

This Day in History

(June 19)

Today is Wednesday; 29th of the Iranian month of Khorrad 1398 solar hijri; corresponding to 15th of the Islamic month of Shawwal 1440 lunar hijri; and June 19, 2019, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

2259 solar years ago, on this day in 240 BC, Greek astronomer and mathematician, Eratosthenes, estimated the circumference of the earth. As director of the library of Alexandria in Ptolemaic Egypt, he read in a papyrus book that in the city of Syene (present day Aswan) at noon approaches on the summer solstice (longest day of the year), shadows of temple columns grow shorter, disappearing completely at noon when the sun is directly overhead. While at the same time, 843 km away to the north in Rhacotis (the ancient Egyptian city on which Alexandria was founded), where because of the time difference, a rod could cast a pronounced shadow. Thus, he realized that the surface of the Earth could not be flat. It must be curved. Using the length of the rod, and the length of the shadow, as the legs of a triangle, he calculated the angle of the sun's rays. This turned out to be about 7°, or 1/50th the circumference of a circle. Taking the Earth as spherical, and knowing both the distance and direction of Syene, he concluded that the Earth's circumference was fifty times that distance.

1437 lunar years ago, on this day in 3 AH, the Battle of Ohad was imposed on Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) by the pagan Arabs of Mecca led by Abu Sufyan, at a place outside Medina near Mount Ohad, for avenging the decisive defeat they had suffered a year earlier at Badr. Ohad turned out to be a setback for Muslims, whose ranks were infiltrated by hypocrites. In the initial encounter, the Muslims managed to repel the heavily-armed Arab pagans, but ignoring the instructions of the Prophet the guards posted at the mountain pass, left their positions to join in the seizing of the camp baggage of the fleeing Meccans. At this juncture, one of the infidel commanders, named Khaled bin Waleed, who lay in ambush, burst upon the Muslims, martyring several of them and forcing most of the companions of the Prophet to flee the battlefield. The Prophet himself was injured and lost some of his teeth. However, thanks to the valour of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (AS), the day was saved for the Prophet and for Islam, although in the process the Prophet's brave uncle, Hazrat Hamza (AS), was martyred by the Abyssinian Wahshi, who was ordered by his mistress, Hind bint Utbah, the wife of Abu Sufyan (mother of Mu'awiyah and grandmother of Yazid), to tear out his victim's liver and bring it to her for chewing. Thus, without the least doubt, Islam is indebted to the valour of Imam Ali (AS), in whose praise on the Day of the Battle of Ohad the angels were heard chanting: "There is no braver youth than Ali, and no sharper sword than Zu'l-Feqar."

1437 lunar years ago, on this day in 3 AH, the eminent Islamic poet and preacher, Abu at-Tufail Amer Kan'ani, was born. As a steadfast follower of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS), his poems are in praise of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) and the blessed Ahl al-Bayt.

1188 lunar years ago, on this day in 252 AH, Seyyed Abdul-Azim al-Hasani, a prominent descendant of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), was martyred in Rayy, where his shrine, in what is now the southernmost suburb of the Iranian capital, Tehran, is a site of pilgrimage for people from all over the world. A pious scholar of repute, he was fifth in descent from the Prophet's elder grandson and 2nd Infallible Heir, Imam Hasan Mojtaba (AS). His genealogy reads: Abdul-Azim Ibn Abdullah Ibn Ali Ibn Hassan Ibn Zayd Ibn Imam Hasan (AS). Born in Medina in the last years of the life of the Prophet's 7th Infallible Heir, Imam Musa al-Kazem (AS), he had the honour of companionship of the 8th, 9th and 10th Infallible Imams - i.e. Imam Ali ar-Reza, Imam Mohammad al-Jawad, and Imam Ali al-Hadi (peace upon them). He was sent as a missionary to Iran to enlighten the people about the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt. Because of severe persecution of the Prophet's progeny by the tyrannical Abbasid caliph, Mutawakkel, he carried out his activities with precaution, spending the days in fasting and nights in worship. Often he used to visit the grave of Hamza, a son of the 7th Imam in an orchard outside the city, and willed that he be buried nearby on his death. Among the books authored by him was a collection of the eloquent sermons of the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS), predating by over one-hundred-and-fifty years the compilation of the "Nahj al-Balagha".

1165 lunar years ago, on this day in 275 AH, the prominent Iranian Sunni Muslim compiler of hadith, Abu Dawud Sulayman Ibn al-Ash'as Sijistani, passed away in Basra at the age of 73. Of the 500,000-odd so-called hadith he collected from whomever he encountered, he chose 4,800 as "Sahih" (authentic) for inclusion in his work titled "Sunan Abi Dawud", which Sunni Muslims regard as the third of their six "canonical" hadith collections, although after due scrutiny modern scholarship amongst the Sunnis has ruled many of his hadith as "weak".

750 solar years ago, on this day in 1269 AD, King Louis IX of France ordered all Jews found in public without an identifying yellow badge of "shame" to be fined ten livres of silver. The Jews were subjected to persecution and humiliation in Christian Europe that often resulted in the burning of their localities and mass massacres, at a time when they enjoyed all rights in Muslim lands and rose to prominent positions.

