

This Day in History

(April 19)

Today is Thursday; 30th of the Iranian month of Farvardin 1397 solar hijri; corresponding to 2nd of the Islamic month of Sha'ban 1439 lunar hijri; and April 19, 2018, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1487 solar years ago, on this day in 531 AD at the Battle of Callinicum near what later came to be known as ar-Raqqa in Syria, an Iranian army of 15,000 cavalry and 5000 Lakhmid Arabs led by the Sassanid general, Azarethes, defeated the forces of Byzantine or the Eastern Roman Em-pire, made up of 25,000 Greeks and Slavs and 3000 Ghassanid Arabs under the command of Belisarius. Initially, the Romans only wanted to ward off the Persians, without a risky battle, which eventually occurred and led to the defeat of the Byzantines when after a seesaw struggle for two-thirds of the day, a squadron of elite Iranian cavalry broke through the Byzantine right flank, driving Greeks and Ghassanid Arabs in different directions. Zacharias of Mytilene writing of the battle said: "[The Romans] turned and fled before the Persian attack. Many fell into the River Euphrates and were drowned, and others were killed."

1237 lunar years ago, on this day in 202 AH, Fadhl ibn Sahl ibn Zadaan-Farrukh Sarakhsi, the powerful Iranian prime minister of Mamoun (the 7th self-styled caliph of the usurper Abbasid re-gime), was slain under mysterious condition while in the bathhouse of the city of Sarakhs, which today straddles the Iran-Turkmenistan border. Known for his craftiness in devising the plan to force Imam Reza (AS), the 8th Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), to leave Medina and come to Mamoun's capital in the Khorasani city of Merv (presently in Turkmenistan), he was entrusted with both the military command and civilian administration with the title "Dhu'r-Riyasatayn" (Possessor of Two Offices). A convert to Islam from Zoroastrianism, Sahl and his brother, Hassan, were instrumental in consolidation of the caliphate of Mamoun, whose mother was Iranian. Sahl was the de facto ruler of the caliphate until the year before his death, having played a crucial role in the civil war between Mamoun and his brother Amin. According to the historian Ibn Atheer, he was suspected of being a follower of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt and was thus murdered - probably on the orders of Mamoun. Following his death the public turned against Mamoun, who pleaded with Imam Reza (AS) to use his influence to calm down the agi-tators.

1043 lunar years ago, on this day in 396 AH, the renowned Iranian scholar, poet and mystic, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, was born in Herat, which is now in Afghanistan, but was then an inte-gral part of Khorasan. He was a commentator of the holy Qur'an, a compiler of hadith, and known for his oratory and poetic talents in Arabic and Persian. He wrote several books on Islam-ic mysticism and philosophy. His most famous work is "Munajaat- Namah", which is consid-ered a masterpiece of Persian literature. His exegesis on the holy Qur'an is titled "Kashf ul-Asrar", and was compiled in 10 volumes by his disciples after his death. He used to avoid the company of the rich, powerful and the influential. Abdullah Ansari was a direct descendant of the Prophet's companion and host in Medina, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari. He died in 1088 in his hometown Herat.

567 solar years ago, on this day in 1451 AD, with the abdication of Alam Shah, the last king of the Seyyed Dynasty of North India, the ambitious Pashto warrior, Bahlol Lodi ascended the throne of Delhi as Bahlol Shah Ghazi. The dynasty founded by him lasted 75 years, ending with the defeat and death of his grandson, Ibrahim Lodi in the Battle of Panipat in 1526 against the Mughal conqueror Zaheer od-Din Mohammad Babar. The Lodis patronized Persian language and culture. Several histories were written and poetical works composed during their rule, such as the "Mathnavi Mehr va Mah". The second king, Sikandar Lodi, had medical books translated into Persian from Sanskrit.

512 solar years ago, on this day in 1506 AD, the Lisbon Massacre or the Easter Slaughter began in the capital of Portugal, when the Catholics, joined by Christian sailors from other European lands, anchored in the Tagus, persecuted, tortured, killed, and burnt at the stake hundreds of people who were accused of being Jews and, thus, guilty of heresy.

