

This Day in History

(March 8)

Today is Thursday; 17th of the Iranian month of Esfand 1396 solar hijri; corresponding to 19th of the Islamic month of Jamadi as-Sani 1439 lunar hijri; and March 8, 2018, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1857 solar years ago, on this day in 161 AD, Marcus Aurelius was declared Roman Emperor and commenced his 19-year rule that saw his generals emerge as victors of the 5-year long war (161-65) against the Parthian Empire of Iran in Armenia and Mesopotamia (Iraq), following initial Iranian victories in Syria and Anatolia (modern Turkey). The Roman success was short-lived, and despite the sacking of the Iranian-controlled Greek city of Seleucia and plunder of the Parthian capital, Ctesiphon (near Baghdad), the Iranians remobilized and reclaimed lost ground.

1007 solar years ago, on this day in 1010 AD, Iranian poet, Abu'l-Qassem Mansour ibn Hassan, famous by his penname "Ferdowsi", completed his masterpiece "Shahnameh" (Book of Kings) that records in verse, Iran's history, and till this day is considered a world famous epic.

942 solar years ago, on this day in 1075 AD, Iranian Sunni Muslim exegete of the holy Qur'an, narrator of hadith, and linguist, Abu'l-Qasim Mohammad Ibn Omar Zamakhshari, was born in Khwarezm. He studied in Samarqand and Bukhara, and later lived in Baghdad. He followed the rationalistic Mu'tazali doctrine and was known as "Jarallah" (Neighbour of God), since he stayed for several years in the city of Mecca, spending his time at the holy Ka'ba, the symbolic House of God Almighty. In his works, he acknowledged the merits and peerless position of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt. He wrote both in Persian and Arabic.

901 lunar years ago, on this day in 538 AH, famous Egyptian reciter of the Holy Qur'an, Qasem Ibn Fira ash-Shatebi, known as "Imam al-Qurra" was born. Although he was blind, he had a sharp memory and authored a book on the seven different ways of recitation of the holy book.

615 solar years ago, on this day in 1403 AD, the 4th Ottoman sultan, Bayezid I, died in captivity in Samarqand, eight months after his defeat in the Battle of Ankara by the Central Asian Turkic conqueror, Amir Timur. Bayezid who had conquered most of southwestern Europe – Greece (except the Byzantine capital Constantinople), Macedonia, Bulgaria, and parts of Serbia, had seized the Ottoman throne on his father's death in Battle of Kosovo in 1389 by strangling to death his brother Yaqoub. He acquired the title "Yildirim" (lightning) during his campaign against fellow Turks and Muslims, who joined Timur in the campaign against the Ottomans.

301 solar years ago, on this day in 1717 AD, Abraham Darby who played an important role in the Industrial Revolution, died in Britain. He developed a method of smelting ore with coke in a blast furnace, instead of using charcoal. This was a major step in the production of iron.

296 solar years ago, on this day in 1722 AD, after two centuries and two decades of glorious rule, which bestowed Iran national unity, religious identity, territorial integrity, and cultural affinity, the Safavid Empire was dealt a serious blow by Hotaki Ghilzai rebels from Qandahar, in what is now Afghanistan, in the Battle of Gulnabad that led to the capture of the capital Isfahan. For seven years, the occupiers, (Mahmoud and after him his cousin, Ashraf), plunged the country into anarchy, cold-bloodedly murdered the last Safavid king, Shah Sultan Hussain, and terrorized the people, until they were driven out from Iran by the general Tahmasp Quli, who routed them in the Battle of Damghan in 1729 and later usurped the throne by styling himself Nader Shah.

282 solar years ago, on this day in 1736 AD, Safavid general, Tahmasp Quli, who rose to rescue Iran from the anarchy by driving out the Hotaki Ghilzai occupiers, crowned himself as Nader Shah. He conducted many successful campaigns, by reclaiming Iranian territories in the Caucasus, in Iraq, in Central Asia, on the southern Arab side of the Persian Gulf and in what is now Afghanistan. He also attacked the Mughal Empire of India, where the fleeing Ghilzai rebels had sought refuge, took Delhi, and returned to Iran with rich booty, including the famous Peacock Throne, the Koh-e Noor Diamond, and the Tent of Pearls.

236 solar years ago, on this day in 1782 AD, the Gnadenhütten massacre took place in the US, when 96 native Amerindians in Gnadenhütten, Ohio, who had converted to Christianity were cold bloodedly killed by American revolutionaries of Pennsylvania militiamen, on the pretext of retaliation for raids carried out by other Amerindians.

217 solar years ago, on this day in 1801 AD, during the War of the Second Coalition, at the Battle of Abuqir, near Alexandria, a British force under Ralph Abercromby landed in Egypt with the aim of driving out Napoleon Bonaparte's French forces. The skirmish, which was a prelude to the Battle of Alexandria, and the withdrawal of the French.