396 solar years ago, on this day in 1623 AD, French author and mathematician and innovator of calculation devices, Blaise Pascal, was born. In hydrodynamics he formulated what came to be known as Pascal's law of pressure. He became religious in the waning years of his life and wrote a book on Christianity titled "Provincial Letters". He died at the age of 39.

272 solar years ago, on this in 1747 AD, Nader Shah Afshar was assassinated in Quchan, Khorasan, at the age of 59, by the captain of his guards, Salah Beg, because of his increasing cruelty, after a 11-year reign as Emperor.

240 solar years ago, on this day in 1779 AD, Mohammad Ali Khan, the 2nd ruler of the Zand Dynasty and son of its Founder, Karim Khan, died of heart attack, after some 5 months in power. His brother Abu'l-Fath succeeded him, only to be deposed two months later by his uncle, Sadeq Khan.

192 lunar years ago, on this day in 1248 AH, the scholar Shaikh Mohammad Taqi Isfahani, passed away in Isfahan. A product of the seminary of holy Najaf in Iraq, he was a student of such scholars as Shaikh Ja'far Kashef al-Gheta, Ayatollah Seyyed Mahdi Bahr al-Uloom, and Ayatollah Seyyed Mohsin Kazemini. He groomed at least 300 scholars, and wrote several books including "Hidayat al-Mustarshadin".

152 solar years ago, on this day in 1867 AD, Austrian prince, Maximilian, who had occupied Mexico a year-and-a-half earlier, was executed by freedom fighters. In 1855 President Benito Juarez of Mexico, as part of his nationalistic policies, had curtailed the undue privileges of the White minority and the power of the Catholic Church - measures that angered European powers, which led by France, invaded Mexico and imposed Maximilian as king. Juarez, however, continued his struggles against the French forces and the monarchists, and after crushing them and executing the imposed king, once again was instated as the president.

142 solar years ago, on this day in 1877 AD, the first flying object that did not need a tarmac and could vertically take off and touchdown, or remain stationary in air, was tested. Named Helicopter, it was tested by Italian inventor, Enrico Forlanini, in the Egyptian city of Alexandria. This primary model of the helicopter was later perfected by Polish expert, Igor Sikorsky, and patented in his name.

70 solar years ago, on this day in 1949 AD, prominent philosopher of the Subcontinent, Seyyed Zafar ul-Hassan, passed away in Lahore, Pakistan, at the age of 64. He wrote many books including "Revelation and Prophet", "Message of Iqbal", and "Philosophy of Islam".

58 solar years ago, on this day in 1961 AD, Britain granted independence to the tiny Persian Gulf emirate of Kuwait.

42 solar years ago, on this day in 1977 AD, Iranian author and thinker, Dr. Ali Shariati, passed away at the age of 44 in London, and his body was brought to Syria and buried in Damascus in the mausoleum of Hazrat Zainab (SA) - the granddaughter of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). Among his valuable books, mention can be made of "Islam and Mankind", "Hajj", "Marxism and Other Western Fallacies: An Islamic Critique", "Martyrdom", "A Visage of Prophet Mohammad", and "Fatimah is Fatemah."

12 solar years ago, on this day in 2007 AD, Takfiri terrorists, as part of their campaign to desecrate holy Islamic sites, triggered a deadly bomb blast at Baghdad's al-Khilani Mosque, resulting in the martyrdom of some hundred men, women, and children, and injury to 218 others.

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

Researchers Use Herbs to Treat Skin Cracks, Scars



TEHRAN (IFP) -- A group of Iranian researchers have used plant extracts to produce a cream for removing skin cracks and scars.

Cracks or lines of skin usually appear on the skin due to skin lifting, thinning, etc. The colours of these lines and their shape are differ-

ent from natural skin. You may feel itching or burning while touching the skin cracks.

These cracks usually occur during pregnancy or after delivery or with the increase of body weight. Skin cracks are not dangerous and often disappear over time based on age and type of skin care.

To eliminate these cracks, researchers at a knowledge-based company have produced a cream that boosts the production of collagen and fibroblasts and antagonistic effects against corticoids in the skin, and thus prevents skin cracks.

The ingredients of this cream are extracts of "Asiatic pennywort", vitamin E and collagen. This medicine is also used to remove scars.

The Asiatica Centella has traditionally been used thousands of years ago in East Asia, India, China, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and South Africa.

Historically, the plant has been used to treat diseases such as hepatitis, stomach ulcers, brain problems, epilepsy, diarrhea, fever, and asthma.

'Birthday Night' Goes to Scotland's XpoNorth Festival

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- Iranian award-winning short film 'Birthday Night' has been scheduled to attend the XpoNorth festival in Scotland.

Directed by Omid Shamd, the 23- minute social short will be among the 14 screenings of the Scottish festival.

A short synopsis of the flick reads, "Ahmad and Ali are two friends and business partners. On their birthday night, as they are travelling back to Ahmad's home from a job outside the city, they get involved in an accident that was awaiting them. The predicament they are entangled with brings to light some



hidden aspects of their personality to one another."

