

This Day in History

(July 11)

Today is Saturday; 21st of the Iranian month of Tir 1399 solar hijri; corresponding to 19th of the Islamic month of Zilqā'dah 1441 lunar hijri; and July 11, 2020, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1866 solar years ago, on this day in 154 AD, Bardaisan, the Gnostic, scientist, scholar, astrologer, philosopher, and poet of Iranian-Babylonian origin, was born in the upper Mesopotamian city of Edessa, which was historically part of Syria, but is now in Turkey. His chief work, *"The Dialogue of Destiny"*, or *"The Book of the Laws of the Countries"*, is the oldest known original composition in Syriac literature. He also composed 150 hymns like the Psalms of Prophet David. His thoughts later influenced the Iranian Mani who founded the religion of Manichaeism by incorporating some of the teachings of Prophet Jesus (AS).

846 solar years ago, on this day in 1174 AD, Amalric, the ruler of the usurper Latin kingdom of Jerusalem (established in Bayt al-Moqaddas and Palestine by European invaders), died after a 11-year reign during which he attempted several unsuccessful attacks on Fatimid Egypt, by forming alliances with some of the local Syrian and Turkic Amirs, who were ready to betray fellow Muslims for paltry gains – like the present day Arab regimes which are serving Zionist interests. In 1171, three years before Amalric's death, the Kurdish general, Salah od-Din, who was appointed vizier in Cairo by the young Fatimid caliph, al-Adid, deposed his benefactor and seized Egypt. Amalric was succeeded by his 13-year old leprosy son, Baldwin IV, with Raymond III, Count of the occupied Lebanese region of Tripoli (Tarabolous) as regent, and William of the occupied Lebanese region of Tyre (Sour) as chancellor. During his 11-year reign, Baldwin used to constantly raid Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian cities, as far as Damascus, but without permanent success. In 1177, he launched a surprise attack and routed almost the entire army of Salah od-Din, who was lucky to escape alive. As the historian Ibn Jubayr writes, Baldwin IV, in view of his mean nature, was called by Muslims as "al-Khinzir" (the Swine). Two years after his death, Salah od-Din led a united army of Kurds, Turks, Arabs and Iranians, to liberate Bayt ol-Moqaddas, thus ending the 87-year illegal existence of the Crusader kingdom of Jerusalem.

776 solar years ago, on this day in 1244 AD, the Turkish slave-soldiers from the ancient Iranian land of Khwarezm in Central Asia, who were in the service of the Turkic Mamluk or Slave-Dynasty of Egypt liberated the Islamic city of Bayt al-Moqaddas or Jerusalem from the Crusader European occupiers. By August 23 the Khwarezmian Turks had taken complete control of the city and its surroundings and razed the edifices erected by the Christian usurpers.

615 solar years ago, on this day in 1405 AD, Admiral Zheng He of China's Ming Dynasty, who was a Muslim and whose actual name was Mahmoud Shams od-Din, set sail to explore the world on the first of his seven voyages that took him to Southeast Asia, the Subcontinent, Arabia, Iran, and Africa. He was a great-great-grandson of Seyyed Ajal Shams od-Din, the Iranian statesman who served in the administration of the Mongol Empire, and was appointed governor of Yunnan Province. He commanded a flotilla of several hundred galleys, including huge five-decked ships, on each of his voyages spread over 28 years, and in addition to demonstrating the might of China through presents to the rulers of lands he visited, he brought back exotic things and animals including zebras, giraffes and ostriches. He cleared the Malacca Straits of pirates and in places he visited he built mosques.

224 solar years ago, on this day in 1796 AD, the United States took possession of Detroit and the adjoining lands from Britain under terms of the Jay Treaty that avoided another war.

