

This Day in History

February 14

Today is Sunday; 25th of the Iranian month of Bahman 1394 solar hijri; corresponding to 5th of the Islamic month of Jamadi al-Awwal 1437 lunar hijri; and February 14, 2016, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1432 lunar years ago, on this day in the year 5 AH, the first granddaughter of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) was born in Medina to the proud parents, Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA) and Imam Ali (AS). She was named by the Prophet as “Zainab”, meaning “Ornament of the Father”, and grew up along with her elder brothers, Imam Hasan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS), as the epitome of virtue. Her piety, wisdom, knowledge, patience, courage and eloquence, was ably displayed during the tragedy of Karbala and its equally tragic aftermath when, she, along with her younger sister, Hazrat Omm Kulthoum (SA) and nephew, Imam Zain al-Abedin (AS), exposed the hypocrisy of the tyrannical Omayyad regime, despite being forced to stand as enchained prisoners in Damascus in the court of the despicable Yazid. Hazrat Zainab (SA), whose two youthful sons attained martyrdom in Karbala, universalized and immortalized the mission of her tragically martyred brother, Imam Husain (AS), and thus nursed back to life the pure and pristine Islamic message of her grandfather, Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). Her auspicious birthday is celebrated as Nurse’s Day in Islamic Iran, as a tribute to her selfless sacrifices for humanity.

1268 solar years ago, on this day in 748 AD, after years of secret networks and simmering discontent, the Hashemiyya Movement came to the surface as the Iranian warlord Veltzaadaan-Pour Vandaad Hormoz, known as Abu Muslim Khorasani, drove out the battle-hardened governor, Nasr ibn Sayyar, to capture Merv, capital of the Omayyad province of Khorasan, marking the consolidation of the Abbasid revolt. With the slogan of restoring rule of the vast Islamic realm (from Spain in the west till the borders of China and India in the east) to the most worthy descendent of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), the Abbasids attracted the support of both Arabs and Persians to the movement to overthrow the Godless Omayyad regime. Merv, founded in the 6th century BC by Cyrus the Great of the Achaemenid Empire, became a base for spread of the rebellion in Khorasan and Transoxiana, resulting in a string of defeats for the Omayyads in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Egypt, for emergence in 750 of a new dynasty of usurpers – the Abbasids, who claimed descent from the Prophet’s uncle Abbas, and after exploiting the sentiments of the Muslim masses, deprived the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt of their divinely-decreed right of political leadership. Abu Muslim, who ordered his partisans to don black clothes (Siyah-Jamegaan) and deceitfully named all males born that year in Khorasan as “Yayha” in memory of Yahya ibn Zaid (a grandson of Imam Zain al-Abedin (AS) the Prophet’s 4th Infallible Heir), who was martyred in Jowzajan in 742 by the Omayyads, managed to absorb the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt, whom he eventually betrayed by endorsing the caliphate of Abbas as-Saffah (the Bloodshedder) in Kufa, rather than pledge allegiance to the Prophet’s 6th Infallible Heir, Imam Ja’far as-Sadeq (AS) in Medina. Abu Muslim continued to rule Merv and Khorasan as a semi-independent ruler until he paid the price with his life of having supported the Abbasid usurpers. In 755, at the age of 55, when he went to Iraq to meet the 2nd self-styled caliph, Mansur Dawaniqi in Mada’ en (Ctesiphon the former Parthian & Sassanid capital), the latter accusing him of heresy in spite of being reminded of his key role in placing the Abbasids in power, was killed and his body thrown into the River Tigris. Throughout the Abbasid era, Merv remained the capital and most important city of Khorasan. From 813 to 818, it was effectively made capital of the Muslim world by Mamoun, the 7th self-styled Abbasid caliph, who forced the Prophet’s 8th Infallible Heir, Imam Reza (AS) to come to Merv from Medina, and after declaring him heir-apparent against his will, martyred him through poisoning in Tous (Mashhad). Merv, which for over two millenniums was an integral part of Iran, was seized in 1785 by Shah Murad the Emir of Bukhara, and is presently part of the Republic of Turkmenistan.

