

# This Day in History

(March 8)

Today is Monday; 18<sup>th</sup> of the Iranian month of Esfand 1399 solar hijri; corresponding to 24<sup>th</sup> of the Islamic month of Rajab 1442 lunar hijri; and March 8, 2021, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

**1860 solar years ago**, on this day in 161 AD, Marcus Aurelius was declared Roman Emperor and was the last of the 5 good emperors in Roman history.

**1435 lunar years ago**, on this day in 7 AH, the impregnable fortress of Qamous in the vast tract of Khaybar, 150 km north of Medina on the road to Syria, was single-handedly captured by the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (AS), who after overcoming in personal combat the fearsome Israelite warlord, Marhab, pulled from its hinges the huge gateway that several Jewish strongmen used to open and close. Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) had to undertake the campaign on learning of the plots and seditions of the ever-rebellious Israelites, who in violation of the accords were contemplating military measures, including raid on Medina, in addition to their funding of pagan Arab tribes to attack Muslims from time to time.

The Prophet's sudden arrival on the scene with some 1,500-odd Muslims caught the estimated 10,000 armed Israelite force off guard, and forced the leaders of various Jewish tribes to agree to pay tribute. Of the forts that resisted, the Muslims forced almost all of them to surrender after several weeks of siege. The principal Israelite fortress of Qamous, however, not just continued to hold out but its defenders drove away with losses the expeditions led by the Prophet's companions. At last the Prophet said he would be giving the command tomorrow to the person "who loves God and the Prophet and is in turn loved by God and the Prophet; an intrepid attacker (Karrar) who never retreats (Ghayra Farrar)." On the morning the Prophet invoked the famous phrase "Nad-e Aliyyan Mazhar al-Aja'eb" (Call Ali the Manifestation of Wonders). His dear cousin and son-in-law, who because of eye inflammation was not participating in the campaign was brought before him. The Prophet applied his saliva to his eyes, which were miraculously cured. The rest is history, and the Prophet gave fair terms to the Jews after surrender, allowing them to live in peace. It is worth noting that before this campaign the Prophet had received the vast orchard of Fadak as a personal gift without the involvement of Muslims, arms, and hostilities. On God's command he gave Fadak to his daughter, Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA), who used to spend its income for the poor and needy, until it was seized from her by the first and second self-styled caliphs.

**1341 lunar years ago**, on this day in 101 AH, the Omayyad ruler, Omar bin Abdul-Aziz, died due to poisoning of his food after a reign of three years during which he renounced the oppressive and un-Islamic policies of his predecessors. One of his first acts on becoming caliph was to issue a decree to halt the blasphemous cursing of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (AS), during Friday prayer sermons – a sacrilegious practice begun by the hardcore heathen, Mu'awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan, who through such acts intended to keep the growing neo Muslim population ignorant of the God-given right to rule of Prophet Muhammad's (SAWA) rightful successor. Omar bin Abdul-Aziz next returned to the Ahl al-Bayt the large tract of Fadak whose income had now swelled to 40,000 dinars, since this was the property of the Prophet's daughter, Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA) from whom the first and second self-styled caliphs had illegally seized. He is also credited with various other reforms like abolition of drinking, forbidding public nudity, and elimination of mixed bathrooms for men and women, which the Godless Omayyad caliphs had initiated. He was succeeded by the ungodly Yazid bin Abdul-Malik, who immediately reversed the policies of his predecessor and again seized Fadak.

**1103 lunar years ago**, on this day in 339 AH, the famous Islamic scientist and philosopher, Abu Nasr Mohammad al-Farabi, passed away at the age of 82 in Aleppo, Syria, where he was a luminary at the court of Amir Saif od-Dowla. As a follower of the Ahl al-Bayt of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), he discovered the limits of human knowledge, compared to divinely-revealed wisdom. He is regarded as founder of Islamic political science. Farabi's most important views are raised in his books like "Kitab as-Siyasah" (Book of Politics), and "as-Siyasat al-Madaniyah" (Civics). He viewed religion as a symbolic rendering of the Ultimate Truth, and, like Plato, saw it as the duty of the philosopher to provide guidance to the state. He, however, differed from the Platonic view and said the "Medinat-al-Fazela" or Perfect State is the one that is ruled by the Prophet or the divinely-appointed Imam, instead of the philosopher-king envisaged by Plato. He pointed out that the "Perfectly Ideal State" was founded in Medina by Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), who was in direct communion with God.