101 solar years ago, on this day in 1917 AD, Ferdinand Adolf August Heinrich Count von Zeppelin, the German inventor, engineer and manufacturer who was the aviation pioneer that built the first rigid dirigible airships, named Zeppelins, died. After retiring from the army, he embarked on designing and building aircraft. His first airship took off on 2nd July 1900 at Lake Constance. Eventually, he produced more zeppelins, which were first flown commercially in 1910 by Deutsche Luftschiffahrts-AG (DELAG), the world's first commercial airline. During World War I, he produced more than 100 Zeppelins for military uses, including the bombing of Britain. After the war, he continued to improve the design and built a fleet of airships for commercial passenger service, which included transatlantic flights. Zeppelin use ended after the 6 May 1937 Hindenburg fire disaster at Lakehurst, New Jersey, USA.

96 solar years ago, on this day in 1922 AD, Reza Khan Mirpanj, a year after his coup with British-backing to install himself as war minister and commander-in-chief of the army of the tottering Qajar dynasty of Iran, ordered closure of all widely circulated newspapers, for their criticism of his high-handed policies. The editors who refused to heed his orders were arrested and humiliated. Many sought asylum in the shrine of Seyyed Shah Abdul-Azim al-Hassani in Rayy, south of Tehran, while others went to the Russian embassy to put pressure upon him. Despite promises of freedom of press, Reza Khan did not keep his word, and continued his repressive policies against the nation, resulting in his seizure of the Peacock Throne in 1925 and declaring himself as king of the new Pahlavi dynasty with British backing.

36 solar years ago, on this day in 1982 AD, prominent religious scholar, Ayatollah Rabbani Shirazi, passed away. Born in Shiraz, he was active in struggles against the despotic Pahlavi regime, suffering arrest and banishment to remote parts of the country. On victory of the Islamic Revolution, he was elected to the parliament, and spent his life serving Islam and Muslims.

33 solar years ago, on this day in 1985 AD, the execution of ten religious scholars of the family of the Late Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mohsin al-Hakeem by the repressive Ba'ath minority regime, after years of imprisonment, shocked the world, and made the Father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (RA) issue a strongly-worded statement denouncing the latest crime against humanity of Saddam. The Imam also questioned the silence of world bodies and claimants of human rights and democracy.

33 solar years ago, on this day in 1985 AD, a failed assassination attempt in Beirut against Lebanon's leading religious scholar, Allamah Seyyed Mohammad Hussain Fazlollah, killed at least 45 innocent persons and injured 175 others. The US was behind this murderous plot which was masterminded for the CIA by Robert Gates, who later served as US War Secretary.

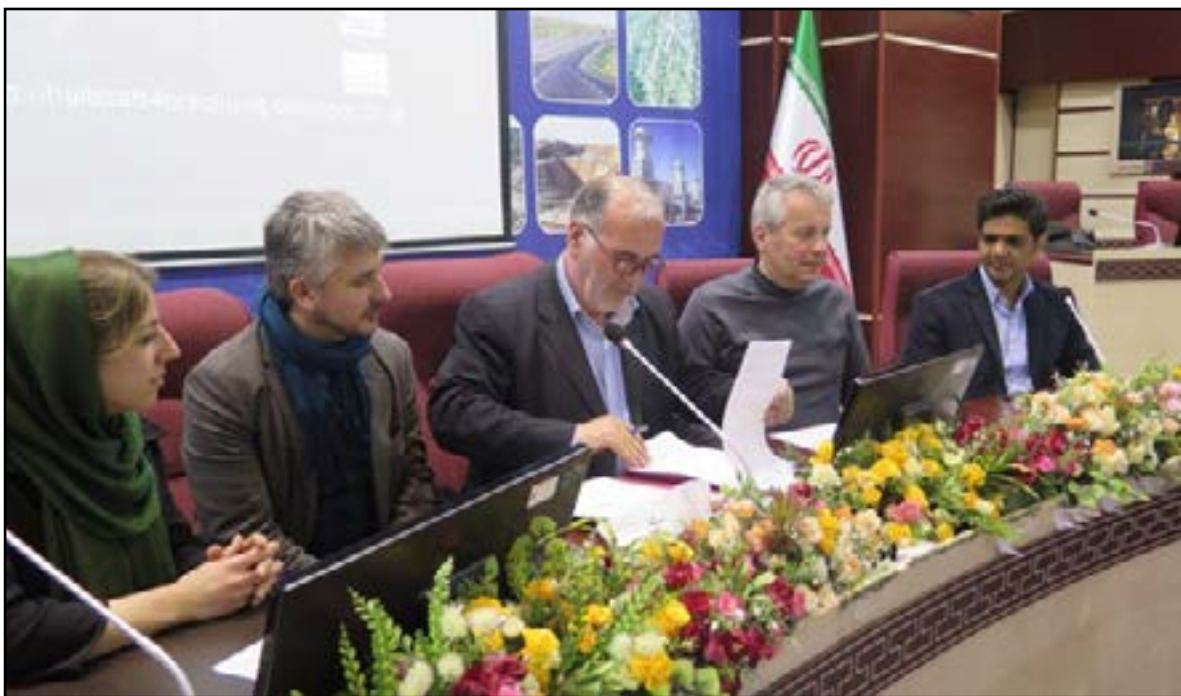
28 solar years ago, on this day in 1990 AD, Hussein Qawwami, one of the prominent instructors of Iran's traditional music, passed away. Following the victory of Iran's Islamic Revolution, he dedicated his music for revolutionary songs. In 1988, he received a plaque of honour from Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.

