

This Day in History

(April 28)

Today is Tuesday, 8th of the Iranian month of Ordibehesht 1394 solar hijri; corresponding to 9th of the Islamic month of Rajab 1436 lunar hijri; and April 28, 2015, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1376 lunar years ago, on this day in 60 AH, the infant Martyr of Karbala, Hazrat Ali Asghar (AS), was born in Medina. He was the youngest son of Imam Hussain (AS) and was only six months when he was brutally martyred by an arrow shot by the heartless Harmala bin Kahel that pierced his tender throat, when his father took him in his arms and asked the cruel forces of Yazid to at least provide some water for the thirsty infant. Every year millions of Muslims all over the world commemorate the martyrdom of the infant Ali Asghar in the month of Moharram by taking out processions of empty bloodstained cradles, followed by wailing mothers carrying children in their arms – a pathetic sight that brings tears to the eyes of even the hardest hearts.

823 solar years ago, on this day in 1192 AD, Conrad of Montferrat (Conrad I), the self-styled king of the Latin Kingdom Jerusalem that had ceased to exist in 1187, was executed in Tyre, southern Lebanon, by Ismaili Muslims. Born in the northern Italian town of Montferrat near Piedmont, he was one of the main participants of the Third Crusade launched by European Christians on Palestine and Syria in a vain bid to retake the recently liberated city of Bait ol-Moqaddas. An opportunist without any principles, he made enemies both amongst his fellow Europeans and the Muslim defenders. The contemporary Muslim historian Ibn al-Athir calls him “*devil incarnate*”, and on the news of his death wrote: “*The ruler of Tyre, and the greatest devil of all the Franks, Conrad of Montferrat – God damn him – was killed.*”

515 lunar years ago, on this day in 921 AH, the Iranian historian and poet, Zain ol-Abidin Ali bin Abdul-Momin, popular as Abdi Bek Navidi Shirazi, was born in Shiraz. His main book is a history titled “*Takmilat al-Akhar*”, in which he has chronicled events beginning from the emergence of the Safavids till the year 978 AH. His main poetical works are three Khamsas, composed in imitation of the celebrated Nizami Ganjavi. Of these, “*Sahifat-al-Ikhlis*” is mostly a descriptive account of the palaces, gardens, and artists of Qazvin (the then Safavid capital). His Divan of Persian poetry was published for the first time in Lucknow, India, in 1267 AH (1851).

510 lunar years ago, on this day in 930 AH, 10-year old Shah Tahmasp I was crowned as the Safavid Emperor of Iran, a week after the death of his father and founder of the Dynasty, Shah Ismail I. His reign of 54-years is the longest of any Muslim king of Iran, and was marked by foreign threats, primarily from the Ottomans in the west and the Uzbeks in the northeast. Upon adulthood, he was able to reassert his power and consolidate the dynasty against internal and external enemies. Although he lost Iraq and parts of Anatolia to the Ottoman invaders, his pious nature made him avoid unnecessary shedding of Muslim blood. As a result, after thwarting Ottoman designs in the Caucasus, Shah Tahmasp concluded the Treaty of Amasya, with Sultan Sulaiman, resulting in a peace that lasted 30 years and led to the development of Iran. He continued his father’s policy of enlightening the people with the teachings of Prophet Mohammad’s (SAWA) Ahl al-Bayt, and assembled at his court in Qazvin leading ulama from all over Iran, Iraq, Bahrain, and Lebanon. As a descendant of the Prophet and head of the Safavid spiritual order tracing to Safi od-Din Ardebili, he was acknowledged as suzerain by the Shi’ite Muslim sultanates of the Deccan (Southern India). Shah Tahmasp is also known for the reception he gave to the fugitive Mughal Emperor Humayun of Hindustan (Northern Subcontinent) when the latter fled the seizure of power by the Afghan warlord, Sher Shah Suri. Humayun, whose father Babar, was a protégé of Shah Ismail Safavi, was treated as a royal guest, and besides military aid to recover his kingdom, was accompanied by a large retinue of Iranian noblemen, soldiers, and artists, which signaled an important development in Indo-Iranian relations. One of Shah Tahmasp’s more lasting achievements was his encouragement of the Persian carpet industry on a national scale. He was an enthusiastic patron of the arts with a particular interest in the Persian miniature, especially book illustration. The most famous example of such work is the “*Shahnama-e Shah Tahmaspi*”, containing 250 miniatures.

