

This Day in History

(January 14)

Today is Thursday; 25th of the Iranian month of Dey 1399 solar hijri; corresponding to 30th of the Islamic month of Jamadi al-Awwal 1442 lunar hijri; and January 14, 2021, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

2104 solar years ago, on this day in 83 BC, Roman general and politician, Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony), was born in Rome. His father and namesake was Marcus Antonius Creticus, son of the noted orator of the same name murdered during the Marian Terror of 87–86 BC. His mother was Julia Antonia, a distant cousin of the dictator Julius Caesar.

470 solar years ago, on this day in 1551 AD, Abu'l-Fazl Allami, the Persian scholar, vizier and close confidante of Moghal Emperor Jalal od-Din Mohammad Akbar of Hindustan (northern subcontinent), was born in Agra. He was the younger brother of the equally gifted scholar and Persian poet, Shaikh Abu'l-Faiz "Faizi". After mastering Persian and Arabic as well as other sciences, Abu'l-Fazl came to Akbar's court in 1575 and was influential in the latter's liberal views on religion. Along with his elder brother, he known as one of the Nine Jewels (Navaratnas) of Akbar's court. Abu'l-Fazl led a Moghal army in its wars in the Deccan, but while returning to Agra was assassinated at the age of 51 by a Rajput named Vir Singh Bundela on the orders of Prince Salim (later Emperor Jahangir) the prospect of whose accession to the throne he used to oppose. He authored in Persian the "Akbarname", the official history of Akbar's reign in three volumes, (volume 3 is known as "Ain-e Akbari"). Among his other works is a Persian translation of the Christian Bible, and "Ruqa'at-e Abu'l-Fazl", which is a collection of his private letters to his father, mother and brothers, as well as to the emperor, to the three princes – Murad, Daniyal, and Salim (Jahangir), to Akbar's queens and daughters, and to several notable contemporaries. Another of his famous works is "Inshe-e Abu'l-Fazl". Also known as "Maktubat-e Allami" it contains the official dispatches written by him at the court. It contains Emperor Akbar's letters to Emperor Shah Abbas of Iran, Abdullah Khan Uzbek the ruler of Turan (Transoxiana), Burhan Nizam Shah the King of Ahmadnagar, Raja Ali Khan the ruler of Khandesh, and certain Moghal nobles such as Abdur-Rahim Khan-e Khanaana.

2798 solar years ago, on this day in 1742 AD, English astronomer and mathematician, Edmund Halley, died at the age of 85. He is best known for recognizing that a bright comet (later named after him) had appeared several times on a periodical basis.

260 solar years ago, on this day in 1761 AD, the Afghans led by Ahmad Shah Abdali Durrani inflicted a crushing defeat on the Marathas at the 3rd Battle of Panipat, fought about 95 km from Delhi that changed the course of Indian history. The Marathas' French supplied artillery was no match for the "Zamburak" mounted artillery of Ahmad Shah – who as a veteran general of Nader Shah Afshar of Iran had participated in the latter's capture of Delhi in 1739. The Marathas of southwestern India, emboldened by the breakaway of the two important provinces of Bengal and Haiderabad-Deccan from the Mughal Empire, had quickly expanded their influence in the north as far as Punjab and the borders of Kashmir, bringing them into direct confrontation with the Afghans. Ahmad Shah with his two Indian allies – Najeeb od-Dowla Rohilla of the Doaab, and Shuja od-Dowla, the Nawab of Awadh – decided to crush the Maratha marauders, whose pillaging and looting of lands had alienated from them the Sikhs, the Jats, and even fellow Hindu Rajputs. The battle is considered one of the largest fought in the 18th century. The 250,000-strong Maratha army was annihilated and large numbers fled the battlefield. The earlier two decisive Battles of Panipat that also changed the course of Indian history were fought in 1526 and 1556. The first saw the defeat of the Afghan king, Ibrahim Lodhi of Hindustan (Northern Subcontinent) and establishment of the Mughal Empire by the Timurid ruler of Kabul, Zaheer od-Din Babar Shah – a protégé of Shah Ismail I of Iran. The second saw the victory of Bayram Khan Turkman, the guardian and general of Jalal od-Din Akbar Shah over Hemu, the Hindu general of the Afghan rulers of Delhi and led to the restoration of Mughal rule in the aftermath of Humayun Shah's sudden death shortly after return from Iran and recapture of Hindustan with aid provided by Shah Tahmasp Safavi.

