## Iran marks National Day of Omar Khayyam

Written by Mehr News Agency Thursday, 18 May 2023 09:30 -



Omar Khayyam was born on 18 May 1048 in Nishapur, in northeastern Iran, and spent most of his life near the court of the Karakhanid and Seljuq rulers in the period which witnessed the First Crusade.

A literal translation of the name Khayyam means 'tent maker' and this may have been the trade of Ibrahim his father.

The political events of the 11th Century played a major role in the course of Khayyam's life. The Seljuq Turks invaded southwestern Asia in the 11th Century and eventually founded an empire that included Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and most of Iran. The Seljuq occupied the grazing grounds of Khorasan and then, between 1038 and 1040, they conquered all of north-eastern Iran. The Seljuq ruler Toghril Beg proclaimed himself sultan at Nishapur in 1038 and entered Baghdad in 1055. It was in this difficult unstable military empire, which also had religious problems as it attempted to establish an orthodox Muslim state that Khayyam grew up.

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