25 solar years ago, on this day in 1993 AD, the musician Ahmad Ebadi, who played Setar and Iran's traditional musical instruments, passed away. He groomed numerous students to promote Iran's traditional music.

8 solar years ago, on this day in 2010 AD, Iranian researcher and anthropologist, Dr. Mahmoud Rooh ul-Amini, passed away. Born in Kerman, after obtaining MA in Sociology, he left for France, where in 1968 he received PhD in anthropology. On returning to Iran, he lectured at Tehran University and devoted himself to development of anthropology, resulting in the opening of the Museum of Anthropology at Golestan Palace. He wrote several books.

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

Iran Inks Pacts With 4 European Archeology Museums



TEHRAN (FNA) - Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization of Iran's Northwestern Zanjan Province has signed an agreement with four European museums, a provincial

cultural officer announced.

"The agreement was signed for improvement of maintenance and repair of antique items in Zanjan," Head of Zanjan CHHTO Yahya Rahmati said.

In the fourth archeological and interdisciplinary studies of Chehrabad Salt Mine, an agreement was signed among the Cultural Heritage Organization of Zanjan, and the German Mining

Museum, Bochum, western Germany; Central Museum of Roman German, Mainz, Western Germany; Frankfurt Archaeological Museum, Central Germany; and Natural History Museum, Vienna, Austria.

The agreement also contains holding exhibitions both in Iran and Germany.

In a relevant development in September 2015, former Iranian Culture Minister Ali Jannati and former German Ambassador to Tehran Michael Freiherr von Ungern-Sternberg in a meeting underlined the necessity for the further expansion of cultural relations between the two countries.

"We should endeavor to strengthen cultural ties between the two nations which have had profound relations since far past as sustainable cultural ties guarantee maintained political and economic relations between the two countries," Jannati said during the meeting in Tehran.

"Kupal" to Be Screened at Thrissur Film Festival

TEHRAN (ISNA) – Iranian film "Kupal" directed by Kazem Molaie will be screened at the 13th Thrissur international Film Festival in the south Indian state of Kerala.

The 13th Thrissur international Film Festival has been held from March 1- 7 in Kerala and hosts the Iranian film "Kupal".

Thrissur International Film Festival was established in 2004 and its main goal is to screen the best international and Indian films in Kerala. Kerala is one of

the southern states of India that is famous for its sandy beaches and palm trees and the Thrissur is the oldest festival in the state.

The Iranian film was also screened at the 46th international film festival in Belgrade, Serbia early this week.

Addition to "Kupal", another Iranian film "The Dog and The Insane Lover" directed by Ali Mohammad Qasemi will be also screened at the Thrissur International Film Festival in India.



Scientists Engineer Crops to Resist Drought

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Scientists have improved how a crop uses water by 25 percent, without compromising yield, by altering the expression of one gene that is found in all plants.

The research is part of the international research project Realizing Increased Photosynthetic Efficiency (RIPE) that is supported by Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research, and the U.K. Department for International Development.

"This is a major breakthrough," said RIPE Director Stephen Long, Ikenberry Endowed Chair of Plant Biology and Crop Sciences. "Crop yields have steadily improved over the past 60 years, but the amount of water required to produce one ton of grain remains unchanged -- which led most to assume that this factor could not change. Proving that our theory works in practice should open the door to much more research and development to achieve this all-important goal for the future."

The international team increased the levels of a photosynthetic protein (PsbS) to conserve water by tricking plants into partially closing their stomata, the microscopic pores in the leaf that allow water to escape. Stomata are the gatekeepers to plants: When open, carbon dioxide enters the plant to fuel photosynthesis, but

water is allowed to escape through the process of transpiration.

"These plants had more water than they needed, but that won't always be the case," said co-first

author Katarzyna Glowacka, a postdoctoral researcher who led this research at the Carl R. Woese Institute for Genomic Biology (IGB). "When water is limited,

these modified plants will grow faster and yield more -- they will pay less of a penalty than their non-modified counterparts."

Picture of the Day



Located in the historic centre of Isfahan, the Masjed-e Jame can be seen as a stunning illustration of the evolution of mosque architecture over twelve centuries, starting in AD 841.

Courtesy: Tasnim News Agency