

## This Day in History

(January 13)

Today is Saturday; 23rd of the Iranian month of Dey 1396 solar hijri; corresponding to 25th of the Islamic month of Rabi as-Sani 1439 lunar hijri; and January 13, 2018, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

**1486 solar years ago**, on this day in 532 AD, the 2nd Hagia Sophia cathedral was burned down in Constantinople during the Nika Uprising, which failed leaving some 30,000-to-40,000 people dead. Emperor Justinian and his wife Theodora had attended festivities at the Hippodrome, a stadium for athletic competition. Team support escalated from insults to mob riots and in the end Constantinople lay in ruins. Justinian proceeded to rebuild the city with extensive commissions for religious art and architecture, including the new Hagia Sophia.

**1375 lunar years ago**, on this day in 64 AH, Mu'awiyah, the son of the tyrant Yazid, abdicated the caliphate after only a month and eleven days in power as the self-styled caliph of the usurper Omayyad regime following the death by divine wrath of his accused father, the perpetrator of the heartrending tragedy of Karbala. The 19-year old youth strongly denounced his father Yazid's crimes against Islam and humanity, especially the tragic martyrdom of Imam Husain (AS), the grandson and 3rd Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). It is said he was never again seen in public and is believed to have died or killed by his own kinsmen. He was replaced by the renegade, Marwan ibn al-Hakam, which meant a shift in the lineage of the Godless Omayyad regime from the offspring of Abu Sufyan to those of Hakam – both of whom grandsons of Omayya and avowed enemies of the Prophet of Islam. After some nine months in power, Marwan was killed by his most recent wife, a widow of the tyrant Yazid, who put a pillow on his face and sat over it till his breath was snuffed out. Some 67 years later, the Marwanids were thrown into the dustbin of history with the rise of the new dynasty of usurper caliphs, the Abbasids.

**1071 lunar years ago**, on this day in 368 AH, the Spanish Muslim scholar, Yusuf ibn Abdullah, popularly known as "Ibn al-Abdul-Bir", was born in Qortaba, a city in Spain which is called Cordoba today. A leading Sunni jurist, he initially adhered to the Zaheri School of jurisprudence founded by the Iranian Dawoud ibn Ali az-Zaheri of Isfahan, but later in life became a follower of the Malekite School. In his work, "al-Ist'aaab fi Ma'rifat al-Ashaab" or The Comprehensive List of Names of the Companions, he has considered as a 'companion' any person who even once in life met Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). Nonetheless, he has acknowledged the unrivalled merits of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt or Blessed Household, especially Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS). His other works include "al-Aql wa'l-Uqala" or Reason and the People of Wisdom, and "al-Qasd wa'l-Umam fi Nasab al-Arab wa'l-Ajam" or Endeavors and the Nations: Genealogies of the Arabs and Non-Arabs.

**971 lunar years ago**, on this day in 478 AH, the prominent Iranian Shafe'i scholar, Abdul-Malik bin Abdullah al-Juwaini, passed away at the age of 59 in Neishapour, Khorasan.

**919 solar years ago**, on this day in 1099 AD, the Christian Crusader invaders from Europe set fire to the town of Mara, in Syria, as part of their murderous campaign to ravage Muslim lands and occupy Bayt al-Moqaddas.

**761 lunar years ago**, on this day in 638 AH, the first Muslim queen of India, Razia Sultan, was killed while fleeing along with her husband, Altunia by Jat brigands, a day after the two were defeated in battle by her younger brother, Bahram, who had seized the Delhi sultanate through a plot. Razia, was designated heir-apparent and subsequently ruler by her father, Shams od-Din Iltutmish, the Turkic slave-sultan of India, following the death of her elder brother. She had exceptional administrative and military qualities, and established schools, academies, research centers, and public libraries that included the works of ancient philosophers along with the teaching of the holy Qur'an and the Prophet's hadith. Pre-Islamic Sanskrit works on philosophy, astronomy, and literature were reportedly translated and studied in the schools and colleges she had established. Razia called herself "sultan" and refused to be addressed as Sultana because it meant "wife or mistress of a sultan"

