

## This Day in History

(September 7)

Today is Wednesday; 15th of the Iranian month of Mehr 1394 solar hijri; corresponding to 23rd of the Islamic month of Zi'l-Hijjah 1436 lunar hijri; and October 7, 2015, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

**1375 lunar years ago**, on this day in 61 AH, the two pre-teen sons of Muslim Ibn Aqeel, were martyred in Kufa, Iraq, by the Godless Hareth Ibn Urwah. There are two different accounts of the tragic martyrdom of 12-year Baha and 10-year Ibrahim, whose shrine is a site of pilgrimage near the town of Musayyeb. According to one version, they accompanied Muslim, who was sent as emissary to the people of Kufa by his cousin, Imam Husain (AS), the grandson of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). Following the martyrdom of their father, who had entrusted them to the care of the dubious judge, Shurray, they tried to return to Medina, were caught, jailed, escaped from prison with the help of sympathizers, then caught again and mercilessly killed by the riverside on this day in 60 AH, with their heads taken as trophies to Obaidullah Ibn Ziyad, the tyrannical Omayyad governor. The second version says the boys were with Imam Husain (AS) when he reached Karbala, were witness to history's most heartrending tragedy, made captive along with the rest of the household of the Prophet, fell behind the caravan of captives as it departed for Damascus, imprisoned for several months in Kufa, escaped from prison, wondered unknowingly into the house of their executioner, treated kindly by his wife on learning of their identity, snatched by her husband, taken to the riverside, and cruelly beheaded this day in 61 AH. Instead of the expected reward for their heads Hareth was killed by Ibn Ziyad.

**1091 lunar years ago**, on this day in 345 AH, the Islamic historian, geographer, scientist, and traveller, Abu'l-Hassan Ali ibn al-Hussain al-Mas'udi, passed away at the age of 60 near the then Egyptian capital Fustat in what would later become the city of Cairo. He was born in Baghdad and traced his lineage to the Prophet's companion, Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud. In his homeland he mastered the sciences of the day including theology, history, philosophy, and geology, in addition to learning the Persian, Sanskrit, Greek, Latin and Syriac languages. In his mid-twenties, he embarked on voyages to many Islamic and other lands that lasted almost till the end of his life. His journeys took him to most of the Persian provinces, including Armenia, Azerbaijan and other regions of the Caspian Sea; as well as to Arabia, Syria and Egypt. He also travelled to the Indus Valley and other parts of India, especially the western coast; and he voyaged more than once to East Africa. He sailed the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean, visiting Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia and China. After careful observations, he wrote his works and was one of the first to combine history and scientific geography in a large-scale work. His surviving masterpiece, titled *"Murooj az-Zahab wa Ma'aden al-Jawhar"* (Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems), is a universal geographical history. The titles of more than twenty books attributed to him are known, including several on Islamic beliefs, but most of his writings have been lost. His major work was *"Akhbar az-Zamaan"* (The History of Time) in 30 volumes. It was an encyclopedic world history, taking in not only political history but also many facets of human knowledge and activities.

**444 solar years ago**, on this day in 1571 AD, the decisive Battle of Lepanto took place on the northern edge of the Gulf of Corinth, off the western coast of the Turkish province of *Yunanistan* (now known s Greece), when a fleet of southern European Catholic maritime states, backed by the Church in Rome, managed to defeat the Ottoman navy in five hours of fighting. According to historians classifying strategic battles, a Turkish victory could have led to Western Europe being overrun by the Muslims, as was the fate of the Byzantine Empire a little more than a century earlier. Lepanto was the last major naval battle in the Mediterranean fought entirely between galleys. The Christian powers calling themselves the Holy League were made up of Spain, Spain, Sicily, Sardinia, the Kingdom of Naples, the Republic of Venice, the Republic of Genoa, the Duchy of Savoy, the Papacy of Rome, the Knights Hospitallers, and special forces from Germany, all under the command of Don John of Austria. The death during battle, of the Turkish admiral (Kapudan-e Darya), Ali Pasha, and the mounting of his severed head on the mast of the Christian fleet broke the morale of the Ottoman navy, which retreated, conceding victory to the Christian powers.

