

This Day in History

(February 21)

Today is Thursday; 2nd of the Iranian month of Esfand 1397 solar hijri; corresponding to 15th of the Islamic month of Jamadi as-Sani 1440 lunar hijri; and February 21, 2019, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1367 lunar years ago, on this day in 73 AH, Abdullah ibn Zubayr, the claimant to the caliphate, was killed in Mecca. He was seditious and crafty and misinterpreted and misused religion for worldly ambitions. He had intense hatred for the Ahl al-Bayt or progeny of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). He was among the main perpetrators of the first "fitna" (or sedition) in Islamic history. It was his killing of innocent Muslims that resulted in the Battle of Jamal near Basra, Iraq, in 36 AH against the Commander of the Faithful, the Prophet's righteous successor, Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS). The Imam won the battle and magnanimously treated his fallen foes, allowing them to return peacefully to Medina. Abdullah ibn Zubayr never opposed the misrule of Mu'awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan, but in 61 AH, when the Prophet's grandson Imam Husain (AS) came to Mecca following his refusal to acknowledge the Godless rule of Yazid, he did not support him. Yazid's forces after perpetrating the heartrending tragedy of Karbala, plundered and massacred the people of Medina and then attacked Mecca, where Abdullah ibn Zubayr had taken refuge. Yazid's sudden death halted the campaign, and Abdullah ibn Zubayr began to consolidate his power in Hijaz as the self-styled caliph. He, however, made the folly of allowing the Omayyad governor Marwan ibn Hakam and the latter's son, Abdul-Malik, to leave the Hijaz for Syria, where after Yazid, father and son seized the caliphate and posed a serious challenge to Ibn Zubayr. For almost a decade, the Muslim realm was split between two self-styled caliphs - Ibn Zubayr in Hijaz and Abdul-Malek in Syria. The two fought each other for control of Egypt, Iraq, and Iran, but because of the uprising of Mukhtar ibn Abu Obayda to avenge the blood of Imam Husain (AS), Iraq and the eastern lands were out of their control. Abdullah ibn Zubayr again erred by refusing Mukhtar's invitation to join forces against the Omayyads, who were on the verge of being wiped out. He instead imprisoned members of the Prophet's Hashemite clan with the intention of burning them alive. His plan was foiled by the timely arrival of a force sent by Mukhtar to free the Hashemites. In 67 AH, the spiteful Abdullah ibn Zubayr sent an army under his brother, Mus'ab, to kill Mukhtar and take control of Iraq. Mus'ab succeeded, but a year later, he was defeated and killed by Abdul-Malik bin Marwan. Five years later, Abdullah ibn Zubayr was defeated, killed and crucified by the cruel Omayyad governor of Iraq, Hajjaj, who went on to destroy the holy Ka'ba.

669 lunar years ago, on this day in 771 AH, the prominent scholar, Fakhr al-Muhaqqiqin Mohammad ibn Hassan al-Hilli, passed away at the age of 89. He was the son of the celebrated Allamah Hilli, under whose guidance he attained the status of Ijtihad. He wrote prolifically on a wide variety of topics including exegesis of the holy Qur'an, theology, jurisprudence, and philosophy. Among his books are "al-Kafiya", and "Tahsil an-Najaat".

346 lunar years ago, on this day in 1094 AH, an Ottoman Turkish army led by Hussein Pasha conquered Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia in Europe, with the crown of the Austrian emperor being among the spoils of war.

342 solar years ago, on this day in 1677 AD, Dutch philosopher, Baruch Spinoza, died in Hague at the age of 45 of lung illness which was exacerbated by fine glass dust inhaled while grinding optical lenses.

316 solar years ago, on this day in 1703 AD, Islamic scholar and reformer of the Subcontinent, Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlawi, was born in Delhi. His works can be classified into six categories. The first deals with the holy Qur'an, including its translation into Persian for the first time in the Subcontinent. According to him, the object of studying the holy Qur'an is to reform human nature and correct wrong beliefs and injurious actions. The second category deals with hadith. The third deals with fiqh (jurisprudence). The fourth deals with mysticism. The fifth pertains to his works on Muslim philosophy and theology, including Ijtihad. The sixth category deals with problems between Shias and Sunnis. His theories pertaining to economics and socialism are of revolutionary nature.

191 solar years ago, on this day in 1828 AD, Following Qajarid Iran's defeat in the two-year long 2nd Russo-Persian War in the Caucasus with expansionist Russia, the disgraceful Turkmenchai Treaty was imposed on Fath Ali Shah with the mediation of British colonial officials, on the threat that failure to accept will result in the march of Russian troops upon Tehran. As per this one-sided treaty, Iran handed over to Russia, the Erivan Khanate or most of present-day central Armenia, the Nakhchivan Khanate or the present-day Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan, the Talysh Khanate, and the Ordubad and Mughan regions of what is now the Republic of Azerbaijan, in addition to all Iranian lands seized by Russia some fifteen years earlier, such as Georgia, Daghestan and other parts of the Caucasus.

103 solar years ago, on this day in 1916 AD, the deadly Battle of Verdun broke out between Germany and France during World War I, ending with German defeat. Some one million Germans and French were killed in this battle for control of France.

67 solar years ago, on this day in 1952 AD, the Bengali Language Movement protests occurred at the University of Dhaka in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and continued for three days, resulting in the killing of several students by the security forces. The protest was a reaction to the declaration of Urdu by the Pakistani government as the national language.