**568 solar years ago**, on this day in 1450 AD, the Portuguese sailor and explorer, Bartholomew Diaz, was born.

**352 solar years ago**, on this day in 1666 AD, the famous French traveller and dealer of precious stones, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier arrived in Dhaka (in what is now Bangladesh) after travelling overland via Iran, and met the Moghal Governor of Bengal, Mirza Abu Taleb Tehrani Shaista Khan – brother of Empress Mumtaz Mahal and hence maternal uncle of reigning Emperor Aurangzeb. Tavernier made six voyages to Iran and India between the years 1630-1668, and in view of his fluency in Persian language, he established contacts with the Safavid and Mughal courts. He travelled as far as the Deccan (southern Indian), where he visited the famous diamond mines of the Qutb-Shahi kingdom of Golkandah-Hyderabad – of Iranian origin. Here he obtained the world famous 116-carat Tavernier Blue Diamond, now known as the Hope Diamond and currently kept in the Smithsonian Natural History Museum of Washington, with an estimated price of 250 million US dollars. In 1675 at the behest of his patron, Louis XIV, he published his travelogue titled "Six Voyages".

**186 solar years ago**, on this day in 1832 AD, the French Painter, Edouard Manet, was born. He was a pivotal figure in the transition from the painting school of Realism to Impressionism. His works include "Olympia". He died in 1883.

**176 solar years ago**, on this day in 1842 AD, during the First Anglo-Afghan War, a total of 16,500 British troops while retreating from Kabul were ambushed and nearly all slaughtered at the Khyber Pass. The sole survivor to reach Jalalabad was (reputedly) the badly wounded Dr. William Brydon.

**171 solar years ago**, on this in 1847 AD, the Treaty of Cahuenga was imposed on Mexico by the US to end the war in California, and thus pave the way for Washington's designs to annex more Mexican territory. Throughout its history, the USA has resorted to wars, bloodshed, genocide of Amerindians, enslavement of black people, and seizure of the territories of other countries.

**102 solar years ago**, on this day in 1915 AD, an earthquake in Avezzano, Italy, resulted in the death of 29,800 people.

**77 solar years ago**, on this day in 1941 AD, the Allied Powers held an important conference in London during World War II, upon the initiative of British Premier, Winston Churchill, for coordinating policies in the war against Germany and Italy. This conference was attended by the representatives of Britain, Holland, Belgium, France, Greece, Norway, Luxemburg, and Denmark.

**54 solar years ago**, on this day in 1964 AD, Hindu-Muslim rioting broke out in the Indian city of Calcutta (renamed Kolkata), resulting in the deaths of more than 100 people.

**43 solar years ago**, on this day in 1975 AD, the famous jurispudent, Ayatollah Seyyed Abu'l-Hassan Rafi'i Qazvini, passed away at the age of 83. Born in Qazvin, he studied in Tehran and then in holy Qom under the famous scholar, Ayatollah Abdul-Karim Ha'eri Yazdi, mastering various branches of Islamic sciences. He authored several books.

**39 solar years ago**, on this day in 1979 AD, during demonstrations in several Iranian cities in the crucial days of the Islamic Revolution, intense clashes erupted between Shah's forces and the people, leading to martyrdom and injury of a number of courageous Iranians.

**39 solar years ago**, on this day in 1979 AD, students and people of the Iranian capital staged a large gathering at Tehran University, announcing their opposition to the Shah's despotic regime and calling for return home from exile of the Father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (RA). This happened while the university campus was surrounded by soldiers. Following this gathering, Imam Khomeini, in his message from his place of brief exile near Paris in France, taking note of the rumours being spread by the Shah's regime and plots being hatched against the Islamic Revolution, called on the Iranian people to be alert and vigilant in order to foil all such plots.

**37 solar years ago**, this day in 1981 AD, Saddam of Iraq's repressive Ba'th minority regime ordered the first chemical bombardment of Iran, 50 km west of the city of Elam, resulting in the martyrdom of several soldiers. During the 8-year war imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran on US orders, Saddam frequently used internationally banned chemical weapons supplied by the West, especially Germany, resulting in the martyrdom of at least 10,000 Iranian people and injury to over 130,000 others, as the UN turned a blind eye to his crimes.

