

This Day in History

(January 8)

Today is Tuesday; 18th of the Iranian month of Dey 1397 solar hijri; corresponding to 1st of the Islamic month of Jumadi al-Awwal 1440 lunar hijri; and January 8, 2019, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

981 lunar years ago, on this day in 459 AH, the Iranian literary figure and poet, Sharaf od-Din Khaled Fini Kashani, was born in Kashan. He served as assistant to the famous Seljuqid vizier Khaja Nizam ul-Mulk Tusi, on whose assassination he resigned his post and settled in the Iraqi port city of Basra, spending his years in study and research. He has penned memoirs of his days in administrative posts at the Seljuqid court in Isfahan. It is a fine specimen of Persian prose and includes poems of prominent classical poets.

695 solar years ago, on this day in 1324 AD, Venetian traveler, Marco Polo, died at the age of 69. He was seventeen years old when he started his long journey to China, along with his father and uncle, visiting several Asian lands, including Iran, both on the way and while returning. During his return journey he escorted Princess Kokachin sent by Kublai Khan from China as a bride for his grandnephew, Arghun Khan, the Ilkhanid Mongol ruler of Iran-Iraq. It took two years for Marco Polo and the bridal party to reach Hormuz by sea from southern China, and when they arrived in Maragah, the then capital of Iran, the Khan had died and was succeeded by his son, Ghazaan Khan, who married the princess and on conversion to Islam changed his name to Mahmoud. When Marco Polo finally returned to his hometown, Venice in 1291, it was after 24 long years, but with many riches and after travelling some 24,000 kilometers. He related his memoirs to Rustichello da Pisa while both were prisoners of the Genova Republic, mentioning his observations at the court of China's Mongol Emperor, such as use of paper money, in addition to his observations in other Asian cities and lands, including Iran.

639 lunar years ago, on this day in 801 AH, the fearsome Turko-Mongol invader, Amir Timur Gurkani captured Meerut north of Delhi. Days earlier, he had ordered a general massacre in Delhi, killing tens of thousands of people, before proceeding to the banks of River Ganges to defeat a Hindu force near Tughlaqpur, and an Indian Muslim army under Mubarak Khan. He then defeated Malik Shaikha at Kutila (Hardwar), and started his return march to his capital Samarqand (in what is now Uzbekistan) through the Siwalik Hills, where he gained a victory on the 15th of Jamadi al-Awwal over Ratan Sen and captured Nagarkot (Kangra).

524 lunar years ago, on this day in 916 AH, Da'ud Khan of the Faruqi Dynasty of Khandesh in Central India, died after a reign of 7 years, during which he was totally dependent on his two brothers, Hussain Ali and Yar Ali, with the former serving as vizier of the state.

377 solar years ago, on this day in 1642 AD, Italian scientist, astronomer, and physicist, Galileo Galilei, died at the age of 78. With the usage of lens, invented by the famous Muslim astronomer, Ibn al-Haytham, he developed a telescope for observing stars. With this instrument, and with the aid of the writings of Islamic scientists, he wrote that the surface of moon has plains and altitudes and each galaxy is made of small and large stars. He also claimed as his own, the discoveries of Islamic scientists that the Sun is at the centre of the Solar System and other planets, including Earth, revolve round it. These discoveries were already made several centuries earlier in the Islamic world by the renowned Iranian astronomer, Abu-Rayhan Birouni (a follower of Prophet Muhammad's [SAWA] Ahl al-Bayt), who had proved the orbit of the Earth around the Sun as it rotates on its axis. Following the publication of Galileo's theory on the movement of earth and other planets of the solar system round the sun, the Roman Church charged him with blasphemy, forcing him to renounce his views or risk execution.

338 solar years ago, on this day in 1681 AD, the Treaty of Radzin ended the five-year war between the Ottoman Empire and the allied countries of Russia and Poland. The Turks were forced to recognize Russia's sovereignty over much of Ukraine including the capital Kiev and its adjacent districts. Russia was also granted access to the Black Sea, although the Muslim populated Crimean Peninsula remained in Ottoman hands.

