

## This Day in History

(December 07)

Today is Thursday; 16th of the Iranian month of Azar 1396 solar hijri; corresponding to 18th of the Islamic month of Rabi al-Awwal 1439 lunar hijri; and December 7, 2017, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

**2060 solar years ago**, on this day in 43 BC, Marcus Tullius Cicero, considered to be ancient Rome's greatest orator and prose stylist, was assassinated on the orders of Marcus Antonius (Mark Anthony).

**1443 solar years ago**, on this day in 574 AD, Byzantine Emperor, Justin II, abdicated the throne due to recurring seizures of insanity, and handed over power to his general Tiberius, proclaiming him Caesar. Justin II died four years later at the age of 58.

**1439 lunar years ago**, on this day, a few days after Hijra, work started for construction of the famous "Masjid an-Nabi" (Prophet's Mosque) in Medina after the entry of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) in this city which was then called Yathreb. The Prophet personally took part in the construction, and adjacent to it rooms or quarters were built for him, for his cousin, Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS), and some of his companions. The Prophet used to hold the daily congregational prayers in this mosque, and would use it as a place for handling the various affairs of the Muslim society. The "Masjid an-Nabi", in whose precincts, the Prophet reposes in eternal peace, is the second holiest mosque for the Islamic Ummah after the "Masjid al-Haram" (Sacred Mosque) which houses God's symbolic house, the holy Ka'ba in Mecca. It is worth noting that on God's commandment, the doors of the Sa'haba opening into the courtyard of the "Masjid an-Nabi" were closed except for the doors of the houses of the prophet and Imam Ali (AS).

**1431 lunar years ago**, on this day around 8 AH, Omm Kulthoum, the second and youngest daughter of Imam Ali (AS) and Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA) was born in Medina in the lifetime of her grandfather, Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). Like her elder sister, Hazrat Zainab (AS), and brothers, Imam Hasan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS), she was a picture of virtue, and on growing up married her paternal first cousin Awn ibn Ja'far at-Tayyar - who was martyred years later in 38 AH in the War of Siffin - since as a member of the spotlessly pure Ahl al-Bayt no other man was worthy of her hand, except a faithful Hashemite. She was present in Karbala at history's most heartrending tragedy; was taken in chains along with the rest of ladies and children of the Prophet's blessed household to the court of the tyrant Yazid; delivered memorable sermons to unmask the hypocrisy of the Omayyad regime; and on return to Medina recited the famous elegy "Madinato Jaddona la taqbalina..." (O City of our Grandfather, don't accept our coming).

**1114 solar years ago**, on this day in 903 AD, the famous Iranian Islamic astronomer and mathematician, Abu'l-Hassan Abdur-Rahman Ibn Amr as-Sufi ar-Raazi, was born in Rayy, near modern Tehran. He was one of the greatest astronomers and astrologers and was patronized by Azud od-Dowla Daylami, the ruler of the Persian Shi'ite Muslim Buwayhid dynasty of Iran-Iraq-Oman to translate scientific texts from Greek, Pahlavi and other languages into Arabic. As-Sufi was known in medieval Europe as "Azophi"; and today modern scientists have named in his honour the moon crater "Azophi" and the minor planet "12621 Alsufi". He published his famous book "Kitab al-Kawakeb as-Sabeta" (or Book of Fixed Stars) in 964 AD, describing much of his work, both in textual descriptions and pictures. In the same year he made the earliest recorded observation (from Yemen) of what western scientists today call the "Andromeda Galaxy"; describing it as a "small cloud". These were the first galaxies other than the Milky Way to be observed from the Earth. He also identified over five centuries before Ferdinand Magellan what the West calls the "Large Magellanic Cloud", which was not seen by Europeans until the Portuguese Sailor's voyage around the world in the 16th century. For each constellation, he provided two drawings, one from the outside of a celestial globe, and the other from the inside (as seen from the earth), and this is another firm proof that in contrast to the Europeans, the Muslims knew the earth as a sphere. As-Sufi also wrote about the astrolabe, finding numerous additional uses for it. Since 2006, the Astronomy Society of Iran - Amateur Committee (ASIAC) - has been holding an international "Sufi Observing Competition" in his memory. A related work by him is: "Kitab Suwar al-Kawakeb ath-Thamaniya al-Arba'een".

**1050 solar years ago**, on this day in 967 AD, the Iranian mystic and poet, Abu-Sa'eed Abi'l-Khair, was born in Mihne, near Torbat-e Haiderieh in Khorasan. He was an expert on exegesis of the Holy Qur'an, hadith, and jurisprudence, and was devoted to the Ahl al-Bayt of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). The details of his thoughts and life are known from the book "Asrar at-Tawhid" (Mysteries of Monotheism) written by his grandson, Mohammad Ibn Munawwar. Abu Sa'eed was also an accomplished poet and mostly composed quatrains in Persian.