473 lunar years ago, on this day in 963 AH, Ezzeddin Seyyed Hussein, the prominent scholar of the School of Prophet Mohammad’s (SAWA) Ahl al-Bayt, was martyred through poisoning at the age of 57 in the city of Sidon in what is now Lebanon. Born in the Jabal Amel region, he mastered the sciences of the day, and had attained higher degrees of Gnosticism.

128 lunar years ago, on this day in 1308 AH, the source of emulation, Ayatollah Shaikh Mohammad Hassan Aal-e Yasin, passed away at the age of 88 in Kazemayn. He studied in the seminary of holy Najaf and became Marja’ after the passing away of the celebrated Ayatollah Shaikh Morteza Ansari. Despite mastery over various branches of Islamic sciences, he wrote mainly on jurisprudence. His works include “*Asraar-al-Faqaha*”.

95 solar years ago, on this day in 1920 AD, the Russian-occupied northern part of the Iranian land of Azerbaijan, including Arran, which had broken free of Moscow’s control on the collapse of Czarist rule in 1917, was seized by the communist army of the Soviet Union after heavy fighting and massacre of at least twenty thousand Azeri Muslims. Known today as the Republic of Azerbaijan, this region should have been returned to Iran, as per the terms of the Treaties of Golestan (1813) and Turkmanchai (1828). “*Azar*” is Old Persian for fire, while “*Baijan*” is the Arabic corruption of the Persian word “*Payegaan*” meaning guardian or land. Thus, Azerbaijan means “Land of Fire”, probably because of the oil wells around what is now Baku that at times spewed fire, as recorded in ancient texts, including the travels of Marco Polo. From pre-historic times this region has been the home of different Iranian tribes, such as the Scythians (Sakas). Azerbaijan had been an integral part of Iran before the emergence of the Median Empire followed by the Achaemenid, Parthians, and Sassanid Dynasties, after which it became part of the Islamic world. With the weakening of the Abbasid caliphate, the Arab governors of this region took the ancient title Shirvanshah, and became thoroughly Persianized in language and culture, promoting such poets, as the famous Nizami Ganjavi. Although nomadic Turkic tribes fleeing the Mongol invasion of Central Asia had settled in the pastures, it was only with the influx of large numbers of Turkic Shi’ite Muslims from Anatolia as supporters of the Safavid Dynasty that the Old Iranian Azari dialect of the region began to be replaced with what is now called Azeri Turkic. After the Safavids, the Afsharid, Zandi and the Qajarid dynasties of Iran held sway over this area until its seizure by the Russians in the first half of the 19th century. After the collapse of the Russian Empire during World War I, northern Azerbaijan, together with Armenia and Georgia set up the short-lived Trans-Caucasian Democratic Federative Republic. When the republic dissolved in May 1918, northern Azerbaijan declared independence as the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. While the Azeri army was engaged in putting down an Armenian revolt in Qarabagh, the Soviets invaded and occupied this land.

78 solar years ago, on this day in 1937 AD, Saddam, the future brutal dictator of the repressive Ba’th minority regime of Iraq, was born, of doubtful paternity, in the village of al-Owja near Tikrit. As a teenage thug he was involved in social crimes including murder. At the age of 29, he joined the Ba’th Party. After the coup staged by the Ba’thists in 1968 under command of General Ahmad Hassan al-Bakr, he was instated as deputy president. In July 1979, a few months after the triumph of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the US and Britain replaced Bakr with Saddam, in order to use his savage nature to brutally suppress the Iraqi Muslim people from following the footsteps of Iran to determine the fate of their country. After massacring thousands of members of Iraq’s Shi’ite Arab majority, including the leading ulama such as Ayatollah Seyyed Baqer as-Sadr, and after expelling tens of thousands of Iraqis, Saddam, at the behest of his masters in the West, invaded the Islamic Republic of Iran to try to topple the government. He utterly failed and the war dragged on for eight years during which he was supplied with internationally banned chemical weapons by the West for use against both the Iranian and Iraqi peoples. Two years after the end of his 8-year war, Saddam occupied Kuwait. This led to a US-led war against him, but following the retreat of his forces from Kuwait, he was allowed by the US to again massacre Iraqi Shi’ite Muslims by hundreds of thousands, and to desecrate the holy shrines of the Imams of Prophet Mohammad’s (SAWA) Household in Karbala and Najaf. Finally, in 2003 when his own godfathers, the Americans and the British, launched an attack to remove him, he fled and hid, until he was caught and jailed. The bloodthirsty Saddam was responsible for the death of several million people, including Iraqis and Iranians. He was executed by hanging in 2006.