146 solar years ago, on this day in 1875 AD, Albert Schweitzer the physician was born in Alsace in France. He established a hospital in Gabon, spending the rest of his life assisting and medically treating the disadvantaged people of Africa. He wrote several books, including "The Philosophy of Civilization". Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1953, he died in 1965.

123 solar years ago, on this day in 1898 AD, Lewis Carroll, the British logician, mathematician, photographer, and novelist, remembered for the book "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" (1865), died at the age of 65. His real name was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, and after graduating from Oxford University, he taught mathematics and wrote treatises there until 1881. He was the author of several mathematics books, including "A Syllabus of Plane Algebraical Geometry" (1860), and "Euclid and his Modern Rivals" (1879).

79 solar years ago, on this day in 1942 AD during World War 2, US president, Franklin Roosevelt, and British prime minister, Winston Churchill, as the main leaders of the Allied Powers held a summit in Casablanca, Morocco, to plan attacks on Fascist Italy including the bombardment of Sicily and other places by the American air force.

72 solar years ago, on this day in 1949 AD, the Durban riots occurred in South Africa against Indians predominantly by Zulus (at the instigation of the ruling whites) resulting in the massacre of 142 people, and injury to 1,087 others. It also led to the destruction of 58 shops, 247 dwellings and one factory – all owned by Indians. The Indian business area was attacked with an assortment of improvised weapons. As the looting took place, a number of white Europeans encouraged the black people to attack, and subsequently joined the looting. The riot then spread to the peri-urban areas of Durban where numerous acts of murder, arson, rape, and looting took place. The Indians were accused of black-marketeering, opposition to the economic expansion of the Africans, and social and racial humiliation of the blacks by Indian landlords, but in reality Indians were treated far worse by Europeans because they were given the terms coolie and the jealousy that blacks and whites showed because Indians started going from extremely poor and servitude status to being their owners through close knit networks and pre planning steps in business. The Indians were descendants of low caste groups from places like Bihar, and were despised by both the whites and the blacks who resented the rise of dark skin inferior looking people.

42 solar years ago, on this day in 1979 AD, during the crucial days of the Islamic Revolution, major clashes erupted between the unarmed demonstrators and the Shah's US-backed soldiers. Several soldiers, impressed by the Islamic movement, joined the people, thereby further demoralizing the Shah's US-trained army. In his message from exile, the Father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (RA), encouraged soldiers to join the people for defence of the divine religion of Islam, in order to rescue the country from the yoke of hegemonic powers.

30 solar years ago, on this day in 1991 AD, the notorious Zionist spying agency, Mossad, in a terrorist act in Tunisia, assassinated Salah Khalaf Abu Ayad, a senior leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), along with two other Palestinian officials. The assassination smelled of treason on the part of the Tunisian regime of the now ousted Zain al-Abidin bin Ali and some Palestinian leaders, because later in the same year in October, PLO Chief, Yasser Arafat, started the so-called peace talks with the illegal Zionist entity, Israel.

22 solar years ago, on this day in 1999 AD, the combatant religious scholar, and the elected representative of the Majlis (parliament), Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Haqqi Sarabi, passed away at the age of 72. Born in Iraq near Tabriz, after initial studies he left for holy Qom and later for holy Najaf in Arab, where he attained Ijtihad. On return to Iran, he involved himself in the struggle against the repressive rule of the Pahlavi regime. Following triumph of the Islamic Revolution, he was elected as a representative in the Majlis and the Assembly of Experts.

10 solar years ago, on this day in 2011 AD, Tunisia's pro-US-Israeli dictator, Zain al-Abidin bin Ali, faced with a popular uprising, fled the country for Saudi Arabia along with his family and billions of dollars of public wealth. On taking power in 1987 he slavishly served American interests by brutally suppressing the Tunisian Muslim people, for which he was rewarded with asylum by Saudi Arabia. His ouster freed Tunisia from over half a century of anti-Islamic rule and triggered uprisings in other countries, such as Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

Artists Across Globe Participate at Iran's Calligraphy Exhibition



Director of the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, Hojjatollah Ayyubi.

TEHRAN (Honaronline) -- Calligraphy works by 300 artists from 30 countries will participate at the first international exhibition and scientific conference of the Silk Road calligraphy both via videoconferencing and in person.