**1034 solar years ago**, on this day in 983 AD, the Holy Roman Emperor Otto II died crestfallen, a year after he was decisively defeated by the Muslim forces of the Fatemid Ismaili Shi'a caliphate of Egypt-North Africa at the Battle of Capo Colonna, in Calabria, southern Italy. The Fatemids, who after taking control of Sicily in the 960s had advanced into southern Italy, came into conflict with the Germans under Otto advancing from the north with the intention of seizing Apulia and Calabria from the Byzantines. Otto was met by the forces of the Sicilian Emir, Abu'l-Qassem, to whom the Greek Christians had appealed for aid against the Roman Catholics. After initial success, Otto's army was bogged down in a pitched battle south of Crotona at Cape Colonna, and although Abu'l-Qassem was martyred, the Muslim troops did not flee. They regrouped and managed to surround the German soldiers, killing many of them and inflicting a severe defeat upon the Holy Roman Emperor.

**419 solar years ago**, on this day in 1598 AD, Giovanni "Gian" Lorenzo Bernini, Italian sculptor, painter, architect, was born. He was the greatest sculptor of the 17th century and worked under the patronage of Pope Urban VII. His works included the "Ecstasy of St. Teresa," "David" and "Daphne and Apollo."

**286 solar years ago**, on this day in 1731 AD, French orientalist, Abraham Hyacinthe Anquetil-Duperron, was born in Paris. He could be called the first professional French Indologist and Iranologist.

**235 solar years ago**, on this day in 1782 AD, Haidar Ali Khan, the Sultan of Mysore, died in camp near Chittor in what is now Andhra Pradesh, during the war with the British colonialists at the age of 61 after a reign of 21 years.

**170 lunar years ago**, on this day in 1268 AH, 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. He had risen from the lower rungs of the society through hard work, honesty, and voracious appetite for knowledge and eagerness to learn new techniques. He became prime minister of Mohammad Shah and within three years carried out important reforms. On Mohammad Shah's death, when Naser od-Din Shah ascended the throne as a boy, Amir-e Kabir acted as his guardian and saved Iran from the colonial designs of the British and the Russians. His achievements include the vaccination of Iranians against smallpox; economic development of the fertile Khuzestan Province; foundation in Tehran of the Dar ol-Fonoun Academy (for teaching medicine, surgery, pharmacology, natural history, mathematics, geology, and natural sciences to train the civilian and military staff); cancellation of the one-sided treaties with the Russians and the British; launching of a newspaper; crackdown on the seditious Babi-Bahai plot against Islam and the country; and execution of the heretic Mohammad Ali Bab. With Amir Kabir died the prospects of an independent Iran led by meritocracy.

**128 solar years ago**, on this day in 1889 AD, the first modern automobile was built. Its speed was 12 km per hour and its inventor was Karl Friedrich Benz of Germany.

**123 solar years ago**, on this day in 1894 AD, French diplomat, Vicomte Ferdinand, de Lesseps, who supervised the construction of the Suez Canal, died at the age of 89.

**89 solar years ago**, on this day in 1928 AD, Avram Noam Chomsky, American linguist, philosopher, cognitive scientist, political commentator, social justice activist, and anarcho-syndicalist advocate, was born in Philadelphia to Ukrainian-born Ashkenazi Jew, Zev Chomsky.

**76 solar years ago**, on this day in 1941 AD, Japan launched an aerial attack on the US naval base at Pearl Harbor in the Pacific, making the US to directly enter World War 2 in the eastern theatre.

**64 solar years ago**, on this day in 1953 AD, three Iranian students were shot and martyred by the Shah's forces at Tehran University for protesting the visit to Iran of the then US vice-president, Richard Nixon, three-and-a-half months after the US-coup that toppled the government of Prime Minister Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh and the fugitive Shah to power. The day after this tragic incident, Nixon was shamelessly awarded an honorary PhD by the regime at Tehran University. This day is thus marked as Student's Day in Iran.

**36 solar years ago**, on this day in 1981 AD, Palestinian activist, Abdul-Wahhab Kayyali, was assassinated by Zionists in Beirut. His PhD thesis at London University was on Palestine and the resistance of Arabs against colonialism and Zionism. He also published the first Palestinian magazine. Among the valuable books he wrote, mention can be made of "Modern History of Palestine".

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

# 'Run Rostam Run' Awarded at Polish Festival



'Run Rostam Run' is written and directed by Hossein Molyayemi.

WARSAW (Dispatches) - 'Run Rostam Run' by Hossein Molyayemi has received an award from the Edukino Festival of educational films.

The animated short film 'Run Rostam Run' won the award of distinction from Edukino film festival in Poland.

Edukino Festival of Educational Films was held in National Museum of Warsaw, Poland.

'Run Rostam Run' is an eleven minute animated short film made in Barfak Studio using Digital cel system. This animated film was first screened at Tehran International Animation Festival where it won the best animation and the best director awards.

