

This Day in History

(August 10)

Today is Monday; 20th of the Iranian month of Mordad 1399 solar hijri; corresponding to 20th of the Islamic month of Zil-Hijjah 1441 lunar hijri; and August 10, 2020 of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

2632 solar years ago, on this day in 612 BC, with the killing of King Sinsar-iskun during the Battle of Ninevah by an allied army of Babylonians, Chaldeans, Medes, Persians, Scythians and Cimmerians, the city of Ninevah – the then largest in the world – was sacked and the neo-Assyrian Empire ended after three centuries of domination over West Asia. The city of Babylon now became the imperial centre of Mesopotamia for the first time in over a thousand years, leading to the emergence of the neo-Babylonian Empire under King Nabopolassar, who had formed a successful alliance with King Cyaxares or Hvakshathra of the Medes, and other Iranian tribes. In 539 BC, Cyrus the Great of the Persian Achaemenid Empire ended the neo-Babylonian Empire.

1375 lunar years ago, on this day in 66 AH, the brave Muslim warrior Ibrahim bin Malek al-Ashtar left Kufa to confront the invasion of Iraq by the Syrian army led by the infamous Obaydollah ibn Ziyad – the main perpetrator of the heart-rending tragedy of Karbala and the martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson Imam Husain (AS), five years earlier. Dispatched by Mokhtar ibn Abu Obaidah, the Avenger of Imam Husain's blood, Ibrahim faced the enemy forces on the banks of the River Zab near Mosul and thoroughly defeated them, killing Obaydollah along with other notorious criminals such as Haseen bin Numayr and Shurahbil bin Zi'l-Kila. Son of Malek al-Ashtar an-Nakha'i, the celebrated general of Imam Ali (AS) and his governor-designate to Egypt to whom the famous epistle on ideal administration is addressed, Ibrahim and his mostly Iranian army, following victory over the Syrians, liberated the cities of Sinjar, Nasibayn, and Harran in present day Turkey. Ibrahim was in Mosul when the treacherous Abdullah ibn Zubayr sent his brother Mus'ab from Hijaz to attack Kufa and martyr through deceit the valiant Mokhtar in 67 AH. Under pressure from both the Omayyads and the Zubayrids, Ibrahim couldn't fight on two fronts at the same time and reluctantly sided with Mus'ab, who entrusted him the governorship of Mosul, Upper Mesopotamia, Armenia and Azarbaijan. When Omayyad ruler, Abdul-Malik ibn Marwan attacked Iraq, Ibrahim's advice to Mus'ab to purge traitors and conspirators from the army and the administration fell on deaf ears. As a result, a day before the major battle, despite his courage and swordsmanship, Ibrahim was killed because of the betrayal by hypocrites. The next day, Abdul-Malik's army easily defeated and killed Mus'ab and went on to occupy all of Iraq and Iran. The tomb of Ibrahim al-Ashtar is located south of Dujayl, on the old Baghdad-to-Samarrah route. In 2005 Takfiri terrorists, backed by the US and Saudi Arabia, destroyed it.

1313 lunar years ago, on this day in 128 AH, Imam Musa al-Kazem (AS), the 7th Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) was born in Abwa between the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. At the age of 20, the mantle of divine leadership came to rest on his shoulders following the martyrdom of his father, Imam Ja'far Sadeq (AS), through poisoning. His period of Imamate was 35 years, during which he was subjected to hardships by the Abbasid tyrants – Mansour, Mahdi, Hadi, and Haroun. His epithet "Kazem" means Restraint of Anger, and despite frequent bouts of imprisonment he showed profound patience and forbearance, even in the dungeons of Haroun, who martyred him through poisoning in 183 AH in Baghdad. Today, his magnificent gold-plated shrine is the centre of pilgrimage in Kazemayn.

1233 solar years ago, on this day in 787 AD, prominent Iranian-Islamic astronomer, philosopher and hadith scholar, Abu Mash'ar Ja'far ibn Mohammad al-Balkhi, was born in the Khorasani city of Balkh (currently in Afghanistan). Abu Ma'shar wrote several books including "*Kitab al-Mudkhal al-Kabir ila Ilm Ahkaam an-Nujum*", "*Kitab al-Milal wa'l-Duwal*" and "*Kitab Tahawil Sinin al-Mawald*" (Book of the Revolutions of the Years of Nativities).

