

This Day in History

July 21

Today is Thursday; 31st of the Iranian month of Tir 1395 solar hijri; corresponding to 16th of the Islamic month of Shawwal 1437 lunar hijri; and July 21, 2016, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1951 solar years ago, on this day in 365 AD, a tsunami devastated the city of Alexandria in Egypt, killing 5,000 people inside the city and another 45,000 outside it. The tsunami was caused by the Crete earthquake estimated to be 8.0 on the Richter scale.

1430 lunar years ago, on this day in 7 AH, the Almighty's Last and Greatest Messenger, Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) performed an astounding miracle known as Radd ash-Shams or Return of the Setting Sun, when he supplicated to God to reverse the revolve of Planet Earth for some moments so that the resulting daylight allows his cousin and divinely-decreed vicegerent Imam Ali (AS) to formally perform the Asr or late afternoon ritual prayer, which the Imam had performed through gestures at its right time, so as not to disturb the sleep of the Prophet whose head was in his lap. This is indeed one of the proofs of the significant status of Imam Ali (AS). It happened that the Prophet had sent the Imam on an errand, and the latter after having discharged his duties returned after the congregational Asr Prayer was over. At this time, the Prophet felt the descending of divine revelation upon him, and so he rested his head on his cousin's lap. The revelation lasted till the sun was about to set, and at this time the Prophet asked the Imam whether he had performed the Asr Prayer in the proper manner. The Imam replied: "since your blessed head was in my leg and you were receiving divine revelations, I couldn't disturb you and performed the Asr prayer with gestures. The Prophet supplicated to God and suddenly daylight appeared as it is at the time of the Late Afternoon Ritual Prayer, and Imam Ali (AS) performed the Asr Prayer in its proper manner. This even has been recorded by both Shi'a and Sunni historians and authorities of Hadith. A mosque was built at this particular place of the miracle in Medina, and was known as Masjid Radd ash-Shams. It stood for centuries and was a site of pilgrimage for both Sunni and Shi'a Muslims, until it was demolished in the 1980s by heretical Wahhabi regime of Saudi Arabia.

This miracle is not a matter of surprise, since according to Islamic texts, as well as biblical sources, similar miracles had occurred for Prophet Joshua the successor of Prophet Moses, and also for Prophet Solomon. This is indicative of the power of the Almighty Creator over the elements of nature.

927 lunar years ago, on this day in 510 AH, the hadith scholar and historian, Ahmad Ibn Yusuf Ibn Azraq al-Fareqi, was born in the Miyafareqin region of what is now southeastern Turkey. He travelled widely, becoming familiar with social state of the masses, their customs, and the historical developments of the said regions. These journeys are recorded in his magnum opus titled "Tarikh al-Fareqi", which is a general history with special focus upon the author's native region of Miyafareqin and Amed. He died in 577 AH at the age of 67 years.

298 solar years ago, on this day in 1718 AD, The Treaty of Passarowitz was signed between the Ottoman Empire on one side and the Habsburg Monarchy of Austria and the Republic of Venice on the other. During the years 1714-1718, the Ottomans had been successful against Venice in Greece and Crete, in the Ottoman-Venetian War, but, in the Austro-Turkish War of 1716-1718, they had been defeated at Petrovaradin (1716). The treaty reflected the military situation. The Ottoman Empire lost the Banat and southeastern Syrmia, central part of present-day Serbia (from Belgrade to south of Krusevac), and a tiny strip of northern Bosnia to Austria. Venice renounced claim to the Peloponnesus Peninsula and Crete, retaining only the Ionian Islands and the cities of Preveza and Arta. The result of the treaty was restoration of Habsburg rule over much of the territory of present-day Serbia, which had been lost during the Great Turkish war between 1688 and 1699.

242 solar years ago, on this day in 1774 AD, the 6-year Russo-Turkish War ended with the signing of the Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji, according to which the weakened Ottoman Empire lost Southern Ukraine, Northern Caucasus, and Crimea to expansionist Russia. The treaty was a most humiliating blow to the once-mighty Ottoman realm. Russia gained two outlets to the Black Sea, which was no longer an Ottoman lake. The Crimea was the first Muslim territory to slip from the sultan's suzerainty. The frontiers of the Ottoman Empire, which for three centuries, prior to the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, had posed existential danger to Europe, would gradually shrink for another two centuries, until the Sykes-Picot accord detached its Arab possessions as well, to reduce it to modern Turkey.