1115 lunar years ago, on this day in 322 AH, Qaher-Billah, the 19th self-styled caliph of the usurper Abbasid regime, was deposed after only two years of rule; and when in the state of drunkenness he refused to abdicate, his eyes were blinded, and he was cast into prison. Eleven years later he was freed, and was sometimes seen in beggar’s rags and wooden sandals – a sad contrast to his high-sounding title “al-Qaher-Billah” which means “Victorious by the Will of God.” He died in poverty in 339 AH at the age of 54, six years after his release from prison and 17 years after losing the caliphate. The caliphate was given to Qaher-Billah when his profligate brother Muqtadir-Billah was deposed, beaten and killed by the courtiers, who feared that the latter’s son might avenge his father’s death. Qaher turned out to be even worse, and went to every excess of cruelty and extortion. He tortured his stepmother (mother of Muqtadir) to squeeze wealth from her. He then walled alive his nephew, the son of Muqtadir, in order to remove any rival. Qaher was succeeded by a nephew who survived, named Raazi-Billah, who during his 7-year rule returned the vast orchard of Fadak to the direct descendants of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). Fadak was the personal property of the Prophet and was situated north of Medina near Khaybar. The Prophet had given it to his daughter, Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA), who used its revenues for the upkeep of the poor and destitute. After the Prophet passed away, the regime in Medina seized Fadak by forging a hadith alleging that Prophets do not leave inheritance and whatever they leave is the property of Ummah. Hazrat Fatema (SA) defended her rights by citing the ayahs of the holy Qur’an which speak of Prophet Solomon inheriting Prophet David, and Prophet Yahya inheriting Prophet Zachariah.

667 solar years ago, on this day in 1349 AD, over a thousand Jews were publicly burned to death by Christian mobs while the remainder of their population was forcibly driven away from the German city of Strasbourg, as part of the pogroms, the Church used to frequently conduct against the followers of Judaism in Europe, at a time when Jews living in Islamic lands enjoyed all the freedom and privileges of Muslims, even rising to post of ministers. The massacre followed the deadly bubonic plague of 1348 which was blamed on the presence of Jews in Christian lands. The practices and behaviour of the Jews was also partly responsible for such massacres, because the Jews played the role of money-lenders and manipulated the economy, which brought about serious problems. European chroniclers report that the Jews were so arrogant that they were unwilling to grant anyone else precedence, and those who dealt with them, could hardly come to an agreement with them. This ruthlessness of the Jews, coupled with their slandering of Prophet Jesus (AS) and his Virgin mother, Mary (SA), used to be the reason for their frequent massacres by Christians in Europe. Until the beginning of the 18th century, Jews were forbidden to remain in town in any European country after 10 pm, and heavy taxes were levied on them, including a special tax to be paid for any horse that a Jew would ride or bring into the city.

533 solar years ago, on this day in 1483 AD, the founder of the Moghul Dynasty of South Asia, Zaheer od-Din Babar, was born in Andijan in the Ferghana Valley in what is now Uzbekistan. Son of the local ruler, Omar Sheikh – a great-grandson of Amir Timur – on his mother’s side, he was grandson of Yunus Khan, the ruler of Moghulistan and thus a direct descendent of the fearsome Genghis Khan. Like the rest of the Timurids, Babar had embraced Persian language and culture, although his mother tongue was Chaghatay Turkic. In his obsession to take control of Samarqand he lost Ferghana as well, on being defeated by Obaidullah Khan Shaibani Khan, the ruler of the Uzbeks, who were newcomers to the region and were fast displacing the local Tajiks (Persian speaking). He accepted Shah Ismail I, the founder of the Safavid Empire of Iran, as suzerain, after rejecting demands from the Ottoman Sultan to acknowledge him as overlord. This alliance enabled him to chalk out an independent kingdom in Kabul, which he used as a base to recapture Samarqand with Safavid help, but soon lost it. Later with his combined Tajik and Turkic military, he conquered the northern parts of the Subcontinent by defeating the Afghan king, Ibrahim Lodhi of Delhi at the Battle of Panipat in 1526 and then routing the huge Rajput-Afghan joint army of Rana Sanga in 1527 to establish the Moghul Empire. He was a poet in both Persian and his Turkic, and was a devotee of Prophet Mohammad’s (SAWA) Ahl al-Bayt.

455 lunar years ago, on this day in 982 AH, the exegete of the Holy Qur’an, Mohammad Mostafa Imadi, popularly known as Abu’s-Saud passed away. Born in the vicinity of city of Istanbul, in western Turkey, he was fluent in Turkish, Persian, and Arabic. He also wrote poetry in both Persian and Arabic. He focused upon the social topics of his community, and has left behind numerous books, including “Tafsir Abi’s-Saud”, “Du’a Namah”, and “Qanoun Namah”.

237 solar years ago, on this day in 1779 AD, Captain James Cook, who is supposed to have discovered Australia, was killed by Hawaiians near Kealakekua on Hawaii Island at the age of 50 for his arrogant colonialist intentions. He spent several years surveying the coasts of Labrador and Newfoundland. He made three expeditions to the Pacific on supposedly scientific trips that were a cover for forcing islands to submit to Britain’s colonial rule.