The short has attended sever-

al global events, including the Clermont-Ferrand Film Festival in France as well as the

International Amity Short Film Festival and the 6th Mercy to the Universe International Film Competition, both in Turkey.

Some of the festival attendings for 'Birthday Night' have brought it a number of awards including Best Short Film award from The 2018 edition of the Linz International Short Film Festival in Austria and the Special Jury Award at the 16th edition of the Wegiel Film Festival in Poland.

The 19th edition of the XpoNorth, which is Scotland's leading creative industries festival held in the city of Inverness, is slated for July 3-4, 2019.

Poor Oral Health Linked to Increase Liver Cancer Risk

BELFAST (Dispatches) -- Poor oral health is associated with a 75% increased risk of hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC), the most common form of liver cancer, new research has found.

The study, by researchers at Queen's University Belfast, analyzed a large cohort of over 469,000 people in the UK, investigated the association between oral health conditions and the risk of a number of gastrointestinal cancers, including liver, colon, rectum and pancreatic cancer.

Whilst no significant associations were observed on the risk of the majority gastrointestinal cancers and poor oral health, a substantial link was found for hepatobiliary cancer.

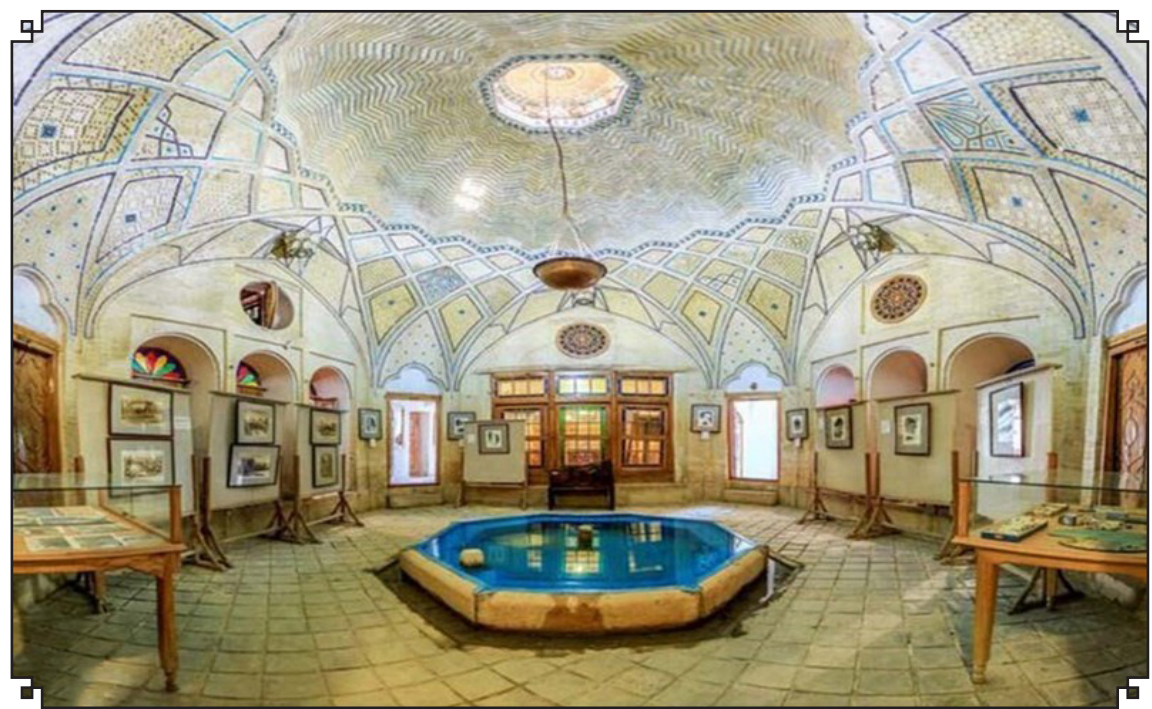
"Poor oral health has been associated with the risk of several chronic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes," explained Dr Haydee WT Jordao, from the Centre of Public Health at Queen's University Belfast and lead author of the study. "However, there is inconsistent evidence on the association between poor oral health and specific types of gastrointestinal cancers, which is what our research aimed to examine."

The biological mechanisms by which poor oral health may be more strongly associated with liver cancer, rather than other digestive cancers, is currently uncertain. One explanation is the potential role of the oral and gut microbiome in disease development. "The liver contributes to the elimination of bacteria from the human body,"

stated Dr Haydee WT Jordao. "When the liver is affected by diseases, such as hepatitis, cirrhosis or cancer, its function will decline and bacteria will survive for longer and therefore have the potential to cause more harm. One bacterium, Fusobacterium nucleatum, originates in the oral cavity but its role in liver cancer is unclear. Further studies investigating the microbiome and liver cancer are therefore warranted."



Picture of the Day



The recently-founded Meshkin Fam Art Museum occupies one of the late-Qajar mansions of Shiraz. The house is called after Foruq, a member of the powerful Qavam family.

Courtesy: Tasnim News Agency