233 solar years ago, on this day in 1783 AD, the Russians, taking advantage of the weakness of Iran, flexed their military muscles in the Caucasus by declaring Georgia as their protectorate. The Georgians, which for over two millenniums were part of the Persian Empire, were banned from maintaining direct relations with either Iran or the Ottoman Turks.

218 solar years ago, on this day in 1798 AD, the Battle of the Pyramids, also known as the Battle of Embabeh, was a major engagement during the French invasion of Egypt, and resulted in the French army under Napoleon Bonaparte scoring a decisive victory against the forces of the Georgian Mamluk rulers (Murad Bey and Ibrahim Bey), wiping out almost the entire Egyptian army. It was the battle where Napoleon employed one of his significant contributions to military tactics, the divisional square. Actually a rectangle, the deployment of the French brigades into these massive formations repeatedly threw back multiple cavalry charges by the Egyptians. The victory effectively sealed the French conquest of Egypt and Napoleon entered Cairo after the battle to create a new local administration under his supervision. The battle highlighted the weaknesses of the Ottoman Empire in the face of a changing Europe. Napoleon named the battle after the Egyptian pyramids because they were faintly visible on the horizon, 15 km away, when the battle took place some 6 km from Cairo. Nevertheless Napoleon's position in Egypt was precarious, despite his wearing of Muslim dress, showing respect for the Sheikhs of al-Azhar, and renaming himself as Ali Bonaparte. Britain and the Ottoman government joined forces to defeat him and finally drove out the French in 1801.

185 solar years ago, on this day in 1831 AD, with installation of Leopold I as king, Belgium became a constitutional monarchy - a day now celebrated as National Day. In 1830, the Belgian Revolution had led to the separation of the Southern Provinces from the Netherlands and to the establishment of a Catholic, officially French-speaking and neutral Belgium. It is a founding member of the European Union and hosts the EU's headquarters as well as those of several other major international organisations such as NATO. Belgium covers an area of 30,528 square km and has a population of about 11 million people.

128 solar years ago, on this day in 1888 AD, the English inventor, John Boyd Dunlop, invented pneumatic tyres. He had realized that inner-filled tyres reduce the speed of vehicles and therefore made a tyre which was filled with air. This type of tyre granted further speed and flexibility to vehicles. He died in the year 1921.

117 solar years ago, on this day in 1899 AD, American author, Ernest Hemingway was born. For a while, he worked as a reporter in England and France. He was the innovator of short stories in simple language. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954. Among his books, are "The Old Man and the Sea", "A Farewell to Arms", and "For Whom the Bell Tolls". He committed suicide in 1961.

64 solar years ago, on this day in 1952 AD, the International Court of Justice at Hague, ruled by a vote of 9 to 5 that it had no jurisdiction in the British-Iranian dispute over nationalization of Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (later British Petroleum). The verdict ended Britain's bid to force Iran to stop oil nationalization. The decision was based on the majority finding that the 1933 oil concession was a simple contract rather than an international agreement and that Britain could not invoke previous treaties. Hussain Navaz, Iranian Minister to the Netherlands and the agent in the case, said the court's decision would strengthen the hand of Prime Minister Dr. Mohammed Mossadeq, at a crucial moment in the Iranian political situation. London, however, continued to issue threats against Iran, and the next year ganged up with the US to overthrow the elected government of Prime Minister Mossadeq on August 19, in order to restore the fugitive Pahlavi Shah to the Peacock Throne in Tehran.

62 solar years ago, on this day in 1954 AD, an armistice treaty was signed between France and Vietnam at the end of Geneva Conference, which put an end to French colonial rule of Indochina. This treaty was concluded on May 1954, following the fall of the French Fortification in Vietnam, named "Dien Bien Phu". At the International Geneva Conference, attended by France, the US, Britain, China, the USSR, and Vietnam, the division of Vietnam into North and South was included on American insistence. According to this treaty, foreign forces should have left Vietnam's soil, but the US, in violation of the terms of the treaty, dispatched its troops to the region to confront the freedom-seeking people of Vietnam, and obstructed the unification of Northern and Southern Vietnam. The people of Vietnam, who had fought against the French colonial rule for a long time, this time confronted the US and defeated America after nearly two decades of war. Northern and Southern Vietnam became once again united in a single country in 1975.

