

# This Day in History

(February 29)

Today is Saturday; 10th of the Iranian month of Esfand 1398 solar hijri; corresponding to 5<sup>th</sup> of the Islamic month of Rajab 1441 lunar hijri; and February 29, 2020, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

**2065 solar years ago**, on this day in 45 BC, the first Leap Day was recognized by proclamation of Roman dictator, Julius Caesar. Under the old Roman calendar, the last day of February was the last day of the year. February 29 is a date that usually occurs every four years, and is called leap day. This day is added to the calendar in leap years as a corrective measure, because the Earth does not orbit around the sun in precisely 365 days.

**1349 lunar years ago**, on this day in 92 AH, Tareq bin Ziyad, crossed the Mediterranean from the northwestern African coast and landed on the island known ever since in his memory as **"Jabal at-Tareq"** (Rock or Mount of Tareq, Latinized as Gibraltar). He was governor of Tangiers under Musa bin Nusayr, the conqueror and Emir of the Province of Ifriqiya (present day western Libya, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco). The Muslims under Tareq swept through Spain and soon conquered the whole Iberian Peninsula. Later, they crossed the Pyrenees into southern France and conquered it. Tareq was made governor of Islamic Spain but was eventually called back to Damascus by the jealous Omayyad caliph, Walid I, who also relieved Musa bin Nusayr of the overall charge of northwest Africa, Spain and the islands off the coast of France. There are three different accounts of the origins of Tareq given by Arab historians – he was a Persian from Hamedan; he was an Arab of the Sadf tribe; he was a Berber from North Africa. Musa bin Nusayr is also said to be the son of an Iranian Christian, according to the historian Tabari; while others say he belonged to the Lakhmid Arab clan who were clients of the Sassanid Dynasty.

**1197 lunar years ago**, on this day in 244 AH, the prominent Islamic scientist and lexicographer, Abu Yusuf Yaqub ibn Ishaq, popularly known as "Ibn Sikkit" was brutally martyred by the cruel Abbasid caliph, Mutawakkil, who ordered the pulling out of his tongue through the nape for speaking the truth. Born in Khuzestan, southwestern Iran, he studied in Baghdad under prominent scholars, and his fame led Mutawakkil to invite him to Samarra where he was appointed as tutor to two of the caliph's sons. Mutawakkil, who is notorious for his sacrilegious destruction of the shrine of the Martyr of Karbala and his forcing of the Prophet's 10<sup>th</sup> Infallible Successor, Imam Hadi (AS) to come to Samarra, once asked Ibn Sikkit whether his sons were superior to the Prophet's two grandsons, Imam Hasan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS). The scholar boldly replied that even Qanbar, the black slave of Imam Ali (AS), was better than the caliph's sons. The enraged caliph ordered his execution. Here is one of his poems worth pondering upon.

**854 lunar years ago**, on this day in 587 AH, the Iranian mystical philosopher, Shahab od-Din Sohrewardi, was martyred in Aleppo, Syria, by the Kurdish ruler, Malik az-Zaher, the son of Salah od-Din Ayyoubi. Born in Sohreward, near the northwestern city of Zanjan, he went to Iraq and Syria to develop his knowledge. During his short life of less than forty years he wrote valuable works that established him as founder of a new school of philosophy, called **"Hikmat al-Ishraq"** (Illuminationist Philosophy). He is thus known as **"Shaikh-e Ishraq"**. His views angered his opponents, who had him arrested or charges of heresy and subsequently martyred. Sohrewardi has left behind some 50 works in Persian and Arabic.

**808 solar years ago**, on this day in 1212 AD, Honen, Japanese monk, founded Jodo-shu as the first independent branch of Japanese Pure Land Buddhism. It is the most widely practiced branch of Buddhism in Japan, along with Jodo Shinshu.

**179 solar years ago**, on this day in 1841 AD, John Philip Holland, inventor of the modern submarine, was born in Liscannor, County Clare, in Ireland, into a family that had survived the Great Potato Famine. Following his immigration to America in 1873, Holland settled in Paterson, New Jersey where he taught at school and, with financial backing from the Irish Fenian Society, began developing his first submarine. In 1881, Holland launched the Fenian Ram, a 31-foot-long submersible powered by a 15-horsepower internal combustion engine. With Holland at the controls, the Ram dived 64 feet beneath New York Harbor that summer, only to be seized by the Fenians when they lost interest in the project. In 1895, the J.P. Holland Torpedo Boat Company won a contract from the U.S. Navy to build a submarine. After one discouraging failure, the second submarine, the Holland VI, passed her sea trials and was purchased by the US Navy on April 11, 1900 for \$150,000.