239 solar years ago, on this day in 1780 AD, an earthquake of estimated magnitude 7.7 hit the city of Tabriz, Iran, killing about 80,000 people and causing major damage.

229 lunar years ago, on this day in 1211 AH, renowned Iraqi poet-scholar, Sheikh Kazem Tamimi Bahgdad who wrote under the penname "Azari" passed away in his hometown Baghdad at the age of 80. His famous work is a lengthy ode totaling a thousand couplets, titled "al-Haiyya" on the God-given merits of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA), Imam Ali (AS), and the rest of the Infallible Ahl al-Bayt, along with poetical explanation of the Fundamentals of Faith. He also wrote an excellent elegy on Imam Husain (AS) and the heartrending tragedy of Karbala.

167 solar years ago, on this day in 1852 AD, the highly efficient Iranian Prime Minister, Mirza Taqi Khan Amir Kabir, was killed on the orders of the Qajarid king, Nasser od-Din Shah in the "hammam" (bathhouse) of the famous garden-pavilion of Feen in the city of Kashan, where he was exiled, after dismissal from his post, following court intrigues by local agents of foreign powers, on loss of their illegal interests, because of his political and administrative reforms.

142 solar years ago, on this day in 1877 AD, native Amerindian Chief, Tasunke Witko, whom the Anglo-Saxon occupiers of America, called 'Crazy Horse', fought his last battle against the US Cavalry at Wolf Mountain, Montana Territory, before he was tricked into surrendering, and some months later cowardly shot to death. He took up arms against the US regime to fight encroachments on Amerindian territories and way of life of the Lakota people by the white-skinned occupiers of his homeland. In June 1876 he had defeated the better armed US army at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. The US, which was originally made up of the 13 'New England' colonies established by the British occupiers of North America, has almost wiped out the native Amerindians, as part of its expansionist policy of genocide.

131 lunar years ago, on this day in 1309 AH, Grand Ayatollah Mirza Mohammad Hassan Hussaini Shirazi, issued his historic fatwa against consumption of tobacco in Iran in order to prevent the undermining of Iranian economy by the British colonialists.

93 solar years ago, on this day in 1926 AD, Abdul-Aziz ibn Saud, chieftain of a Wahhabi clan from Najd, declared himself king of Hejaz after destroying the holy shrines in Mecca and Medina, and massacring tens of thousands of Muslims in the two holy cities, as well as in Jeddah and Ta'ef. A salaried servant of the British Empire for destabilizing Ottoman rule in Arabia and paid in India currency through the Bombay Presidency, in the 1920s he expanded his territories at the expense of fellow British agent, Sharif Hussein of the Hejaz. He also occupied parts of Yemen and seized the oil-rich lands of the Shi'ite Muslim tribal chiefs on the eastern, Persian Gulf coast of the Arabian Peninsula. In 1932, the British decided to gift him with a kingdom called Saudi Arabia, for his promise to facilitate the planting of the Zionist entity, Israel, in Palestine. The most blasphemously criminal act of Abdul-Aziz was destruction of the sacred cemeteries of Jannat al-Mo'alla in Mecca that housed the holy tombs of family members of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) and of Jannat al-Baqie in Medina that housed the holy shrines of Four of the Prophet's Twelve Infallible Heirs - Imam Hasan al-Mojtaba (AS), Imam Zain al-Abedin (AS), Imam Mohammad al-Baqer (AS) and Imam Ja'far as-Sadeq (AS).

