everyone goes to the closest rivers, lakes or beaches to release a small floating container to make an offering to the water godess. In 2012, this day was on 28 November 2012.

Loy Krathong is one of the most popular and most important events celebrated in Thailand and certain parts of Burma and Laos. It is held to honor and thank the water goddess and thank her for letting the people use the water to grow their crops and therefore support all life.

The festival is always celebrated on the evening of the full moon of the 12th month according to the traditional Thai lunar calendar. In 2012, this day was on 28 November 2012. In the Western calendar, this date is on the 11th month, in November.

It usually starts in the afternoon with small parades, where kids get dressed up in fancy, traditional Thai attire, their mothers putting make up on them and style their hair like grown-ups with golden hair pins, golden earrings and bracelets. Stages, food stalls and drinks tents are set up, close to rivers, lakes or beaches and after the parades, in the evening, everybody goes to the festival areas near the water
with their Krathong, A Krathong is a small raft, which used to be made of layers of a banana tree trunk or bread but in modern days it´s often made of styrofoam. While banana stalk or bread floats are biodegradable and disintegrade after a few days or can be eaten by fish. Styrofoam Krathongs pollute the rivers and are therefore

A Krathong is decorated with nicely folded banana leaves, flowers, three incense sticks and a candle. The Thai word Loy means to float and Krathong is usually a lotus shaped container. Older people often put a bit of hair on the float and some fingernail clippings to send bad illnesses and bad luck away with the raft. Before they put the Krathong in the water, they light the candle and the incents sticks, say a silent prayer and make a wish to go out on the float which is then taken away by the current.

In the festival area and in the villages around, one can often see and hear groups of people singing and dancing, others are striking cymbals or beating the drums. Dressed up children in beautiful traditional costumes perform dances on a stage or participate in beauty contests of all sorts. Fireworks and firecrackers are used to chase bad spirits away.

The Festival of Lights in 2013 will be on November 17.

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