78 solar years ago, on this day in 1938 AD, illegal Zionists migrants from Europe, who formed the Palmach terrorist outfit in British-ruled Palestine, stormed the Palestinian village of Sa’ sa, and for two days indulged in the massacre of men, women, and children, killing over 60 Muslims, as part of their ethnic cleansing campaign to create the illegitimate state of Israel.

71 solar years ago, on this day in 1945 AD, Britain and the US jointly conducted the deadliest bombardment of World War 2 by using a total of 1,773 aircraft to flatten German cities and towns. For three continuous days bombs were rained on population centres, turning them into rubble and killing at least 250,000 men, women and children.

27 solar years ago, on this day in 1989 AD, the Father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (RA), issued the historic death verdict against the Indian-born British apostate, Salman Rushdie, for writing the blasphemous book “The Satanic Verses”, days after the devilish novel led to shedding of Muslim blood in India and Pakistan. Rushdie, who was commissioned by the Zionists and certain western regimes for writing this sacrilegious book to insult Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), Prophet Abraham (AS), and the sanctities of Islam, has been hiding ever since under protection of Britain to escape execution. World Muslims and all conscientious people hailed the Imam’s dynamic fatwa, while the 57-nation Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) endorsed it. As per divine laws the Late Imam’s fatwa is irrevocable since it concerns an unrepentant apostate born of Muslim parents (Murtad-e Milli).

11 solar years ago, on this day in 2005 AD, former Lebanese Premier, Rafiq Hariri, was assassinated by Israeli agents in a bomb blast in Beirut. The US and its proxies in Lebanon by setting up a Kangaroo tribunal under the UN, first tried to put the blame on Syria, and then on the legendary anti-terrorist movement, the Hezbollah, but to no avail, since all documented evidence points in the direction of the Zionist entity.

5 solar years ago, on this day in 2011 AD, as part of the Islamic Awakening, the people of the Persian Gulf island state of Bahrain launched their peaceful uprising against the repressive Aal-e Khalifa minority regime, through a series of mass demonstrations in the capital Manama, calling it the “Day of Rage”. The people’s demand for democratic changes, including end of discrimination against the long-suppressed Shi’ite Muslim majority, was met with tear gas and bullets. The first martyr of the peaceful uprising this day was 21-year old Abdul-Hadi Saleh Ja’far Mushaima. The “Maidan Lu’lu” (Pearl Square) soon became the site of peaceful mass protests that were savagely attacked by the regime with the help of Saudi Arabian soldiers who desecrate mosques and Hussainiyahs, and burn copies of the holy Qur’an.

4 solar years ago, on this day in 2012 AD, US filmmaker Sean Christopher Stone embraced the truth of Islam in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and added “Ali” to his name in honour of Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS), the dear cousin, son-in-law and divinely-decreed heir of the Almighty’s Last Messenger to all mankind, Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). Son of the famous film director, Oliver Stone, he told a news conference, following his conversion: “It’s a mistake to believe that Islam is antagonistic towards Judaism and Christianity. What we need is to understand each other’s beliefs and to establish dialogue. The most important thing is I hope I can help Americans to understand the true nature of Islam. I feel good when I enter a mosque. I believe there is only one God.”

He is currently making a documentary focusing on Jinns of genie – a species of semi intelligent shadowy beings created of fire, unlike the human beings who is essence is of clay.

(Courtesy: IRIB English Radio – <http://english.irib.ir>)

Tehran, Melting Pot of Cultures During 34th Fajr Intl. Theater Fest.



TEHRAN (MNA) – **Tehran was host to one of the greatest international cultural events in the country this February, the 34th Fajr International Theater Festival.**

This January, all theater stages as well as some outdoor public spaces in Tehran were host to a great cultural event called Fajr International Theater Festival (FITF) with over 300 high-quality plays from 9 foreign countries and various provinces across the country wooing the audience and cultivating their taste in high art.

The highlight of the international section of Fajr Theater Festival which was enjoying its 34th year was the participation of renowned German director Thomas Ostermeier with his stage production of William Shakespeare’s masterpiece

‘Hamlet’. The play had three performances on three days at Vahdat Hall, the capital’s only opera house, to a completely sold-out event. It did not come as a surprise to anyone that Ostermeier took home the festival’s grand prix.