66 solar years ago, on this day in 1953 AD, Francis Crick and James Watson reached conclusion on the double helix structure of the DNA molecule. They made their first announcement on February 28, and their paper titled, "A Structure for Deoxyribose Nucleic Acid", was published in the 25 April 1953 issue of journal Nature.

54 solar years ago, on this day in 1965 AD, US Afro Muslim activist, Malcolm X was assassinated by white supremacist terrorists, believed to be hirelings of the government, which was afraid of the Islamic movement he had formed. He was 40 years of age when martyred, and had embraced the truth of Islam in his youth. He was active in the campaign for equal rights of the black people. He believed that racial discrimination and other injustices of the morally-bankrupt and decadent liberal democratic system of the West would only end if the dynamic laws of Islam, based on social justice and ethical virtues, are promoted.

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

Macedonia Hosts Iranian Film Week



"The Children of Heaven" by Majid Majidi.

TEHRAN (MNA) - Iranian Film Week kicked off in the Republic of North Macedonia on Tuesday, on the occasion of the 40th victory anniversary of the Islamic Revolution and was welcomed by

cinema enthusiasts.

The event will screen 6 Iranian feature movies in Skopje, the capital city of North Macedonia.

Iranian Ambassador to Macedonia Hossein Karimi attended the event and addressed the audiences on the human and moral achievements of the Islamic Revolution.

"Iran's Islamic Revolution emphasizes human and moral issues more than anything else; and that's why our country has a long track record in art, especially cinema," Karimi added.

Currently, Iran is among the top five countries in the cinema industry, and more than 100 films

are produced annually in Iran, he added.

The Iranian Film Week will continue in Skopje until February 23, and films by Abbas Kiarostami, Majid Majidi and Kamboozia Partovi will be screened in the event.

"The Children of Heaven" by Majid Majidi, "Café Transit" by Kamboozia Partovi, "Where Is the Friend's Home?" by Abbas Kiarostami, "Where Are My Shoes?" by Kiumars Pourahmad, "Don't Be Embarrassed" by Reza Magsoudi, and "Don't Be Tired!" by Seyed Mohammadreza Alipayam are the six movies to be displayed in the event.

Researchers Develop Apparatus for Mineral Exploration

TEHRAN (IFP) - A group of Iranian researchers have developed a new apparatus for exploration of copper, zinc, phosphate and gold mines.

Researchers at a knowledge-based company have developed the know-how to produce mineral exploration systems named portable gamma spectrometers.

The new apparatus can be used to explore copper, zinc, phosphate and gold mines, and to spot potassic zones in the earth and monitor environmental beams.



At the moment, 40 portable gamma spectrometers have been produced. The apparatus has been patented as well. It is an industrial and expensive apparatus, so it will be produced only when ordered by customers. The cost of production of the apparatus in Iran is between 35 and 40 percent less than that of foreign-made ones.

The device has received Europe's CE standard.

According to the project manager, the apparatus is to be exported to neighbouring countries as well.

Sufficient Sleep Reduces Cardiovascular Disease Risk

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) - Getting enough sleep is key to good health, and studies have shown that insufficient sleep increases the risk of serious problems, including cardiovascular disease. Now investigators have discovered one way that sleep protects against the development of atherosclerosis.

Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) investigators have discovered one way that sleep protects against

the buildup of arterial plaques called atherosclerosis. They describe the mechanism by which insufficient sleep increases production of inflammatory white blood cells known to be major contributors to atherosclerosis.

"We have discovered that sleep helps to regulate the production in the bone marrow of inflammatory cells and the health of blood vessels and that, conversely, sleep disruption breaks down control of inflammatory cell production, leading to more inflammation and more heart disease," says Filip Swirski, PhD, of the MGH Center for Systems Biology. "We also have identified how a hormone in the brain known to control wakefulness controls processes in the bone marrow and protects against cardiovascular disease."

To investigate how insufficient sleep increases atherosclerosis, Swirski's



team subjected mice genetically programmed to develop atherosclerosis to repeated interruptions of their sleep, similar to the experience of someone constantly waking up because of noise or discomfort. While there were no changes in weight, cholesterol levels or glucose tolerance in the sleep-deprived

mice, compared to animals from the same strain allowed to sleep normally, those subjected to sleep fragmentation developed larger arterial plaques and had higher levels of monocytes and neutrophils -- inflammatory cells that contribute to atherosclerosis -- in their blood vessels.

Denmark FOKUS Screens Iran Short Film 'Slaughter'

TEHRAN (IFILM) - Co-directed by Saman Hosseinpour and Ako Zand-Karimi, the short film "Slaughter" has been selected to vie at the FOKUS film festival in Denmark.

The Iranian film will compete against nine other contestants.

In "Slaughter", we meet a family in a village in Iran. Facing a tough winter, father of the family, Qasem, decides to sell their only cow. The son who is emotionally attached to the cow lets it loose to stop the slaughter.

"Slaughter" has competed in a number of international and domestic festivals, including the International Student Film Festival in Bulgaria.

The FOKUS video art festival is an annual festival for video art that presents 5-6 Danish and international exhibitions every year; the exhibitions give visitors the opportunity to encounter experimental and innovative art.

The ninth edition of the FOKUS international festival is set for February 28- March 31, 2019, in Copenhagen.

Picture of the Day



Austrian Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran Stefan Scholz visited historical and religious monuments in Susa, northern Khuzestan province.

Courtesy: Mehr News Agency