**62 lunar years ago**, on this day in 1379 AH, the prominent religious scholar, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Yathrebi-Kashani passed away at the age of 68 in Kashan and was laid to rest in the mausoleum of Imamzadeh Habib ibn Imam Musa al-Kazem (AS). Born in the holy city of Karbala, at the age of 5 he returned to his ancestral town Kashan, along with his scholarly father, Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Reza Yathrebi-Kashani. He was initially taught by his father and other scholars of the Kashan Seminary, before travelling to Iraq for higher religious studies at the famous seminary of holy Najaf, where during his 7-year stay, his teachers included Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Kazem Yazdi, Grand Ayatollah Sheikh osh-Shari'ah Isfahani, Grand Ayatollah Mirza Mohammad Hussain Na'ini, and Ayatollah Aqa Ziya od-Din Iraqi. In 1339 AH, he returned to Kashan on request of his father, and two years later, on the invitation of Grand Ayatollah Sheikh Abdul-Karim Ha'eri he became an instructor at the seminary in holy Qom, where his students included Ayatollah Seyyed Shahab od-Din Mar'ashi, Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Baqer Mohaqqiq Damad, Ayatollah Mirza Hashem Amoli, and the future Father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (RA). Seven years later, on his father's death, he returned to Kashan to take up the latter's responsibilities at the local seminary, which he ably discharged for over three decades.

**60 solar years ago**, on this day in 1960, a major earthquake jolted the port city of Agadir in western Morocco on the Atlantic coast, resulting in the death of at least 12,000 people. It lasted for only 15 seconds, was followed by a Tsunami and was the most destructive earthquake in North Africa.

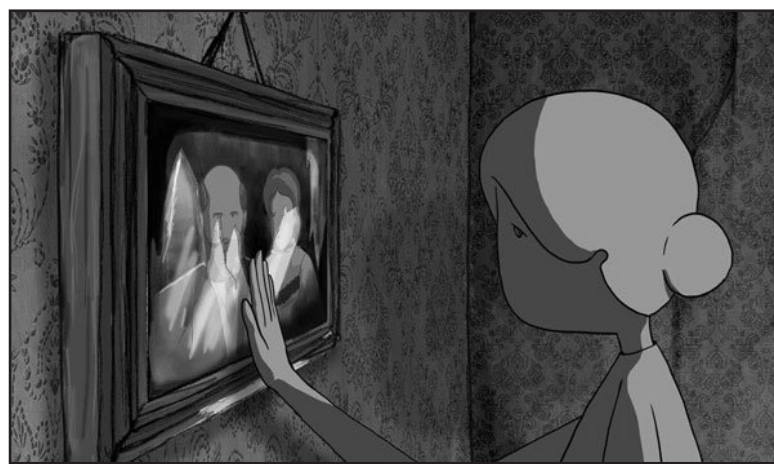
**41 solar years ago**, on this day in 1979 AD, the Father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (God bless him), returned to his seat of learning, holy Qom, after over 14 years in exile abroad, and 28 days after landing in Tehran to lead the people's grassroots movement to victory. In 1964, after his critical speech in Qom against the injustices and anti-Islamic policies of the British-installed and US-backed Pahlavi regime, especially the disgraceful capitulation bill granting immunity to American criminals, he was arrested, brought to Tehran, and forced into exile – first to Turkey and then to holy Najaf in Iraq. On his return this day to Qom, where he had first moved in 1921 and stayed for the next 44 years to learn and then emerge as a leading Marja' or Source of Emulation, he took up residence in a modest house. Several months later, responsibilities of supervising the smooth functioning of the Islamic Republic system in the face of internal and external plots, made him take up residence in Tehran for the remaining ten years of his fruitful life.

**32 solar years ago**, on this day, in 1988 AD, following repeated defeats of the Ba'hist invaders at the Iranian borders, Saddam unleashed cowardly missile attacks on residential areas of Tehran and other cities. These US-supported dastardly missile attacks continued for almost 45 days, but failed to break the resistance of the Iranian people. As many as 16 missiles hit Tehran this day. It was the 4th time during the 8-year imposed war that Saddam had attacked Iranian cities.