46 solar years ago, in 1970 AD, the Aswan High Dam in Egypt was completed after 18 years of work. It is a huge rock-filled dam that lies just north of the border between Egypt and Sudan. It captures the world's longest river, the Nile, in the world's third largest reservoir, Lake Nasser. Built with Soviet aid at a cost of \$1 billion, it now produces hydroelectricity meeting 50% of Egypt's power needs. It holds several years of irrigation reserves, assists multi-cropping, has increased productivity 20-50%, enormously increased Egypt's arable land, and overall, increased Egypt's agricultural income by 200%. The embankment is 111 meters high, with a width of near 1,000 meters. Lake Nasser is 480 long and up to 16 km wide.

33 solar years ago, on this day in 1983 AD, the world's lowest temperature in an inhabited location was recorded at Vostok Station, Antarctica at -89.2 °C (-128.6 °F).

28 solar years ago, on this day in 1988 AD, four days after Iran accepted UN Security Council Resolution 598 to stop the Iraqi war, Saddam, who had earlier accepted this same resolution, violated its terms and clauses, by launching a fresh attack in southwestern Iran. Thanks to the readiness of the Muslim combatants, this fresh Ba'athist attack was defeated and it revealed the warmongering nature of Saddam, who had started the 8-year war in September 1980. Ceasefire finally ended the Iraqi War on August 20, 1988.

3 solar years ago, on this day in 2013 AD, in Yemen armed terrorists seized an employee of the Iranian embassy in Sanaa. Diplomat Nour Ahmad Nikbakht was freed by Iranian special operatives in March, 2015.

(Courtesy: IRIB English Radio - <http://parstoday.com/en>)

Foreign Ministry Panel Talks E-Visas, E-Services at World Conference of Mayors & Councilors



The IT Department of Iran's Foreign Ministry Panel

TEHRAN (Kayhan International Cultural Desk) - **The 1st 'World Conference of Mayors and Councilors 2016' began its work at Tehran Milad Tower on Wednesday, with President Hassan Rouhani and over 2000 participants from Iran and around the world in attendance.**

During the two-day gathering, the IT Department of Iran's Foreign Ministry is holding an expert panel dubbed "the role of diplomacy in lifting tourism barriers and paving the way for public access to e-services."

The panel is being coordinated by Iman Mohseninia of the IT Department of Foreign Ministry.

On its first day, Deputy Foreign

Minister for IT Affairs Mohammad Nik-Eghbal Rad as well as IT experts Mojtaba Khezrian, Neda Jomhori, discussed their views and proposals with the audience.

Speaking during the opening session, Nik-Eghbal Rad discussed challenges, opportunities and barriers in the way of travel and tourism in Iran. He said Iran is a front-runner in issuing e-Visa for tourists in the region, adding that talks are underway with the Border Police and other organizations in order to help introduce the new system at the earliest.

Second panellist Khezrian said many countries are issuing e-Visas in order to facilitate tourism,

adding that the plan to introduce the modern system in Iran goes back many years ago, and soon it will become operational.

He further noted that Iran will be a top tourism destination with the new visa program, as many countries issue e-Visas at points of entry which has helped greatly to facilitate travel and tourism. He said the Foreign Ministry is considering e-Visas for all types of applications, which will make the system in Iran as one of the most efficient ones in the world.

Third panellist Jomhori said many governments have focused their resources on IT and the application of electronic cities and electronic governments. She added that the whole idea is to boost the quality of life and services for citizens.

According to the IT expert, e-services is what many governments are after, the ultimate goal of which is having electronic cities. She said to this end the Foreign Ministry has introduced e-services for expatriates, through which they can appraise and get their documents Eva, hated and endorsed. The website service by the Foreign Ministry is available 24/7 and has helped cut the time and the costs for those using it.

According to the experts Foreign Ministry could play an important role in e-services, adding that the same could be said for its role in

boosting the tourism sector.

Foreign Ministry could take the following steps in order to promote travel and tourism in Iran:

1-Offering e-Visa for tourists to facilitate travel to Iran.