**1011 solar years ago**, on this day in 1010 AD, Iranian poet, Abu'l-Qasem Mansour ibn Hassan, famous by his penname "Ferdowsi", completed his masterpiece "Shahnameh" (Book of Kings) that records in verse, Iran's history, and till this day is considered a world famous epic.

**946 solar years ago**, on this day in 1075 AD, Iranian Sunni Muslim exegete of the holy Qur'an, narrator of hadith, and linguist, Abu'l-Qasim Mohammad Ibn Omar Zamakhshari, was born in Zamakhshar, in the historical Iranian land of Khwarezm – divided today between the Central Asian republics of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. In his works, he acknowledged the merits and peerless position of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt.

**618 solar years ago**, on this day in 1403 AD, the 4th Ottoman sultan, Bayezid I, died in captivity in Samarqand at the age of 43, some eight months after his defeat and capture in the Battle of Ankara by the Central Asian Turkic conqueror, Amir Timur.

**285 solar years ago**, on this day in 1736 AD, Safavid general, Tahmasp Quli, who rose to rescue Iran from the anarchy by driving out the Hotaki Ghilzai occupiers, crowned himself as Nader Shah – of the short-lived Afsharid dynasty.

**230 lunar years ago**, on this day in 1212 AH, the great Gnostic scholar, Seyyed Mohammad Mahdi Tabatabaie, famous as Bahr al-Uloom (Ocean of Knowledge), passed away at the age of 57 in holy Najaf and was laid to rest beside the tomb of the famous Founder of the Najaf Seminary, Abu Ja'far Shaikh at-Ta'efa Tusi. He wrote several books, including "al-Masabih" on jurisprudence, "ad-Durrah an-Najafiyah", "Mishkat al-Hedayah" and "Tuhfat- al-Keraam" on history of Mecca and Masjid al-Haram (Great Sacred Mosque), besides a Collection of poems on the merits of the Infallible Imams of the Household of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA).

**104 solar years ago**, on this day in 1917 AD, Ferdinand Adolf August Heinrich Count von Zeppelin, the German inventor, engineer and manufacturer who was the aviation pioneer that built the first rigid dirigible airships, named Zeppelins, died at the age of 78.

**99 solar years ago**, on this day in 1922 AD, Reza Khan Mirpanj, a year after his coup with British-backing to install himself as war minister and commander-in-chief of the army of the tottering Qajar dynasty of Iran, ordered closure of all widely circulated newspapers, for their criticism of his high-handed policies.

**36 solar years ago**, on this day in 1985 AD, the execution of ten religious scholars of the family of the Late Grand Ayatollah Seyyed Mohsin al-Hakeem by the repressive Ba'ath minority regime, after years of imprisonment, shocked the world, and made the Father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (RA) issue a strongly-worded statement denouncing the latest crime against humanity of Saddam. The Imam also questioned the silence of world bodies and claimants of human rights and democracy.

**36 solar years ago**, on this day in 1985 AD, a failed assassination attempt in Beirut against Lebanon's leading religious scholar, Allamah Seyyed Mohammad Hussain Fazlollah, killed at least 45 innocent persons and injured 175 others. The US was behind this assassination attempt which was masterminded for the CIA by Robert Gates, who later served as US War Secretary.

**10 solar year ago**, on this day in 2011 AD, the Iranian bibliographer and Iranologist, Dr. Iraj Afshar, passed away at the age of 86.

**9 solar years ago**, on this day in 2012 AD, Simin Daneshvar, the wife of the famous Iranian writer, Jalal Aal-e Ahmad, died at the age of 91 years in Tehran. She was an academic, novelist, fiction writer and translator, largely regarded as the first major Iranian woman novelist.

# Foreign Performances Compete at Tehran Mobarak Puppet Festival



Mobarak International Puppet Theatre Festival, Tehran.