**28 solar years ago**, on this day in 1992 AD, Muslims and Croats in Bosnia-Herzegovina began casting ballots in an independence referendum; Serbs boycotted the vote, and started military activities and finally genocide of the Muslims in a bid to stall independence.

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

# Iranian Animation Wins Big in Russia



A still from Iran's short animation 'Tangle'.

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- Iran's short animation 'Tangle' has been awarded at the International Sretensky Orthodox Film Festival 'Vstrecha' in Russia.

The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported on Wednesday that the animation won the best title award at the closing ceremony of the 15th Vstrecha which was held in the Russian city of Obninsk.

Directed by Maliheh Gholamzadeh, 'Tangle' tells the story of people who have to leave

their homeland because of war.

According to the report, the motto of this year's edition of the festival was Father, Fatherhood and Homeland. Many of the movies that attended the event were about fatherhood and the relationship between parents and their children. 'Tangle' has attended various international film festivals and managed to grab several awards, including the Best Animation award at the 15th Early Bird International Student Film Festival in Bulgaria.

# Seniors Benefit From New Telerehabilitation Technology Centre

TEHRAN (IFP) -- The 'Centre for Promotion of Telerehabilitation Technologies' has opened in Iran in an effort to accelerate the development of a technological model for the delivery of rehabilitation services over telecommunication networks.

The new centre which is part of a national grand plan was inaugurated by Iranian Vice President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari.

The national plan is expected to provide the patients with the opportunity to receive rehabilitation services through modern technologies.

The new centre allows the patients to do the rehabilitation exercises at home and lets the therapists examine and assess the process of treatment at a

distance.

Moreover, the rehabilitation practices have been designed like a game and employ various technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality and machine processing.

The Iranian telerehabilitation centre would allow the patients to receive therapy without traveling to a clinic, lets the experts to manage the time of every therapy session according to the needs, will cover 60 to 70 percent of the occupational therapy processes, and takes advantage of new technologies such as virtual reality, biofeedback technique, developing therapy through play, and body monitoring.

A model for the development of telerehabilitation techniques have been already implemented and



evaluated in the centre.

The Iranian centre has also finalized the first operational package for the telerehabilitation and assessment of patients suffering from Parkinson's disease.

Senior citizens make up about 6 to

7 percent of the Iranian population at present. Statistics show that the figure will triple by 2050. A rise in the number of senior citizens will naturally increase the rate of diseases such as multiple sclerosis (MS) and Parkinson's disease, which require rehabilitation.

# Link Between Genes, Ability to Exercise

LONDON (Dispatches) -- A team of researchers have discovered a genetic mutation that reduces a patient's ability to exercise efficiently.

In a study published in The New England Journal of Medicine, a team including researchers from King's College London has found a link between a genetic mutation that affects cellular oxygen sensing and a patient's limited exercise capacity.

The team identified a patient who had a reduced rate of growth, persistent low blood sugar, a limited exercise capacity and a very high number of red blood cells.

The team carried out genetic and protein analysis of the patient, examined their respiratory physiology in simulated high altitude, measured their exercise capacity, and performed a series of metabolic tests.

Dr Federico Formenti, School of Basic & Medical Biosciences, one of the leading authors of the study, comments: "The discovery of this mutation and the associated phenotype is exciting because it enables a deeper understanding of human physiology, especially in terms of how the human body senses and responds to reduced oxygen availability."

# Toronto Hosts Iranian Director's Play 'The Terrace'

TEHRAN (MNA) -- Iranian director Jafar Mahyari will be staging Jean-Claude Carrière's absurd comedy 'The Terrace' in Toronto, Canada.

The play will go on stage on 27, 28 and 29 February at Fairview Theatre in Toronto, Canada.

Mahyari said he received an offer for staging a play in Toronto after his team held a workshop in Calgary in Spring.

According to him, the theme of the play is focused on the desperation and confusion of the modern man.

"In this work, we tried to bring the realistic atmosphere of the original play closer to surrealism to make the theme of the work even more profound," he explained.

Mahyari had previously staged 'The Chairs' at the Theater Encounter in Calgary, Canada.

# Picture of the Day



Patients infected by COVID-19 are receiving treatment in the isolated Intensive Care Unit in Forghani Hospital, Qom city. (Courtesy of Mehr News Agency)