2-Opening tourism information centers and advisory services at embassies around the world.

3-Encouraging ambassadors to play a much more effective role in promoting travel and tourism to Iran.

4-Setting up tourism department and study center for tourism affairs at Foreign Ministry.

5-Using tourism diplomacy in international organizations to help boost the tourism industry.

On Wednesday, President Rouhani inaugurated the international conference with a focus on urban management, urban planning, tourism, crisis management and urban economics.

Over 2000 participants from more than 40 countries and international organizations, including from Spain, Germany, Denmark, Mexico and Turkey, are taking part in the two-day event.

Iran's Interior Minister, IT Minister, Minister of Roads and Urban Development, foreign mayors and international investors are expected to deliver speeches at the gathering. Educational workshops, professional panels and session on related topics are also being held alongside the main event.

Iran to Launch Imam Reza TV Channel

TEHRAN (ISNA)- **Iran plans to launch a special TV Channel of Imam Reza, the 8th Imam of Shiite Muslims whose holy shrine is located in Mashhad City, northwestern Iran.**

Ebrahim Raeisi who is custodian of Astan Quds Razavi and Head of the IRIB Abdol-Ali Ali-Asgari in a meeting discussed bilateral cooperation between the two establishments,

and stressed the need to launch Imam Reza (A.S.) TV Channel.

During the meeting, the two sides agreed on providing a detailed assessment of the implementation and operational stages of launching the TV channel.

Governor of Khorasan Razavi, mayor and Islamic City Council president expressed readiness to co-

operate to finance infrastructure, and jointly produce the channel's programs.

Topics such as the providing required infrastructures for broadcasting multiple programs by Astan Quds Razavi, solving technical problems and facilitating further involvement of the media, especially the national media in the Holy Shrine, and im-

proving the content of the programs with the aim of influencing more than the past at national and international level, were stressed.

Astan Quds Razavi is a charitable foundation, in Mashhad City. It is the administrative organization which manages the Imam Reza shrine and institutions which belong to the organization.

Mashhad Must Convert to Center of Spreading Pure Islam in the World

TEHRAN (ABNA) - **Grand Ayatollah Nouri Hamadani, Supreme Authority of Shiite World, met and spoke with Hujjat al-Islam wa al-Muslimin Raeisi, Custodian of Astan Quds Razavi.**

Grand Ayatollah Nouri Hamadani at this meeting while pointing to the existing capacity of Mashhad and the historical record of this holy city in the development of the Islamic Revolution and religious principles stated, "With planning and continuous work, the holy city of Mashhad must be converted to the cultural and ideological base of the Islamic world and the center responding to the doubts and questions of the lovers of the household of the Apostle of God (S.A.W.)."

"Paying attention to the discourse of Islamic Revolution and its explanation for millions of pilgrims of Imam Reza (A.S.) and the introduction of the pillars, goals, and missions of the Revolution and the Islamic Movement for people of the world, using advertising and cultural methods are among the topics which must be on the agenda of the officials and the authorities" This Supreme Authority of Shiite World added.

"Today, the enemies of Islam, with their mercenary agents in the region such as House of Khalifa and House of Saud seek to replace the false and fabricated Islam with the real and pure Islam, and at the present juncture, the alliance of Muslim nations in order to disclose their nature and

deal with them is essential" he reiterated.

"Now, Noble Quds and Great Mecca, two main bases of Muslims, are in the grip of imperialism and their agents, and God willing, with the effort of Muslims, we will see the release of these noble places" he

continued.

Ayatollah Nouri Hamadani, in another part of his speech, pointing to the setting table of fast breaking during the holy month of Ramadan in Razavi Holy Shrine and the distribution of the blessed food among the deprived and the oppressed strata of

the society described these measures very valuable, and noted, "Thankfully, paying attention to pilgrims and revering them has increased during the responsibility of Hujjat al-Islam wa al-Muslimin Raeisi, and we hope that the measures taken bring more satisfaction for the pilgrims."

Picture of the Day



After a good maintenance by the experts of Lavizan Birds Garden, located in Tehran District 4, the beautiful African bird had laid two eggs for the second successive year which one of the glossy, dirty-white eggs hatched successfully.

Courtesy: Tehran.ir