138 solar years ago, on this day in 1882 AD, the British fleet started the bombardment of the port city of Alexandria in Egypt as part of the Anglo-Egyptian War, following a coup by Colonel Ahmed Orabi against Tawfiq Pasha, the Khedive of Egypt and Sudan, because of grievances over disparities in pay with European employees and other concerns. As a nation, Egypt was in limbo. Although a province of the Ottoman Empire, the Turks neither governed nor cared for Egyptian affairs, because of their own internal decline. Consequently, Egypt had been looted and misgoverned for decades by the Khedives, who in turn were exploited by the British and the French.

115 solar years ago, on this day in 1905 AD, the famous Egyptian jurist and reformist religious scholar, Shaikh Mohammad Abduh, passed away in Alexandria, at the age of 56. A product of al-Azhar where he studied logic, philosophy and mysticism, when the great Iranian pan-Islamist scholar, Seyyed Jamal od-Din Asadabadi, arrived in Egypt, Abduh became his student and was deeply influenced by him. On being appointed editor-in-chief of *"al-Waqa'e al-Misriyya"*, the official newspaper of the country, he dedicated to reforming all aspects of Egyptian society. In his articles he criticized corruption, superstition, and the luxurious lives of the rich. He was exiled from Egypt in 1882 for six years, which he spent in Lebanon and Paris, where he joined Seyyed Jamal od-Din in publishing the Islamic revolutionary journal *"al-Urwat-al-Wusqa"* which promoted anti-colonial views. Abduh also visited Germany and Britain and during his exile dedicated his efforts toward furthering respect and friendship amongst Muslims and Christians. He returned to Egypt in 1888, became a consultative member of the Court of Appeal in 1890, and in 1899 was appointed Mufti of Egypt – a position he held until he died. He embarked on reforming the education system at al-Azhar having come to the conclusion that Muslims suffer from ignorance about their own religion because of the despotism of unjust rulers. He was a prolific writer, and among his works is a commentary on *"Nahj al-Balagha"*, the famous collection of the sermons, letters, and maxims of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali (AS) – a book, reintroduced to the Egyptians, seven centuries after the end of Fatimid rule.

99 solar years ago, on this day in 1921 AD, the Red Army captured Mongolia from the White Army and established the Mongolian People's Republic.

85 solar years ago, on this day in 1935 AD, the Gowharshad Mosque Uprising of the people of Mashhad began against the anti-Islamic policies of the British-installed Pahlavi potentate, Reza Khan, especially "Kashf-e Hijab" or forced unveiling of Muslim women. Adjacent to the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) – the 8th Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) – the Gowharshad Mosque and its courtyard was the scene of peaceful public protests led by the ulema, including Ayatollah Mohammad Taqi Gonabadi known as "Sheikh Bohlool". The regime's forces, desecrating the holy precincts, brutally attacked the peaceful gathering, and on July 14 martyred and wounded some 5,000 people, besides arresting a large number of others.

60 solar years ago, on this day in 1960 AD, the West African countries of Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger, gained independence from several decades of French colonial rule. All three countries have Muslim majority populations.

45 solar years ago, on this day in 1975 AD, Chinese archeologists announced the uncovering of a 3-acre burial mound concealing 6000 clay statues of warriors and their regalia dating from 221 to 206 BC. The "Terracotta Army" was uncovered near the ancient capital of Xian. The 7,000 life-size clay soldiers and horses were buried in pits in battle formation facing east to guard the tomb of China's first emperor, Qin Shi Huang. The figures were modeled after the emperor's army, and each face is different. The buried wonder was found in 1974 in the course of digging a well.

29 solar years ago, on this day in 1991 AD, a Nigerian Airlines jet carrying Muslim Hajj pilgrims to Mecca, crashed at the Jeddah international airport in what is called Saudi Arabia, resulting in the death of all 261 people on board. The plane was a Canadian-chartered DC-8.

25 solar years ago, on this day in 1995 AD, in Bosnia, over a hundred Muslims were brutally decapitated and their headless corpses loaded on to trucks, under instructions of Serb intelligence officer, Momir Nikolic, who was eventually arrested in 2002 for killing some 1,000 Muslim males, taken from a UN compound in July 1995. He was also charged for the deaths of 6,000 more Muslim prisoners who were fleeing besieged Srebrenica. In 2003 Nikolic pleaded guilty to war crimes, but was only given a light sentence of 20 years in prison.