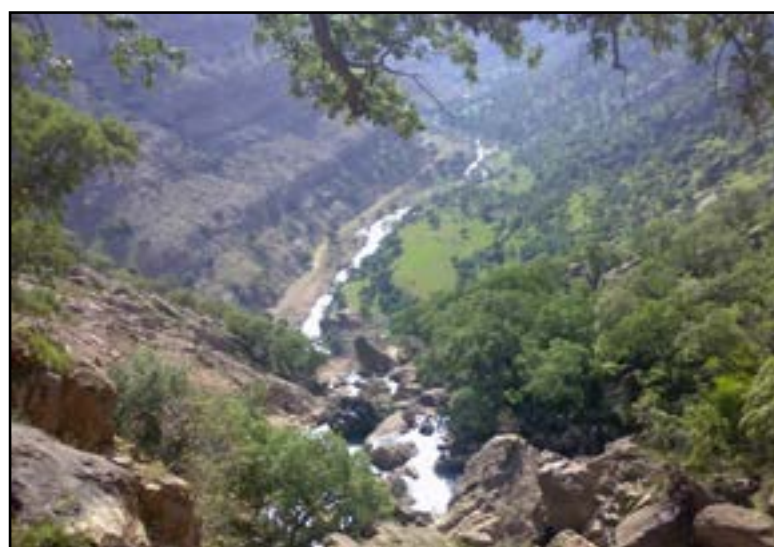
20 solar years ago, on this day in 1999 AD, Pakistan formally acknowledged that at least 50,000 Pakistanis were being kept as slaves by powerful landlords in the Sindh Province. The acknowledgement was made by Governor Moinuddin Haider. Pakistan is among the countries with the highest number and highest percentage of forced labour. According to the latest figures from Pakistan, about two million people are in bonded labour, mostly in the Sindh and Punjab provinces, particularly in brick kilns, carpet-making, agriculture, fishing, mining, leather tanning, and production of glass bangles;

18 solar years ago, on this day in 2001 AD, the Taliban militia massacred over 300 unarmed Shi'ite Muslims of the Hazara ethnic group in Yakalang in Afghanistan. Created from among Afghan Pashtun refugees in Pakistan, with Saudi money and weapons supplied by the US, the savage militia seized power in Afghanistan and terrorized the country and the people by implementing inhuman medieval European laws in the guise of Islam, until its ouster by the Americans in 2001. The Taliban, like similar terrorist groups, such as al-Qa'eda, Boko Haram, Daesh, and Lashkar-e Jhangavi, preach and practice hatred, violence, and brutal killings of Muslims, as part of the Zionist-Salafi-Imperialist plot to tarnish the image of Islam.

12 solar years ago, on this day in 2007 AD, the Iranian historian and researcher, Hojjat al-Islam Ali Davani, passed away at the age of 78. He was an expert on Islamic history and wrote 110 books and numerous articles in this regard. His books include "The Movement of Iranian Ulama", which is in ten volumes. He was compiling the "Alawid Encyclopedia" when death overtook him.

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

Japan Cooperates With Iran on Khuzestan Afforestation Project



TEHRAN (Tasnim) - The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) launched a project in southwest Iran to

establish forests and resuscitate pastures in the areas around Karun, the only navigable river in Iran.

An official at the Forests, Range and Watershed Management Organization of Iran in the southwestern province of Khuzestan told Tasnim that under an agreement signed between the Iranian organization and JICA, the Japanese agency has embarked on the afforestation project on the banks of Karun.

The joint project to create forests and protect rangelands in areas adjacent to Karun would be carried out in forestlands covering an area of 16,000 hectares in Dehdez county near the city of Izeh, the official noted.

He said Japanese experts had already carried out a major afforestation project in the neighboring province of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari for 5 years, noting that JICA has now come to Khuzestan to share its know-how and put the outcome of its research into

practice.

In August 2017, JICA signed a contract with Iran to provide water management strategies at Karun.

Under the deal, signed in Tehran, the Japanese government would help Iran carry out land use plans and water management practices to protect and improve the quality of water in Karun and increase the flow rate of the river.