501 solar years ago, on this day in 1519 AD, the Portuguese navigator Ferdinand Magellan's 5-ship Spanish expedition set sail from Seville to circumnavigate the Earth. The Basque second in command Juan Sebastian Elcano was to complete the expedition after Magellan's death in the Philippines and return to Spain on 5 September 1522.

340 solar years ago, on this day in 1680 AD, the Pueblo Revolt was launched by Pueblo Amerindians against the Spanish in the province of Santa Fe de Nuevo Mexico.

228 solar years ago, on this day in 1792 AD during the French Revolution, the storming of the Tuileries Palace led to the arrest of King Louis XVI and the massacre of his Swiss Guards by the Parisian mob. He and his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette were later executed by the guillotine.

100 solar years ago, on this day in 1920 AD, the Treaty of Sevres was forced upon the decaying Ottoman Empire by Britain and France, stripping it of 80% of its territory. The remaining European parts of the Empire were handed over to Greece, while Italy got several islands, forcing hundreds of thousands of Muslims to leave their ancestral homes and cross into the Asian parts. At the same time, Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine were placed under British mandate, and Syria and Lebanon under French mandate, while Hijaz with its holy cities of Mecca and Medina, the resort of Ta'ef and the Red Sea ports of Jeddah and Yanbu, declared an independent kingdom under the British agent, Sharif Hussain. Armenia also got a share of Turkish territory while a part of Asia Minor was given to Greece as Ionia. Istanbul and its surroundings were declared demilitarized, while the ancient Seljuq capital of Konya was placed under Italy's zone of influence. The plan was to separate the Kurdish areas as well, but was deferred. This harsh and humiliating treatment led to the uprising of the Turkish people, and the Turkish army soon drove away the Greek occupiers from Asia Minor and the surroundings of Istanbul on the European side. This forced the western powers to draft a new treaty in 1923, which fixed the present boundaries of modern Turkey. In 1937, the French illegally handed over to Turkey the Syrian territories of Iskenderun and Antakya (Antioch), which Turkey calls Hatay Province, but whose sovereignty Damascus has never recognized, calling it part of Syria. Meanwhile, in 1925, the Kingdom of Hijaz was occupied by Wahhabi brigands from the Nejd with the blessings of the British who in 1932 formally installed their agent, Abdul-Aziz Aal-Saud as king of the pseudo country called Saudi Arabia. Abdel-Aziz consequently seized parts of Yemen and occupied the Shi'ite Muslim sheikhdoms of the eastern parts of the Arabian Peninsula on the oil-rich Persian Gulf coast.

94 solar years ago, on this day in 1925 AD, the jurisprudent, Ayatollah Shaikh Abdun-Nabi Noori, passed away in Tehran. He was a product of the seminary of holy Najaf, in Iraq, where he attained ijthad under guidance of leading ulema such as Mirza Mohammad Hassan Shirazi of the anti-tobacco movement. On his return to Iran, he taught at the Tehran seminary, grooming several scholars.

83 solar years ago, on this day in 1937 AD, a two-year war broke out between China and Japan over some important regions of Chinese soil including Canton which fell to the Japanese on April 25, 1939. With the outbreak of World War II Japan occupied large regions of eastern China, which it was forced to evacuate following its defeat.

40 solar years ago, on this day in 1980 AD, Pakistan's former president, General Agha Mohammad Yahya Khan, died at the age of 63.

30 solar years ago, on this day in 1990 AD, more than 127 Muslims were massacred in northeastern Sri Lanka by paramilitary troops. Throughout the civil war between the Sinhali dominated Buddhist government and the Hindu Tamil militants, the Muslims of Sri Lanka were unfortunately targeted by both sides.

27 solar years ago, on this day in 1993 AD, the acclaimed Iranian miniaturist and illustrator, Ahmad Ra'ez, passed away. Born in Isfahan, he became familiar with arts and illustration under prominent masters. His works which were displayed at the Brussels International Exhibition were ranked second and won prizes. He spent nearly 50 years drawing miniatures and enameling, in addition to grooming numerous students. He produced more than 145 works of miniature.