14 solar years ago, on this day in 2006 AD, two hundred nine people were killed in a series of bomb attacks in Mumbai, India, and over seven hundred others injured. The blasts took place over a period of 11 minutes on the Suburban Railway in Mumbai, the nation's financial capital.

Fall Festivals Merge As One to Counter Pandemic



TEHRAN (IFILM) -- The rival fall film festivals of Toronto, New York, Telluride and Venice have set to cooperate rather than compete in response to the coronavirus pandemic. "This year, we've moved away from competing with our colleagues at autumn festivals and commit instead to collaboration. We are sharing ideas and information. We are offering our festivals as a united platform for the best cinema we can find," they said in a joint statement. "We're here to serve the filmmakers, audiences, journalists and industry members who keep the film ecosystem thriving. We need

to do that together," the statement added.

The novel coronavirus first emerged in China late last year and has now infected millions of people and killed hundreds of thousands across the world.

The pandemic impacted many events and forced the cancellation or the postponement of many festivals.

The fall festivals will take place as a physical event, albeit to different degrees.

This year's editions of the festivals will see first-time digital platforms and slimmed-down lineups.

Day of Literature for Children Celebrated at Mahak by Storytelling

TEHRAN(HONARONLINE) -- A number of artists plan to celebrate the Day of Literature for Children and Young Adults by telling stories to children at the Mahak Charity Society, a Tehran-based major medical center for children with cancer.

In a six-day program that commenced on Wednesday, the stories are being recorded and will be available on the Instagram page of the charity society.

Hassan Majuni, Ezzatollah Alvandi, Azadeh Moayyadifard, Bahar Katuzi and Eleka Hedayat are among the artists.

"The charity society has made its great efforts all these years to create a happy, inspiring atmosphere for children with cancer and help make the process of treatment easier for children



and their families," an official in charge of Mahak's Support Services Department, Behnaz Asangari, said in a press release. "The story of Mahak is the story of those who have always

thought other than of themselves. And now in these days of the coronavirus pandemic that have kept us apart, we thought this is a good opportunity to commemorate the Day of

Literature for Children and Young Adults and upload stories for our children narrated by our good artists," she said.

She added that the idea is derived from Kayhan Z., a Mahak donor who has been recording the stories. He tells stories to his children at home, and uploads them for the Mahak children to bring happiness to the little heroes.

"Kayhan lives in Isfahan and has been a good companion of Mahak during the pandemic. He records a story every night in his studio and we upload it in digital media for our children so that they can tolerate these hard days much happier, and it is worth mentioning the stories have been warmly received by children," she said.

Study Supports Remdesivir as COVID-19 Treatment

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- A new study found that remdesivir potently inhibited SARS-CoV-2, the virus which causes COVID-19, in human lung cell cultures and that it improved lung function in mice infected with the virus.

This week researchers at Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC), the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Gilead Sciences reported that remdesivir potently inhibited SARS-CoV-2, the virus which causes COVID-19, in human lung cell cultures and that it improved lung function in mice infected with the virus.

These preclinical findings help explain the clinical effect the drug has had in treating COVID-19 patients. Remdesivir has been given to patients hospitalized with COVID-19 on a compassionate use basis since late January and through clinical trials since February.

In April, a preliminary report from the multicenter Adaptive COVID-19 Treatment Trial (which included VUMC) suggested that patients who received the drug recovered more quickly.

The current findings provide "the first rigorous demonstration of potent

inhibition of SARS-CoV-2 in continuous and primary human lung cultures." The study is also the first to suggest that remdesivir can block the virus in a mouse model.



Picture of the Day



Khadijeh Abbasi, a 58-year-old woman who lives alone in a village in Ardakan in Iran's central Yazd province, has turned her farmland into an exhibition of dolls she makes for fun.

Courtesy of IFP News