But Hamlet, magnificent and impressive as it was, was not the only noteworthy event of the festival. Norway also participated in the 34th FITF with Henrik Ibsen’s controversial, yet beautifully-written play ‘Hedda Gabler’ by Norwegian director Marianne Roland’s troupe. Although the stage was unconventional and the seats were very limited and the translated subtitle was in English rather than Persian – one could almost think the performance was a private event, the performance itself was powerful and left quite a linger-

ing effect on the audience who had been lucky enough to have secured themselves a seat for this Norwegian production.

Japan’s ‘The Shadow Game’ by Dazzle Dance Company dominated the stage in Vahdat Hall with four performances in two days, each time to an enthusiastic, crowded audience. The art performance which had employed elements of street dance and electronic music and infused it with an interesting plotline was aesthetically beautiful and fluidly moving and would have easily won an award in the section of Best Dancing Moves if the festival actually had one.

As it were, the festival’s international section recognized the following categories: Best Makeup Artist (won by Maria Hajiha for ‘Crime and Punishment’, Iran), Best Music (won by Music band for ‘Cenmar Sacrifice Séance’, Iran), Best Clothes Designer (won by Ehsan Falahatpisheh for ‘A Journey to the Farthest Away’, Iran), Best Stage Design (won by Reza Gouran for ‘The Night Sings its Songs’, Iran), Best Actor (won by Lars Eidinger for ‘Hamlet’, Germany), Best Actress (won by Soudeh Sharhi for ‘Crime and Punishment’, Iran), Best Script (won by Amin Ebrahimi for ‘A Song for You’, Iran), and Best Director (won by Iman Afsharian for ‘Crime and Punishment’, Iran).

The festival’s Special Award went to ‘When We Dead Awaken’ based on a play by Henrik Ibsen and directed by Shahab Agahi, Iran, while Thomas Ostermeier snatched the Grand Prix for ‘Hamlet’.

While Hamlet was the only foreign performance that was awarded, Farindokht Zahedi, one of the juries for the international section was of the opinion that foreign plays should not participate in the competition section of the festival and awards should only be granted to Iranian productions as an incentive to encourage them for producing stage performances that would be chosen for international events.

In any event, all productions were good enough to have been selected for Fajr Theater Festival and the tickets were all pre-sold so quickly and the attending audience were so great in number that many had to sit on the floor or the stairs to watch a particular play. One would think half of the population in Tehran had at least watched a play or two during the festival. For some reason, Iranians love the theater, perhaps even more so than the cinema, and when they are presented with a chance to sit down before a foreign-produced performance, to get introduced to theatre projects from other cultural backgrounds and experience a different kind of performance art, they will rush in without a second thought.

Kids Should Be Told Stories at least Once a Week

Kayhan International Culture Desk

Iranian poet and writer of Children’s books, Jafar Ebrahimi, advised parents to tell stories or sing lullabies to their children at least once a week.

According to the public relations and international affairs Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Adolescents, comparing the emotional impact of traditional method of storytelling with that of new methods - with the help of new means of communication, Ebrahimi emphasized that each method has its own impact, but nevertheless, parents should continue telling stories to their children, Mehr News Agency reported following the 18th International Festival of Storytelling.

However, Ebrahimi believes that the objective of storytelling is not educational and that the story teller can use the story as a tool to strengthen children’s imagination as to enjoy beauties, raise the level of aesthetics and provide a suitable background for identification in the story.

Furthermore, the writer cited storytelling and stories as a great influence in making children interested to read.

The 18th International Storytelling Festival which runs through Feb 27 to 30, is held at the Cultural Center of Intellectual Development of Children and Adolescents located on Hejab street.



Iranian poet and writer of Children’s books, Jafar Ebrahimi.

Your Shoes May Become Next Energy Source

TEHRAN (IRNA) - **Thanks to a new energy harvesting and storage technology, developed by the bright minds at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, our shoes may become our next energy source.**

Our phones seem to have a nasty habit of running out of juice when we’re running about, but soon, we may be able to harness all that running energy to the benefit of our mobile devices.

A paper, published late last year in Scientific Reports, details how human motion could be captured and then utilized in order to power mobile devices. And this may spell just the beginning of power-generating shoes, yahoo.com reported.

Power-generating shoes could be especially useful for the military, as soldiers currently carry heavy batteries to power their radios, GPS units, and night-vision goggles in the field. The advance could also provide a source of power to people in remote areas and developing countries that lack adequate electrical power grids.

Picture of the Day



Two Iranian music groups, Khorshid and Vaziri, performed concerts at Vahdat Hall, on Friday.

Courtesy: Mehr News Agency