243 solar years ago, on this day in 1775 AD, the armed rebellion of the 13 New England colo-nies against the British crown - also known as the American Revolutionary War - started with a victory of the colonists at Battle of Concord.

211 solar years ago, on this day in 1807 AD, the British forces, following their failure to con-front the Egyptians, withdrew from Alexandria. The British plot was to seize Egypt in order to pressure the Ottoman Empire, but the Egyptian ruler, Mohammad Ali Pasha, with the assistance of Egyptian people and ulema, who had issued a fatwa for Jihad against the invading troops, de-fended the country.

194 solar years ago, on this day in 1824 AD, English poet, George Gordon Byron, died of se-vere bleeding at the age of 36 in Greece, where he was inciting the Greeks to rebel against the Ottoman Turkish Empire by planning to attack the fortress of Lepanto, at the mouth of the Gulf of Corinth. A controversial figure, his works are sentimental and critical. His first collection of poems was "Hours of Idleness". His other works include "The Prisoner of Chillon", and "Childe Harold". He led an unprincipled life, travelling around Europe and indulging in scandal-ous affairs.

179 solar years ago, on this day in 1839 AD, the Treaty of London established the new country Belgium as a kingdom and guaranteed its neutrality. Made up of ethnic Dutch, French and Ger-man speakers, its capital Brussels today is the headquarters of the 28-nation European Union (EU).

136 solar years ago, on this day in 1882 AD, English naturalist, Charles Darwin, died. He is the author of the controversial theory of evolution which he presented in "Survival of the Fittest," and "On the Origin of Species." His theories have been refuted by both Christian and Muslim scientists and scholars as absurd.

112 solar years ago, on this day in 1906 AD, French physical chemist and co-winner of the No-bel Prize for Physics in 1903, Pierre Curie died at the age of 46.

109 solar years ago, on this day in 1909 AD, Howard Baskerville, a 24-year old American Pres-byterian preacher in Iran, was shot dead while trying to break the siege of Tabriz as a defender of the new Iranian constitution. Born in North Platte, Nebraska, he came to Iran in 1907, and taught English and geometry in the American Memorial School in Tabriz. In the spring of 1909, during the Constitutional Revolution of Iran, he decided to raise a volunteer force to defend the people. Despite attempts to discourage him by the American consul in Tabriz, William F. Doty, he led about a hundred volunteers to help defend the besieged city against the British-backed Qajar troops of Mohammad Ali Shah.

80 solar years ago, on this day in 1938 AD, the Jurist, Ayatollah Seyyed Najm ul-Hassan the founder of Jame' Nazemiyya of Lucknow, the oldest Shi'ite Muslim religious institution of In-dia, passed away at the age of 75.

57 solar years ago, on this day in 1961 AD, Cuba's air force shot down 9 of the 16 US aircraft used by the American-backed invaders and killed 114 of the insurgents, making the rest of the invasion force to surrender, thereby defeating the sinister plot of Washington to overthrow the government of Fidel Castro.

30 solar years ago, on this day in 1988 AD, the US launched unprovoked attacks on Iranian na-val forces in the Persian Gulf in support of Saddam the Ba'th minority dictator of Baghdad, in an operation codenamed 'Praying Mantis'. This was the largest naval battle since World War II. The Iranian navy put up a brave fight in the face of heavy odds with the frigates Sahand and Joshan challenging the American ships, along with a flotilla of speed boats backed by aircraft. Because of superior fire power, the US navy damaged Joshan and sank a few boats, but after an exchange of missile volleys with Sahand, it backed off. Earlier the Americans had scuttled the merchant ship Iran Ajr and attacked Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf.

25 solar years ago, on this day in 1993 AD, following the attack of FBI on the Headquarters of Davidian Sect in Waco, Texas 80 men, women and children were brutally killed for opposing the Godless policies of the US regime.

23 solar years ago, on this day in 1995 AD, in Oklahoma City, US, a large car bomb exploded at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building killing 168 people and injuring 500 including many chil-dren in the building's day care center.