This film is a free, comic adaptation of the tragic story of Rostam and Sohrab. Rostam, the national epic hero, must travel in time and come to modern Tehran in order to make up for what he has done to his son, Sohrab. While in Tehran, he cannot decide whether to accomplish his goal through a legal way or an illegal one.

## 'Isolation' Goes to US Film Event

SANTA FE (Honar) - Iranian feature 'Isolation', directed by Morteza Ali Abbas Mirzaei, has been accepted to compete in the main competition section of the 18th KIDS FIRST! Film Festival in US.

'Isolation' narrates the story of a man named Parviz who after six years of imprisonment takes permission from the warden for a 72-hour leave in order to bury his wife and attend her burial ceremony, but his mind is occupied with something else.

The KIDS FIRST! Film Festival showcases new and classic children's films, TV programs and DVDs.



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DVDs from studios, independent producers and youth producers.

The 18th edition of the event will be held on December 31 - January 15, 2018 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

## 'The Little Black Fish' Set for Stage

TEHRAN (MNA) - 'The Little Black Fish', a play based on one of the most celebrated Iranian stories, will appear on stage in Iran after having been performed in the US.

'The Little Black Fish', a play based on one of the most celebrated Iranian children stories by Samad Behrangi, is an Iranian, American co-production written by Mehrnosh Alia and directed by Mohammad Aghebati. The play which is scheduled to appear on stage in Iran for a week has previously been performed in New York and San Francisco in English.

The play is about a little black fish that lives in a pond with its

mother and dreams of the ocean. Naz Shademan, Maziar Seyyedi, Ava Darvishi, Parmis Aghdai and Maneli Gharakhan play in this stage production.

Reza Behjat (set and light designer), Negar Behbahani (Sound designer), Armineh Moghadasi (Illustrator) are among other members of the production team.

Mohammad Aghebati is a theatre director who studied performance and interactive art at Yale Drama School. He has directed stage productions for both adult and young audiences.

'The Little Black Fish' will appear on stage in Tehran on December 15, 2017.

## Hundreds of Genetic 'Switches' Affect Height

LONDON (eLife) - It's been understood for decades that a host of factors -- everything from pre- and post-natal health, nutrition, and genetics - play a role in determining height, but efforts to untangle the complex web of factors that contribute to height have long been stymied.

That picture, however, is becoming clearer, thanks to the work of Harvard scientists.

Led by Associate Professor of Human Evolutionary Biology Terence D. Capellini, a team of researchers discovered hundreds of genetic "switches" that have an influence on height and performed functional tests that demonstrated precisely how one such switch alters the function of a key gene involved in height differences.

"Large genome-wide association studies on upwards of 250,000 people found about 700 genetic regions associated with height," Capellini said. "But within each region there could be many single DNA variants linked together, so there are potentially tens of thousands of variants spanning those regions. The question is how do you whittle that number down to those specific variants that influence height?"

The first step, Capellini said, was to filter the list of more than 60,000 genetic variants to those that are likely functional in the cartilage growth plates of bones. To do this they identified in the femurs of developing mice regions of the DNA

that act as regulatory "switches" - that is, sequences of DNA that cause nearby genes to turn on or off. As part of that search, Capellini and colleagues focused on areas where the genome was "open," or available for transcription using a technique called ATAC-seq.

The problem, however, is that process identifies every switch in the growth plate cartilage cell, many of which may not be involved in bone growth but rather basic cellular processes. To separate those "general" switches from those related to bone growth and thus likely height, the team performed the same test again, but on a different cell type, and identified sequences that were open in both.

"If we find a common sequence that's open in a brain cell and in a cartilage cell, we can say it likely turns on some gene that may be important for cells to live," Capellini said. "So we filtered those out, but we didn't ignore them completely, because they may actually be important. While we first concentrated on the bone-specific switches, we know there are a lot of inputs to height - it's about the length of our bones, but we also know hormones trigger height, malnutrition can impact height, among other inputs so there may be general genetic factors that influence height."

As part of that work, Capellini said, researchers also performed a number of "quality control" tests to ensure the unique switches they identified

were actually involved in bone and cartilage development as well as height.

After performing those tests and filters, Michael Guo, an author on the study, was next able to determine how many of the 60,000 variants associated with height actually reside in on/off switches for bone. This resulted in a list of about 900 genetic variants. To make sure that this process generated unique height signals, Capellini and colleagues performed additional analyses.

"We took genome-wide analyses from other studies that had nothing to do with height and looked to see if we saw the same signal, and we

didn't, which makes sense," he said. "We also looked at switches from other cell types to see if these genetic variants appeared, and they didn't. That really suggests to us that the signals we're seeing are very strong, it's not just a property of the genome or a property of identifying these switches."

The team then chose one on/off switch, associated with a gene known as Chondroitin Sulfate Synthase 1, or CHSY1, which plays a key role in how cartilage cells create the extracellular matrix that hardens into bone. In turn, the gene influences femur length in mice and humans.



The 7th annual edition of Visual Art Festival has put on display works by Iranian and international artists in Tehran.