

This Day in History

(January 31)

Today is Saturday; 11th of the Iranian month of Bahman 1393 solar hijri; corresponding to 10th of the Islamic month of Rabi al-Akher 1436 lunar hijri; and January 31, 2015, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1436 solar years ago, on this day in 579 AD, the 22nd Sassanid Emperor, Khosrow I, known as Anushirvan the Just, died at the age of 78, after a reign of 48 years, and was succeeded by his son, Hormizd IV. Son of Qobad I who reigned for 41 years, Khosrow I is the epitome of the philosopher-king in Iranian history. It was in his era that the Almighty's Last and Greatest Messenger, Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), was born in Mecca. His wide-ranging social, administrative, military, and tax reforms were adopted by the Muslims when they took over the Sassanid Empire. He patronized scholars and invited scientists from Greece, India, China and other places, and the outcome of this synthesis resulted in what is known as the "Bimaristan", the first hospital that introduced a concept of segregating wards according to pathology. Greek pharmacology fused with Iranian and Indian traditions resulted in significant advances in medicine that were later fully utilized by the Muslims. He strengthened the famous academy Gondishapur as the centre of learning. In his foreign policy, Khosrow Anushirvan, after agreeing to an abortive "Eternal Peace" treaty with Emperor Justinian of the Roman Empire, followed a prudent policy to thwart Roman designs in Syria, Anatolia, Armenia and Upper Mesopotamia. He made sure Rome would never be a threat to Iran by keeping close contacts with the Goths, the Arabs, and the people of Yemen, which he brought under Iranian influence to control the trade routes between India and Europe. In the northeast, he kept the Turks under check and his reign signifies the promotion of the Silk Road linking ancient China with India and Rome through the Iranian Empire.

1235 lunar years ago, on this day in 201 AH, Hazrat Fatema al-Ma'soumah (SA), the venerable daughter of Imam Musa Kazem (AS) – the 7th Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) – succumbed to the wounds she suffered 17 days earlier when her caravan was attacked near Saveh, and attained martyrdom in the city of Qom, at the young age of 28 years. She was on her way from her hometown Medina to Merv in Khorasan to meet her brother, Imam Reza (AS), who was forced to come to northeastern Iran by the crafty Abbasid caliph, Mamoun. She was a picture of piety, knowledge, wisdom, virtue, and generosity that earned her the title of "Karimey-e Ahl al-Bayt" (Munificent Lady of the Prophet's Household). Her holy shrine draws millions of pilgrims every year from all over Iran and the world, and has transformed Qom into a prime centre of Islamic learning.

454 solar years ago, on this day in 1561 AD, the great general and statesman, Bairam Khan, who served three Mughal Emperors (helping Zaheer od-Din Babar conquer northern India, assisting Naseer od-Din Humayun in retaking his Indian kingdom with Iranian help, and consolidating Jalal od-Din Akbar's rule), was martyred in Gujarat by Mubarak Khan Lohani at the age of 61 while proceeding on Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. A Baharlu Turk of the larger Qara Quyunlu tribe that once ruled Iran and Iraq (until 1468), he was born in Badakhshan (in present day Afghanistan), and like his father joined the service of the Timurid prince, Babar, who was a protégé of Shah Ismail I, the Founder of the Safavid Empire. He played an active role in Babar's conquest of India, and served Humayun as Mohrdar (keeper of the seals), taking part in military campaigns in Benares, Bengal and Gujarat. He accompanied Humayun during his exile in Iran, and as a follower of the Ahl al-Bayt of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), was influential in persuading Shah Tahmasp to provide help to retake Hindustan. Following Humayun's death in 1556, as regent of the 13-year old Akbar, he consolidated Mughal rule in northern India and most notably won the Second Battle of Panipat against an Afghan-Hindu alliance. Bairam Khan has left a divan of Persian and Chaghatay Turkic poetry, which includes qasidas in praise of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS) and Imam Reza (AS). His son Abdur-Rahim Khan-e Khanaana was a prominent scholar and official at Akbar's court.

389 solar years ago, on this day in 1626 AD, Sultan Mohammad Qutb Shah, the 5th ruler of the kingdom of Iranian origin of Golkandah-Haiderabad in the Deccan (southern India), passed away after a reign of 15 years. He was the nephew and son-in-law of his predecessor, Sultan Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah – having married in 1607 his uncle's daughter Hayat Bakhsh Begum whose mother was the daughter of the Iranian scholar Shah Mir Isfahani. He was very pious, to the extent that he neither took money for his personal expenditure from the state treasury, nor ever missed the late midnight non-obligatory Tahajjud Prayer. He laid the foundation of the famous Mecca Masjid. During his reign the first Qutb Shahi history was compiled. He maintained correspondence with the Safavid Emperors of Iran, and was succeeded by his son, Abdullah Qutb Shah.