71 solar years ago, on this day in 1944 AD, Mohammad Alem Khan, the last ruler of the Persianized Manghit dynasty of the Emirate of Bukhara in what is now Uzbekistan, died in exile in Afghanistan. He reigned from 1911 to 30 August 1920 over an area between the Amu Darya and Syr Darya Rivers. Its core territory was the land along the lower Zarafshan River, while its urban centres were the cities of Samarqand and Bukhara. Formerly part of successive Iranian empires, following the death of Nader Shah Afshar of Iran in 1747, the Manghits rebelled and replaced the Iranian governors, and in 1785 set up the Emirate of Bukhara. In 1868, Bukhara lost a war against Czarist Russia, which annexed much of its territory. In 1873 Bukhara became a Russian protectorate. In 1917, with end of Czarist rule, Alem Khan asserted his independence. In August 1920, the Soviets defeated Alem Khan, who sought refuge in Afghanistan.

69 solar years ago, on this day in 1945 AD, Italy’s Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Petacci, were executed by Italian partisans as they attempted to flee the country, following the surrender of his forces to the Allied armies.

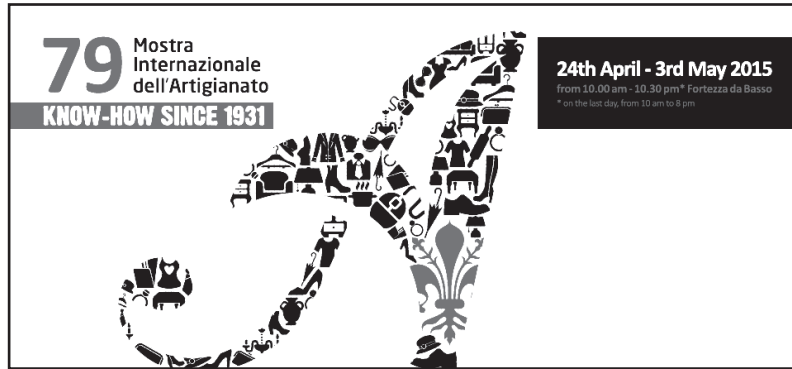
48 solar years ago, on this day in 1967 AD, World Heavyweight Boxing Champion, Muhammad Ali, was illegally stripped of his title under pressure from the US government for refusing to be inducted into the army during the unjust American war in Vietnam. He openly said the Vietnamese had done nothing against him or the other American people, and Islam forbids Muslims from getting involved in unnecessary wars. Of Afro-American stock and named Cassius Clay, he had embraced Islam, and remains the only three-time World Heavyweight Champion; winning the title in 1964, 1974, and 1978.

34 solar years ago, on this day in 1981 AD, Iran’s helicopter pilot, Captain Ali Akbar Shiroudi, attained martyrdom during an operation in western Iran against Saddam’s Ba’thist occupation forces. Earlier, he had played a key role by clearing the border areas from the foreign-backed mercenaries. In a famous operation with two other helicopters, his team blew at least 50 tanks.

27 solar years ago, on this day in 1988 AD, the Wahhabi regime of Saudi Arabia, severed diplomatic relations with Iran, in the aftermath of the July 31, 1987 massacre of over 400 mostly Iranian pilgrims in the holy city of Mecca during the annual Hajj, when even the killing of an insect is religiously forbidden. For three years Iran did not send any pilgrims to the House of God until the restoration of diplomatic ties in 1991.

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

Italy Impressed by Exhibition of Iranian Handicrafts



TEHRAN (MNA) – The 79th edition of Florence International Handi-

crafts Trade Fair 2015 is being held in the presence of Iranian artists in the northern Italian city.

The oldest handicrafts exhibition in Europe and one of the most important events in the world, Florence Handicrafts Trade Fair, has been held since 1931.

The event hosts more than 50 countries including the Islamic Republic of Iran in the northern Italian city, Florence, IRNA reported.

Artists from seven different provinces of Iran have attended the event

displaying various art works including diaphoretic carving, traditional jewelry, rugs, Batik print, glass fusing, wood art and carpet. In addition, in one of the subsidiary saloons of the exhibition, a documentary film on Iran was screened and the country’s cultural attaché in Italy Qorbanali Pourmarjan delivered a speech on the Iranian art and culture.