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

# ICRO to Host 1st Conf. of Asian Cultural Dialogues



TEHRAN (MNA) – The first Dialogues will start Saturday, Conference of Asian Cultural January 13, with several Iranian

ministers and guests from 20 Asian countries in attendance.

The opening ceremony for the first Conference of Asian Cultural Dialogues will start Saturday 13 in the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) with the Head of ICRO Abouzar Ebrahimi Torkaman giving a speech.

Several other Iranian ministers and officials present speeches in the ceremony, including Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Abbas Salehi, the Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, Minister of Science Mansour Gholami, Chancellor of the University of Tehran Mahmoud Nili and several other Iranian and

foreign officials.

Commissions on 'East Asia', 'the Subcontinent' and 'Central Asia and Caucasus' will be held in three days in Faculty of World Studies of the University of Tehran, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad and University of Mazandaran respectively.

Islamic Culture and Relations Organization hosts the conference in cooperation with the University of Tehran, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, University of Mazandaran, ECO Cultural Institute, ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly and the Asia Cooperation Dialogue.

## Ferdowsi Int'l Conference Held at Sofia University

TEHRAN (IBNA) - The international conference, Ferdowsi as Depicted in Persian Culture and Literature will be held by Sofia University of St. Kliment Ohridski in Bulgarian capital.

According to IBNA correspondent, the event which is scheduled for May 15 is the 3rd international conference on Oriental Studies to be hosted by the university.

The event is centered on the masterpiece 'Shahnameh' (Book of Kings) by the legendary Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi Tusi; Ivo Panov, the head of Iranian Studies



The legendary Iranian poet Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi Tusi.

Department in the Sofia University director of Ferdowsi conference of St. Kliment Ohridski and the said.

The subjects to be considered in this event are: "Structure and Content of Ferdowsi's Magnum Opus Shahnameh", "Social Concepts and Human Status in Shahnameh", "Extents of the Shahnameh Influences on the World", and "Thought, Milieu and Ideas of Ferdowsi".

The Sofia University of St. Kliment Ohridski is the oldest higher education institution in Bulgaria. It has been consistently ranked as the top university in Bulgaria according to national and international rankings.

## Nature Beneficial for Mental Wellbeing

LONDON (Dispatches)- Smartphone-based technology has been used to assess the relationship between nature in cities and momentary mental wellbeing in real time.

Researchers at King's College London, landscape architects J & L Gibbons and art foundation Nomad Projects found that firstly, being outdoors, seeing trees, hearing birdsong, seeing the sky, and feeling in contact with nature were associated with higher levels of mental wellbeing, and that secondly, the beneficial effects of nature were especially evident in those individuals with greater levels of impulsivity who are at greater risk of mental health issues. The researchers developed a Smartphone-based app, Urban Mind, to examine how exposure to natural features in cities affects a person's mental wellbeing.

The Urban Mind app monitored 108 individuals who collectively completed 3,013 assessments over a one-week period.

The results showed significant immediate and time lagged associations with mental wellbeing for several natural features: trees, the sky and birdsong. These associations were still evident several hours after exposure to trees, the sky and birdsong had taken place, indicating time-lasting benefits.

Dr Andrea Mechelli, Department of Psychosis Studies, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, King's College London, said, 'These findings suggest that short-term exposure to nature has a measurable beneficial

impact on mental wellbeing. The interaction of this effect with trait impulsivity is intriguing, as it suggests that nature could be especially beneficial to those individuals who are at risk of poor mental health. From a clinical perspective, we hope this line of research will lead to the development of low-cost scalable interventions aimed at promoting mental health in urban populations.



## Picture of the Day



The 33rd edition of the Fajr International Music Festival, Iran's most prestigious music event, is underway in the Iranian capital, Tehran, from January 10-20, 2018.

Courtesy: Tasnim News Agency