**278 solar years ago**, on this day in 1737 AD, 40 foot waves sank 20,000 small craft and killed 300,000 people in Bengal, India.

**209 solar years ago**, on this day in 1806 AD, Englishman Ralph Wedgwood secured the first patent for carbon paper, which he described as an "apparatus for producing duplicates of writings." In his process, thin paper was saturated with printer's ink, and then dried between sheets of blotting paper. His idea for the carbon paper was a byproduct of his invention of a machine to help blind people write, and the "black paper" was really just a substitute for ink. In its original form, Wedgwood's "Stylographic Writer" employed a metal stylus instead of a quill for writing, with the carbon paper placed between two sheets of paper to transfer a copy.

**108 solar years ago**, on this day in 1907 AD, Iran's first parliament (Majlis) was set up after due ratification by Mohammad Ali Shah Qajar, following triumph of the Constitutional Revolution. The constitution was drafted a year earlier and signed by the previous king, Muzaffar od-Din Shah Qajar. It was the result of the struggle of all sections of the Iranian people for their civil liberties and birthrights, led by the ulema and intellectuals. Ayatollah Shaikh Fazollah Noori inserted a clause in the constitution stating that the laws should be supervised by a panel of five leading ulema to ensure that they are not against the Shari'a. This section of the Supplementary Fundamental Laws of October 7, 1907 began by stating: *"The powers of the realm are all derived from the people; and the Fundamental Law regulates the employment of those powers."* Article 1 and 2 of the laws approved this day, established Islam as the official religion of Iran, and specified that all laws of the nation must be approved by a committee of ulema. Later, these two articles were mainly ignored by the ungodly Pahlavis, which resulted in anger and uprising of the ulema and masses, and finally overthrow of the British-installed regime and its replacement by the popular Islamic Republic System based on a new and more comprehensive constitution.

**87 solar years ago**, on this day in 1928 AD, Iranian poet and painter, Sohrab Sepehri, was born in the central city of Kashan. He published his first collection of poems *"Marg-e Rang"* (Death of Colour) in 1951, and soon another collection titled: *"Hashit Kitab"* (Eight Books). Among his other poetical works mention can be made of *"Mosafer"* (Traveler). He holds a special status in Iran's contemporary poetry, given his novel and simple language and usage of delicate and new terms in his poems. He passed away in 1980 and was laid to rest in his hometown, Kashan.

**77 lunar years ago**, on this day in 1359 AH, the erudite scholar, Shaikh Abbas Qommi, popular as Muhaddith Qommi, because of his mastery over Hadith literature, passed away in Najaf at the age of 64 and was laid to reside beside his teacher, Mirza Hussain "Muhaddith" Noori, in the courtyard of the holy shrine of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS). Born in holy Qom, after completion of preliminary studies, he left for Iraq at the age of 20 for higher studies at the famous seminary of holy Najaf, where fellow students included the well known scholars Aqa Bozorg-e Tehrani, Ayatollah Shaikh Mohammad Hassan Kashef al-Ghita, and Seyyed Abdul-Husain Sharaf od-Din Musawi (of Lebanon). He returned Iran after six years and engaged himself in the writing and compilation of Islamic books in his hometown, having acquired valuable expertise in this field in Najaf, where he assisted his teacher Muhaddith Noori in the compilation of books. At the age of 39 he shifted to holy Mashhad in a house adjacent to the blessed shrine of Imam Reza (AS) – the 8<sup>th</sup> Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). Abbas Qommi was second to none in the training of oneself, and considered it unjust to advise other people to perform supplications without having first performed himself. Thus, before delivery of manuscript to the publisher, of his famous prayer/supplication manual *"Mafatih al-Jinan"* (Keys of Paradise), he had not only gone through the book afresh over a period of one year, but also performed every supplication for each day that was recommended therein in order to observe "practice what you preach". That is why this book is considered one of the best concerning supplications and *"Ziyarat"* (pilgrimages). In addition to the famous *"Mafatih"* which is present in almost every Shi'a Muslim household in Iran and throughout the world, he authored several books in Arabic and Persian. These include *"Safinat-ul-Behaar wa Madinat-ul-Hekam wa'l-Asaar"* (Guide to study of Allamah Majlisi's famous encyclopedia *"Behaar al-Anwaar"*), *"al-Fawa'ed ar-Razawiyah fi Tarajame Ulama al-Ja'fariyah"* (Biography of Shi'a scholars), *"Muntah-al-Amaal fi Tarikh an-Nabi wa'l-Aal"* (History of the Prophet, Imams and their descendants), *Bayt ul-Ahzaan fi Mas'aeb Seyyedat-in-Niswaan"* (Martyrdom of Hazrat Fatema Zahra – SA), *"Manaaazelul Aakherah"* (Stages of Afterlife), *"Nafas ul- Mahmoom"* (Tragedy of Karbala), and *"Waqa'e al-Ayyam"* (Islamic Chronology).