368 solar years ago, on this day in 1647 AD, Prince Aurangzeb was appointed governor of Balkh and Badakhshan provinces by his father, Shah Jahan. He assumed charge of the said provinces and on 4th June and defeated Prince Abdul-Aziz Khan, the son of the Uzbek king, Nazar Mohammad, who failed to gain the help of Safavid Iran against the Mughals of India. Because of court intrigues at Delhi, Aurangzeb was recalled in September, resulting in the loss of Balkh and Badakhshan.

165 solar years ago, on this day in 1850 AD, the biggest uprising of Chinese people, referred to as "Taiping Rebellion" commenced as a consequence of the extreme poverty of villagers due to foreign rule over China. It resulted in a widespread civil war in southern China from 1850 to 1864, led by Christian convert Hong Xiuquan against the Qing Dynasty. About 20 million people died, mainly civilians, in one of the deadliest military conflicts in history. Hong, who claimed to be a brother of Prophet Jesus, set up what he called the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom with its capital at Nanjing. The new militaristic regime instituted several changes, including abolition of foot binding, land socialization and common property, suppression of private trade, and the replacement of Confucianism, Buddhism and Chinese folk religion by a form of Christianity. The rebellion was eventually crushed with the help of the British and French. In the 20th century, Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Chinese Nationalist Party, looked on the Taiping Uprising as an inspiration, while Chinese communist leader, Mao Zedong, glorified the Taiping rebels as early heroic revolutionaries against a corrupt feudal system.

106 lunar years ago, on this day in 1330 AH, the Holy Shrine in Mashhad of Imam Reza (AS), the 8th Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), was shelled by the invading Russian forces. The blasphemous attack which damaged the minarets was part of Moscow's pressures on the weak Qajarid government to expel American advisor, Morgan Schuster, and appoint foreign nationals only with the permission of the Russian and British governments. A large number of people of Mashhad were martyred and wounded in this barbaric attack.

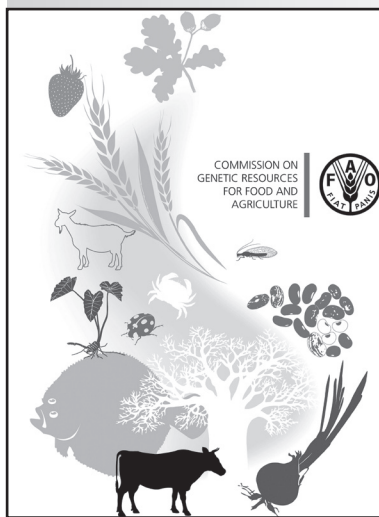
100 solar years ago, on this day in 1915 AD, during World War I, Germany became the first country to make large-scale use of poison gas in warfare in the Battle of Bolimów against Russia.

36 solar years ago, on this day in 1979 AD, the demoralized forces of the Shah's regime staged a parade in the streets of Tehran in a futile bid to scare the Iranian Muslim nation. To the horror of the generals, during the parade, many of the soldiers joined the masses and expressed solidarity with the Islamic Movement against the despotic British-installed and US-supported Pahlavi regime. At the same time, news agencies announced that the Father of Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (RA) would be leaving Paris at 3:30 a.m. local time on February 1, and arriving in Tehran at 9:30 a.m. On hearing this, people poured into the streets to prepare a glorious welcome home to their beloved leader.

2 solar years ago, on this day in 2013 AD, Dr. Hassan Ibrahim Habibi, Iranian revolutionary politician, lawyer, scholar, head of Academy of Persian Language and Literature, and the First Vice President for 13 years (1989-2001), passed away in Tehran at the age of 76. He held a PhD in law and sociology. While he was a university student in Paris he visited the Father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (RA), during the latter's brief stay in a village near Paris, and was tasked to draft the prospective constitution of Iran. After victory of the Iranian revolution, Habibi was named public spokesman for the revolutionary council. He was elected to the Majlis, and later served as the minister of justice. He was also head of the Academy of Persian Language and Literature, in addition to being a member of the State Expediency Council. Among his books are: "God" (1981), "Society, Culture, Politics" (1984), "Islam and the Crisis of Our Time" (1984).