Artworks by the calligraphers will be put on display in a virtual exhibition, which will officially open on January 20 in the northeastern Iranian city of Mashhad.

The Iranian National Commission for UNESCO is the main organizer of the exhibition.

Speaking in a press conference, the director of the commission, Hojjatollah Ayyubi, said, "Many luminaries believe that calligraphy is the attestation of our many other arts. The commission believes in dialogue between cultures and we are happy to be hosting such a great event."

"Every night a selection of over 100 works from different countries will be uploaded, while we will keep in touch live with several of the calligraphers. The works will be select-

ed by the Iran Calligraphers Association as the collaborator of the event. Since Mashhad is the main host of the event, one night will also be dedicated to the calligraphers of Mashhad," he added.

He further noted that a selection of 204 works also to be later published and exhibited in a museum in Mashhad.

"A selection of the displayed works will later be shown in an exhibition to open in the Iranian Academy of Arts in Tehran on January 24 with a limited number of visitors. The closing ceremony will be held in the Iran Mall, a large shopping mall in Tehran on January 28, where a number of ambassadors will be invited," he concluded.

The walls across the city of Mashhad, as well as several historical monuments in Tehran and several other cities, will be displaying a selection of works through video mapping, a system to use light and movement as mediums and buildings or other surfaces as a canvas for some huge, attention-grabbing statements.

The ancient Silk Road has existed for thousands of years, passing

through many different empires, kingdoms, reigns and societies throughout history. At certain times in its long history, traders could travel freely along these routes, whereas at others, travel was difficult or dangerous.

According to UNESCO, the Silk Road enriched the countries passed through, transporting cultures, religions, languages and, of course, material goods to societies across Europe, Asia, and Africa, and uniting them all with a common thread of cultural heritage and plural identities.

There are over 40 countries today along with the historic land and maritime Silk Roads, all still bearing witness to the impact of these routes in their culture, traditions, and customs.

These vast networks carried more than just merchandise and precious commodities, however. The constant movement and mixing of populations also brought about the transmission of knowledge, ideas, cultures and beliefs, which had a profound impact on the history and civilizations of the Eurasian peoples.

'Insert', 'Father of Trees' Nominated at Dhaka Festival

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- Two Iranian films have received nominations at the Dhaka International Mobile Film Festival (DIMFF) in Bangladesh.

The Iranian Youth cinema Society reported that Hassan Mokhtari's 'Insert' and 'the Father of Trees' by Taymour Qaderi were among 21 films nominated for awards at the seventh edition of DIMFF.

The Dhaka International Mobile Film Festival is "a unique place of artistic exploration and entertainment. It is the pioneer in Bangla-



desh for arranging a Film Festival where films are exclusively shot in mobile phone, ignoring what kind of mobile devices the filmmakers are using", the event's website reads.

"DIMFF's purpose [is] not only to inspire and spark creativity in people of all ages with limited income or resources but also to encourage filmmakers to harness their dreams and to recognize the immense possibilities to accomplish them."

The 7th edition of the festival will take place on February 26-27.

Low Fitness Linked to Higher Psoriasis Risk

STOCKHOLM (Dispatches) -- Scientists at University of Gothenburg, Sweden recently demonstrated a connection between inferior physical fitness in young adults and elevated risk of the autoimmune disease psoriasis.

The study was based on data on more than 1.2 million men conscripted, aged 18, into the Swedish Armed Forces between the years 1968 and 2005. During the enrollment process, all these young men underwent the same fitness test on an exercise bicycle. The researchers divided the data, according to how fit the men were, into three levels (low, medium, and high fitness). They then merged the data with other registers, using Sweden's National Patient Register to obtain diagnostic codes for psoriasis and the joint disease psoriatic arthritis.

As a result, the less fit the men were when they were recruited, the higher the proportion of them who later fell ill with psoriasis

or psoriatic arthritis. In the low-fitness group, the risk of developing psoriasis was 35 percent higher, and that of developing psoriatic arthritis 44 percent higher, than in the high-fitness group.



Picture of the Day



The 150-year-old 'Pomegranate Garden' in Tehran, which used to be the personal home and entertainment resort of Hassan Vosough od-Dowleh, the prime minister of Iran during the Qajar rule, has been turned into a public park. Courtesy of ILNA