**65 solar years ago**, on this day in 1950 AD, a year after establishment of the communist system, China seized Tibet, and nine years later crushed the uprising of the Tibetan people, forcing the Dalai Lama or the Buddhist religious-political to seek refuge in India, where he is still based. Tibet covers an area of almost 1.2 million sq km, and is administered as an autonomous region in China. Muslims have been living in Tibet since as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> century. In Tibetan cities, there are small communities of Muslims, known as Kachee (Kache), who trace their origin to immigrants from three main regions: Kashmir (Kachee Yul in ancient Tibetan), Ladakh and the Central Asian countries. Islamic influence in Tibet also came from Iran. After 1959 a group of Tibetan Muslims made a case for Indian nationality based on their historic roots to Kashmir and the Indian government declared all Tibetan Muslims Indian citizens later that year. Other Muslim ethnic groups who have long inhabited Tibet include Hui, Salar, Dongxiang and Bonan. There is also a well established Chinese Muslim community (gya kachee), which traces its ancestry back to the Hui ethnic group of China.

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

# Tehran, Tokyo Sign Cooperation Agreement on Science

TEHRAN (FNA)- Iranian Science Minister Mohammad Farhadi and his Japanese counterpart Hakubun Shimomura signed a first-ever agreement to promote scientific cooperation between the two countries.

According to the document, the two countries will cooperate in exchange of university students and scholars and joint research ventures.

"Implementation of this agreement will be a major stride towards

enhancing research and scientific cooperation," Shimomura said in Tehran on Monday.

In late September, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in a meeting with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani in New York said his government supports exchanges between private sectors in Iran and Japan and enforcement of trade agreements.

The Japanese prime minister, at this meeting, stressed concentration

of measures on exact implementation of nuclear agreement with the Group 5+1 (the five permanent UN Security Council members plus Germany) and said Tokyo is interested in the execution of its content.

"Tokyo wants to be active in supporting the prosperity of Iran's economy," he said.

Rouhani said Japan is a strategic partner of Iran and diplomatic, economic and cultural relations between the two countries shall fur-

ther increase.

"The nuclear deal is an opportunity for strengthening of bilateral relations," he added,"We can cooperate in transport, environment, cultural and scientific issues and modern science including in the field of peaceful nuclear energy"

"Scientific and technical centers in Iran and Japan must be in contact and increase their ties," the Iranian President added.

## Governor Welcomes Election of Tabriz as World Carpet City

TABRIZ (IRNA) - Governor General of East Azerbaijan Province Esmail Jabbarzadeh has welcomed election of Tabriz as the World Carpet City by the World Crafts Council.

'Carpet has been tied to the history of Tabriz,' he said in a meeting with visiting Asia-Pacific Executive Board members of the World Crafts Council. WCC-Asia Pacific Region President Ghada Hijjawi Qaddumi said Tabriz will become more famous by the World Carpet City title.

## Iran Ranks Second in "Asian Cinema 100"

BUSAN (IRNA) – Iran was placed second on the new list of the best Asian films of all time released by the organizers of the Busan International Film Festival in South Korea with 19 films following Japan with 26.

South Korea is ranked third with 15 films, and the oldest film chosen was "I Was Born, But..." directed by Japanese filmmaker Yasujiro Ozu in 1932.

The 20th anniversary of the Busan International Film Festival in South Korea marked its milestone with a poll of noted Asian filmmakers and international critics of Asian cinema, all of whom were asked for their top ten.