(Courtesy: IRIB English Radio – <http://english.irib.ir>)

FAO Calls for Strengthening of Agricultural Biodiversity in Iran



Opening of the training workshop on implementation of the Second Global Plan of Action for the conservation and sustainable use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) in Karaj.

TEHRN (un.org.ir) - The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has called for the establishment of a 'National Information Sharing Mechanism'

(NISM) on plant genetic resources to secure the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic diversity in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The 'National Information Sharing Mechanism' (NISM) provides an invaluable tool not only to share knowledge and experience on plant genetics, but also to facilitate the development of strategies for the use of such resources to enhance agriculture and thereby ensure that the growing global population will continue to have access to adequate, safe and nutritious food to meet its needs.

A similar mechanism and process has been completed in more than 75 countries worldwide, including Turkey, Pakistan, India, Oman and more recently Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon.

Participants from a broad range of national governmental research and academic institutions involved in genetic resources for food and agriculture met in Karaj

for a national workshop to discuss implementation of the Second Global Plan of Action for the conservation and sustainable use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) under the framework of an FAO international project on the use of PGRFA for the use of adaptation to climate change.

During the workshop, Mr. Serge Nakouzi, the FAO Representative to the Islamic Republic of Iran, highlighted the importance of plant genetic resources in promoting food security and safeguarding agricultural biodiversity.

"At a time when the impact of climate change is being increasingly felt and is forecast to be quite significant, plant genetic biodiversity constitutes an essential role to provide the basic components to reinforce the capacity of crops and the agricultural sector of countries, such as Iran, to re-

spond effectively to the challenges posed by climate change and the resulting threats of food insecurity", stated Mr. Nakouzi.

FAO is the lead global authoritative body on biodiversity and genetic resources for food and agriculture.

In 2004 the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture came to force and was ratified by 133 countries including Islamic Republic of Iran.

The National Workshop on "Monitoring and Reporting on the Implementation of the Second Global Plan of Action" on "Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture for Adaptation to Climate Change (PGRFA)" was conducted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the Seed and Plant Improvement Institute (SPII) of the Ministry of Jihad-e Agriculture.

Millions Await World Hijab Day

MAHARASHTRA, India (IRNA) -- Preparing for the third anniversary of World Hijab Day, organizers of the event are anticipating the participation of around 10 million Muslims and non-Muslims worldwide, after huge success of the first two years.

"Our mission is to have 10 Million participants on February 1st, 2015 worldwide, Insha'Allah! The event is being organized since last two years for 'better awareness', 'greater understanding' and a 'peaceful world', and to foster global religious tolerance through Hijab awareness," the World Hijab Day organizers said in a statement quoted by ummid.com.

"On this day, we ask non-Muslim and non-Hijabi Muslim women worldwide to observe Hijab for a day. It will be a day for everyone willing to experience what it's like to step inside the shoes of a Hijabi.

"Our hopes are no less than that. We wish you will gain a wealth of knowledge and experience a slightly different definition of freedom," organizers added.

On February 1, millions Muslim and non-Muslim women wearing a traditional Islamic head scarf will march on the streets of 116 countries to mark the third anniversary of World Hijab Day.

The event, held for the third consecutive year, is the brain child of a New York resident, Nazma Khan, who came up with the idea as a means to foster religious tolerance and understanding.

Guarantee Good Weather' at Your Wedding

LONDON (MNA) - Weddings meticulously planned for months can be ruined by terrible weather – so this company's offer to control the conditions on the big day sounds incredibly enticing.

There's a catch though. Playing God with the weather will cost you £100,000.

For some people that will no doubt seem like a small price to pay to ensure they have a perfectly dry union.

Luxury travel company Oliver's Travels said it can '100% guarantee fair weather and clear skies' for your wedding day using a 'crack-team of cloud busters'.

Oliver's Travels say that the squad, made up of skilled meteorologists and pilots, fly their plane above the clouds and sprinkle them with silver iodide particles. The vapor in the clouds wraps itself around the iodide particles, condensing into water which then falls as rain.

The process begins up to a week before the wedding to ensure the skies are cloud-free for the big day.

The cloud-busting technology, which works by dispersing cloud vapor into the air, is not brand new – it has been tried since the 1940s and was used in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, a Paul

McCartney gig and at Prince William and Kate Middleton's wedding – but has not yet made it into the mainstream of wedding planning.



The plane releases substances that break down clouds.

Picture of the Day



The Nasir al-Mulk Mosque or Pink Mosque is a traditional mosque in Shiraz the capital of Fars Province, Iran.

Courtesy: Tabnak