Opened on April 24, the 79th edition of Florence International Handicrafts Trade Fair 2015 will wrap up on May 3.

Belgrade Holds Sa’adi Poetry Night

BELGRADE (IRNA) – ‘Saadi Poetry and Wisdom Night’ was held in Belgrade to commemorate the great Persian classical poet Saadi Shirazi.

Organized by the Iranian Cultural Center in Serbia, the event was attended by Persian language lovers, Iranian and Serbian cultural figures and university professors.

In the meeting, Iran’s Cultural Attaché in Serbia Mahmoud Shalouei referred to Saadi’s status in Persian literature and said, ‘Saadi is not only a

poet, but he is also a wise scholar whose numerous travels and encounters with other nations made him produce a treasure trove of thoughts and wisdom through his masterpieces.’

He also discussed Saadi’s ideology and recited a number of his rhymes.

Some of Saadi’s books such as ‘Bustan’ were featured on the sidelines of the event.

Saadi’s best known works are ‘Bustan’ completed in 1257 AD and ‘Golestan’ (The Rose Garden) in 1258 AD.

International Recognition for Tehran’s Eco-Schools

TEHRAN (un.org.ir) - Enthusiasm and youthful energy filled the main auditorium today at Tehran’s Department of the Environment as students and educators from 11 Eco-Schools within Tehran assembled to witness international recognition from the Foundation for Environmental Education for Iran. This recognition was not only for Iran’s achieving full membership status but also for being awarded the World’s Green Star for promoting environmental education.

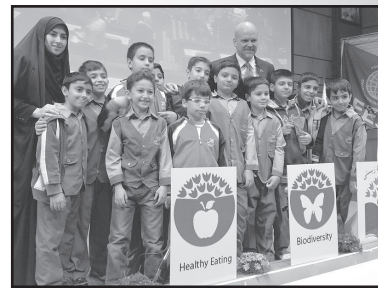
The ceremony included student-led performances, films and the presentation of awards to each of the participating schools.

Also in attendance was Vice President for the Environment, Madam Massoumeh Ektebar, popular television and sporting personalities including famous footballer, Hamid Esteli, and the UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Gary Lewis.

“Mother Earth does not need us,” the UN Resident Coordinator said as he addressed the young audience, “we need Mother Earth.”

Mr. Lewis continued his comments by drawing attention to the 10 objectives of the action plan for Eco-Schools worldwide: waste, sustaining our world, water, energy, climate change, biodiversity, healthy eating, litter, school grounds and global citizenship.

“You are the global citizens of the future,” the Resident Coordinator concluded, “and the future of our planet lies in your hands.”



Mr. Gary Lewis and children from one of Tehran’s Eco-Schools at the Department of Environment

The Director of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) in Iran, Mr. Bahrami, also addressed the energetic audience. In his congratulatory speech to all the schools and their representatives, Mr. Bahrami made note of the many young girls present who were passionate about saving their environment.

“As a father of a young daughter myself,” Mr. Bahrami stated, “I know how active and able girls can be – particularly in caring for our environment.”

“Our girls should see Madam Ebtekar as a great role model,” continued Mr. Bahrami, “and they too can someday reflect their own abilities at the highest level.”

Vice-President Ebtekar closed the ceremony by speaking about the current global education system and the need to drive towards developing the creativity of the world’s children.

Journalism Award for the Best Coverage of the United Nations Work in I.R.Iran

TEHRAN (UNIC) - The United Nations in the Islamic Republic of Iran is pleased to announce the first Award for the distinguished, outstanding, professional and objective journalistic coverage of the UN’s work in Iran. This contest is dedicated to commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations.

Submission Guidelines

From today to 15 September 2015, the UN Information Centre in Iran will be accepting media materials about the UN’s work in Iran from individual journalists (citizens of Iran) from any print, broadcast and online media outlet, operating in Iran.

The entries can be in any journalistic format, including print, radio, television, online, photo stories, etc.

Each entry can cover the period from 24 October 2012 to 15 September 2015 and published, aired or posted by the time of the submission. Journalists should submit their work in the form of a published article for print media, DVD, compact disc or link to the aired material with TV channel logo evidence, the screenshot or URL of the web site for electronic media, etc.

The entries may be in Persian or English.

Each journalist can submit as many entries as he/she want. The authors own the copyright to their works.

The awards will be given in five categories:

Picture of the Day



Bayazid Bastami’s tomb in desert city of Shahroud- Semnan province - Iran

Courtesy: MNA