Festival organizers said they had created the list of the region's greatest films to widen the world's knowledge about its

cinematic history, AFP reported on Sunday.

The poll also rated Asia's top directors of all time with Ozu coming out ahead of Hsiao-Hsien Hou from Taiwan, and Abbas Kiarostami, whose highest-ranked film was 1994's "Close Up".

The top five films in the "Asian Cinema 100" are "Tokyo Story" (Yasujiro Ozu, 1953), "Rashomon" (Akira Kurosawa, 1950), "In the Mood For Love" (Wong Kar Wai, 2000), "The Apu Trilogy" (Satyajit Ray, 1955) and "A City Of Sadness" (Hsiao-Hsien Hou, 1989).

Asia's most successful film in terms of global box office receipts is the Oscar-winning Ang Lee-directed martial arts epic "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" (2000) from Taiwan which collected an estimated US\$128 million.

## German Company to Hold Intl. Section of Iran's Tourism Fest

TEHRAN (IRNA) – A German company will organize the international section of the 9th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition, which will be held from February 16 to 19, the exhibition secretary Ali-Baqer Nemati announced in a press conference on Monday.

The organizer of the exhibition, Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicraft Organization (CHTHO), did not give any detail about the German company.

The company is a professional corporation, which had held tourism exhibitions on theme of Central Asian and African countries previously, he explained.

The exhibition's motto is "Be Our Guest" and it will be held on the theme of "Iranian Houses".

Workshops on Halal tourism, health tourism and international opportunities of international tourism will be held on the sidelines of the event.

The festival will also host several meetings on investment opportunities in the field of tourism industry as well, he added.

The CHTHO has conducted negotiations with representatives of tourism industries from different countries to take part at the fair, Nemati said.

The exhibition also provides stands for all Iranian provinces to show their potential for tourist attractions.

The head of Tehran International Trading and Exhibition Corporation (TITEX) Farhad Aminian also explained about the showcase.

The secretary of the exhibition will receive applications online, Aminian said.

## French Media Promote Iranian Tourism

PARIS (CHN) - Francophile, mythical, refined; these are but a few words used in the French media recently to describe Iran, as the Mideast nation prepares to welcome a wave of travelers.

In a move clearly aimed at promoting Iranian tourism to Francophones, Agence France-Presse and French travel website Melyt Discovery published separate pieces on Iranian tourism in French that chronicled Iran's rise from an off-limits destination to a potential tourist hotspot.

Iran has found its way back on travel agencies' pamphlets following a surge in demand among Western tourists.

"Iran is a dream land and one of the half-dozen mythical destinations on the planet," said Jean Paul Chantaine, CEO of Paris-based Asia Travel Agency.

Jean-Pierre Respaut of Clio, who has organized Iranian tours for the past 20 years, agreed with Chantaine and said the number of French tourists visiting Iran is increasing.

"There's an explosive demand to travel [to Iran], which means there is going to be stiff competition," he said.

Respaut said his agency used to take a maximum of 20 groups to Iran every year until 2013, but last year they organized tours for 50

groups, or about 1,000 tourists.

Founder of Terres Lointaines (French for Distant Lands) said his agency aims to take more than 100 tourists to Iran by the yearend.

Calling Iran a 'diverse, unique, highly cultural and Francophile' destination, William Reynaert added that the Mideast country has abundant archeological sites, deserts and open-air museums.

"We're contemplating taking about 800 people to the country in 2016," said CEO of Voyageurs du Monde Jean-Francois Rial. "I think we're going to rely heavily on Iran."

Officials at the Syndicat des Entreprises du Tour Operating, France's union of tour operators, are astounded by Iran's popularity among French travelers.

Jürgen Bachmann, secretary-general of SETO, said 919 French tourists visited Iran between November 2014 and August 2015. "That's more than double last year's figure of 409 and incomparable with the 13 tourists a year before," he said.

Shortly after the signing of the nuclear deal, the French daily Le Figaro called the agreement 'a boon for travel agencies'. Citing French tour operators, the article reported a fivefold increase in demand to visit Iran among French travelers.

## Picture of the Day



Mina tragedy painting workshop at Vali Asr Tehran Metro station - Iran

Courtesy: Tasnim