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- The 18th edition of the International Puppet Festival Tehran – Mobarak in Iran has picked two foreign performances to join the gala.

'Babysitter Curtain' from Brazil and 'Somewhere Else' from Slovenia are the selected performances for the 2021 edition of the event.

Made by Luis André Cherubini and inspired by Virginia Woolf's 'Nurse Lugton's Curtain', 'Babysitter Curtain' tells the story of a nanny who snoozes while

sewing a huge curtain and dreams of the village embroidered on the fabric. Made by Tin Grabnar, 'Somewhere Else' is about a little girl, who finds herself caught in the middle of a war. It is through her eyes that viewers observe her changing city, filled with horrors, violence and fear, but hope, too.

Threatening planes are flying over the city, the streets are empty and there is no food left on the shelves in the store. The school is closed, and every now and then gunshots are heard nearby. Her environment gradually changes and becomes intolerable.

The Mobarak festival is online due to the coronavirus pandemic and the puppets shows will be streamed on some Iranian platforms.

The organizers announced this edition of the festival is organized nationwide due to the pandemic; however, the two plays have been selected for performance on the last days of the event, Saturday and Sunday.

Director of the festival workshop Fahimeh Mirza-Hassani said "This festival has a good background and is quite well known in the world. Many international groups were interested to take part in the event, however, we could only choose two plays that were suitable for virtual performances."

Some 57 puppet shows are being performed during the gala which has been slated for February 28-March 7 on some Iranian video-on-demand (VoD) platforms. The closing ceremony of the event will honor two veteran artists of Puppet Theater, Iraj Mohammadi and Mohammad-Hassan Abouee-Mehrizi, with lifetime achievement awards on Sunday.

## Iran's 'Nahid' Makes It to Swiss Festival

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian short film 'Nahid' has been accepted into the 35th edition of the Fribourg International Film Festival.

Directed by Samad Alizadeh and produced by Reza Nosrati-Habibi, 'Nahid' will vie with other international entries during the competition section of the event which will be held in Fribourg, Switzerland, on



July 16-25.

The film tells the story of women who have to put double effort in order to prove and establish their damaged identities.

Fribourg International Film Festival aims to promote the understanding between cultures through films. It gives preferences to productions that stimulate reflection and provoke discussion.

## Best Performance Award Goes to Iranian Actress in Canada

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- The 33rd edition of the Living Skies Student Film Festival in Canada has nominated Iranian actress Mojan Kordi for the best performance award.

The other nominees in the category are Breeann DeHaven for 'Fine' by Lynette Piper from Canada, Rosa Iranzo for 'Pleasure of Killing Bugs' by Leonardo Martinelli from Brazil, and Fan Ding Lun for 'Father's Phone' by Yi Chia Fu from Taiwan.

Kordi won the nomination for playing the leading role in the 12-minute drama 'The Recess', which is written, produced and directed by Navid Nikkhah-Azad.

The short film tells the story of a 17-year-old school-girl who runs away from school to watch the football match of her beloved club.

Sahar, along with three of her friends, is planning to exit the school during the break in order to watch the match between Esteghlal FC and Al Ain FC at Azadi Sports Complex.

In addition to Kordi, Reyhaneh Naieean, Niloufar Shokouhinia, and Ghazal Khalili are on the cast list of the short flick.

Scheduled to compete at the 18th Oxford Film Festival in the US, 'The Recess' has already gone on screen at some global events, including the 13th Sofia

MENAR Film Festival in Bulgaria.

The Living Skies Student Film Festival is organized every year in Regina, Saskatchewan, showcasing student works from all over the world.

The short animation 'Thinker' by Mahdieh Raesi has been the other Iranian representative at the Canadian event.

The 33rd edition of the Living Skies Student Film Festival has been held on March 4-6, 2021.



Iranian actress Mojan Kordi in 'The Recess' directed by Navid Nikkhah-Azad.

## Picture of the Day



Bojnord greenhouses, like many other businesses, are busy preparing flowers and plants in the current days leading to Nowruz celebrations.

Courtesy: Mehr News Agency