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

Iran Hosts 35th Int'l Holy Qur'an Contest

TEHRAN (MNA) - Head of Endowment and Charity Affairs Organization Ali Mohammadi said that 370 reciters and memorizers from 84 countries will participate in 35th International Holy Quran Competitions on April 19-26 in Tehran.

Speaking in a news conference, Mohammadi pointed to the orders and commands of pure religion of Islam for all Muslims across the world and said, "Pure religion of Islam has defined specific instruction for anyone individually, so that these heavenly orders should be acted precisely."

In addition to the individual orders, subjects have been imposed as a collective and group rule for Muslims, so that obeying these types of rules is necessary for all, he maintained.

He pointed to the slogan of this year's competition of Holy Quran entitled "One Nation, One Book"



and said, 'unfortunately, enemies of Islam raise the individual rules and regulations, rather, Islamic social rules are much more important.'

In fact, if a person is indifferent to others, he or she is not duly called 'Muslim', he reiterated.

Today, the main problem of Islamic

Ummah is this that these people do not act based on Quranic instructions, Mohammadi reiterated.

Elsewhere in his remarks, head of Endowment and Charity Affairs

Organization pointed to the organizing 35th round of International Holy Quran Competitions and added, "in this edition of the competitions, representatives of 84 countries will take part in five sections of the competitions concurrently."

A Quranic Research Semina will also be held on the sidelines of this round of competition, he said, adding, "International Quranic Researches Seminar will be held today in the holy city of Qom, so that 1,115 domestic and foreign articles have thus far been sent to the Secretariat of the Seminar at large."

In conclusion, Mohammadi said that the Holy Quran belongs to the Islamic Establishment and called on all responsible officials to take effective steps for better organizing this round of competitions.

Elevation in Buildings Can Affect Our Decisions



WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - New research shows that elevation in an office building can increase someone's willingness to take financial risks because it makes people feel more powerful.

"When you increase elevation, there is a subconscious effect on the sense of power," says lead author Sina Esteky, PhD, an assistant professor of marketing in the business school at Miami University. "This heightened feeling of power results in more risk-seeking behavior."

The researchers analyzed data from more than 3,000 hedge funds throughout the world that accounted for assets over \$500 billion. They correlated the level of volatility of the

fund with the floor level of the firm - which ranged from the first to the 96th floor. The researchers found a slight but significant correlation between increased elevation and the volatility of the fund.

Although the implications of these findings could be unsettling for consumers who are relying on themselves or paid experts to make rational choices, the elevation effect vanished when participants were informed that floor level influences behavior, Esteky explains. The effect also disappeared when people could not see that they were on a higher floor level, such as those in cubicles without a window view.

FIFF Special Guests Hold Press Conference



TEHRAN (Dispatches) - Fajr International Film Festival has arranged for the special guests of the festival to attend a press conferences with the Iranian and international press.

Also, 10 prominent critics will write about films in competition for the festival's main bulletin, the Fiff Media Manager Keyvan Kassirian said.

The critics include Saeed Aqiqi, Shadmehr Rastin, Kamyar Mohsenin, Saeed Qotbizadeh, Majid Eslami, Antonia Shoraka, Homa Tavassoli, Amir Pouria, Mohsen Azarm, and Mehrzad Danesh.

Kassirian said the organizers will also publish catalogues in Persian and English languages, providing information about key events and programs, jury members, films and guests. Other main activities of the press office include publishing books for guests and journalists.

Kassirian said the press area is the festival's main platform that publishes news, giving the general public free access to some content in Persian and English languages, such as events, content and services.

Established in 1982, the Fiff celebrates cultural exchange, displays creative achievements of highly acclaimed cineastes and pays tribute to local and international films.

Since its establishment, the Fajr International Film Festival

has played a vital role in the development of Iranian Cinema.

Directed by Reza Mirkarimi, the 36th edition of the festival is slated for April 19-27, 2018, in the Iranian capital city of Tehran.

Picture of the Day



This is one of the best-preserved Qajar-era houses, located in the Fahadan neighborhood in Yazd, which belonged to Haj Muhammad Ibrahim Lari and was built in 1863 or 1864.

Courtesy: Tasnim News Agency