The heavy discharge of the river, which flows through seven western provinces, has diminished in recent years due to natural causes, soil erosion, vegetation destruction, deforestation, land degradation and overgrazing of grasslands.

Japanese researchers have previously provided aid to Iran in saving the endangered Lake Oroumiyeh in northwest of the country.

Int'l Film Festival Announces Deadline for Submissions

TEHRAN (MNA) - Filmmakers around the world who are interested in taking part at the 12th Intl. 100 Seconds Film Festival in Iran have until 20th Jan. 2019 to submit their films.

The 12th International 100 Seconds Film Festival will be held under the theme 'moral and lifestyle' on 27th February to 1st March 2019 in Tehran.

The festival is held in two categories of 'competition' and 'path of experiment', showcasing short fiction, documentary or animation films. The 'world cinema' competition section will also screen films exclusively made by non-Iranian filmmakers.

The themes include moral and lifestyle, promotion of ethical concepts



such as abiding by the law, forgiveness, a new look at life, and breaking the monotony of everyday life.

Filmmakers around the world who

are interested in taking part at the 12th edition of the event have until 20th January to submit their films.

The first 100 Seconds Film Festival

was held in 2002. Since the 6th festival, it has been hosted at an international level.

Each year, 500 short films are selected to be shown in the festival from among 2000 films that are sent to the secretariat. Filmmakers from over 60 countries have participated in this festival so far.

The international festival has retained a significant influence in fostering brevity of films in Iran and other countries.

Considering brevity and paying attention to ethical and humanitarian subjects are what differentiate 100 Seconds from the same short film festivals around the world.

Photographers From Across World Compete at Iran Contest

TEHRAN (FNA) - Some 3,124 photographers from 78 countries have submitted 18,000 works to Mental

Health 2018 International Exhibition of Photography, vying for the cash prizes with a total value of 8,500 euros.

The event, organized by Zanjan University of Medical Sciences and supported by the Federation Internationale de l'Art Photographique (FIAP), aims to help increase the level of mental health in the society.

According to the exhibition's website, this year's event has observed a 17% increase in the number of photographers and 15% growth in the number of photos. The competitions will be held in two

parts, namely open section and mental health section.

The open section covers photos with different themes, including portrait, people, nature, wildlife, landscape, architecture, still-life photography and digital imaging.

In the mental health section, the emphasis is on psychological, social spiritual and mental health, such as happiness, social connections, children and their psychological world, effective communication, collective mutual understanding, positive parenting,

protection of women, elderly, children and vulnerable groups, acceptance of differences, acceptance of psychiatric patients, stigmatization of psychiatric disorders, psychological resilience, mental health components of public health and all other issues related to mental health.

The photos will be judged from Jan. 9-16, and the results will be announced in late January.

Winners will be granted cash prizes with a total value of 8,500 euros.

Engineers Create Inhalable Form of Messenger RNA

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Messenger RNA, which can induce cells to produce therapeutic proteins, holds great promise for treating a variety of diseases.

In an advance that could lead to new treatments for lung disease, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) researchers have now designed an inhalable form of mRNA. This aerosol could be administered directly to the lungs to help treat diseases such as cystic fibrosis, the researchers say.

The researchers showed that they could induce lung cells in mice to produce a target protein -- in this case, a bioluminescent protein. If the same success rate can be achieved with therapeutic proteins, that could be high enough to treat many lung diseases, the researchers say.

The researchers found that 24 hours after the mice inhaled the mRNA, lung cells were producing the bioluminescent protein. The amount of protein gradually fell over time as the mRNA was cleared. The researchers were able to maintain steady levels of the protein by giving the mice repeated doses, which may be necessary if adapted to treat chronic lung disease.

Picture of the Day



Festival of 'Korsi', Iran's historical low table equipped with heater, has been held in Hamam-e Qal'eh Museum of Anthropology, in Hamedan province. The ceremony marks an old Iranian tradition during winter nights, and will go through January 12.

Courtesy: Mehr News Agency