Much Acclaimed Title Competes at Five Festivals



A still from the Iranian short film 'Funfair'.

TEHRAN (MNA) – Iranian short film 'Funfair', directed by Kaveh Mazaheri will take part at five international festivals in the next three months.

The Iranian film has been accepted into Brazil's São Paulo International

Short Film Festival, Italy's Sedicorto International Film Festival, Spain's ANIFF Active Nonviolence International Film Festival, and Romania's Anonimul International Independent Film Festival.

'Funfair' is a short film about

members of a family who risk their lives to earn more money in order to escape a life of destitution.

The film won a special jury award at Palm Springs International Film Festival in the U.S. in June.

The Iranian short has also been accepted into Tabor Film Festival (Croatia), Herat International Women's Film Festival (Afghanistan), Bali International Film Festival (Indonesia), Figari Film Festival (Italy), Corti da Sogni (Italy), SorsiCorti (Italy), Fastnet Film Festival (Ireland) and Krakow Film Festival Market (Poland).

Most of these festivals will be held online and with delays due to the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Since the beginning of 2020, 'Funfair' has taken part in several international events, including the 29th

Palencia International Films Festival in Spain, the 24th REGARD – Saguenay International Short Film Festival in Canada, the 15th Geneva International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights in Switzerland and the 15th ÉCU – The European Independent Film Festival in France.

'Funfair' has been qualified for Oscar 2021 after winning the best short film award at the 32nd edition of the Foyle Film Festival in Derry, Northern Ireland.

The film's other achievements include a Special Mention for Best Screenplay at 'Court en Scène' Film Festival in France, a Special Mention for Best Foreign Film at Winchester Film Festival in the UK, and the 'Good Fyilm Best Short Award' at the 18th edition of Cornwall Film Festival in the UK.

Short Film 'Label' Goes to Finnish Festival

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- The Scandinavian International Film Festival (SCIFF) in Finland has scheduled to screen Iranian short 'Label'.

Directed by Mohammad Shahrestanaki, the short narrative will be in competition at the 5th edition of the Finnish event.

A brief synopsis for the short reads, "Mohsen is about to tie the knots with his brother-in-law's cousin. But suddenly he decides not to marry her. No one knows why he has changed his mind out of the blue".



A still from Iranian short film 'Label'.

Mehdi Qamar and Nima Qorbazadeh are the cast members of the flick.

The SCIFF is considered as a high-level cultural event in Helsinki, Finland.

Its objective is to highlight today's conflicts such as racism, radicalism and human crises.

The 5th edition of the SCIFF is scheduled for August 22-26, 2020.

The well-recognized short film by Javad Daraee, 'Limit', is the other Iranian representative at the Finnish event.

Windows Down Means More Air Pollution For Drivers

LONDON (Dispatches) -- Car users from the world's least affluent cities are exposed to a disproportionate amount of in-car air pollution because they rely heavily on opening their windows for ventilation, a new study finds.

A global team of researchers led by Surrey's Global Centre for Clean Air Research (GCARE) investigated air pollution exposure levels for commuters in 10 different global cities -- Dhaka (Bangladesh), Chennai (India), Guangzhou (China), Medellín (Colombia), São Paulo (Brazil), Cairo (Egypt), Sulaymaniyah (Iraq), Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), Blantyre (Malawi), and Dar-es-Salaam (Tanzania).

The research team investigated PM2.5 and PM10 exposure levels inside vehicles during peak hours in the morning and evening, as well as off-peak hours in the middle of the day. The scientists measured how exposure levels changed when drivers used recirculation systems, fans and simply opened the windows.

The study discovered that drivers in some of the world's poorest cities experienced higher levels of in-car pollution.

Irrespective of the city and car model used, a windows-open setting showed the highest exposure, followed by fan-on and

recirculation. Pollution exposure for windows-open during off-peak hours was 91 percent and 40 percent less than morning and evening peak hours, respectively. The study also found that the windows-open setting exposed car passengers to hotspots of air pollution for up to a third of the total travel length.



Picture of the Day



Fireworks illuminate the sky over Azadi Tower in Tehran to mark Eid al-Ghadeer on August 8, 2020.