

# This Day in History

(April 22)

Today is Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> of the Iranian month of Ordibehesht 1400 solar hijri; corresponding to 9<sup>th</sup> of the Islamic month of Ramadhan 1442 lunar hijri; and April 22, 2021, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

**965 solar years ago**, on this day in 1056 AD, the supernova in the Crab nebula was last seen by the naked eye. According to historical documents, as recorded by the Chinese court astronomer and astrologer of those days, Yang Wei-Te, in its first two months in the year 1054, the star was of yellow colour. It remained visible for 653 days, as is also attested by the Islamic astronomers of those days.

**589 lunar years ago**, on this day in 853 AH, the prominent astronomer-king of the Timurid dynasty, Mirza Mohammad Taraghay Ulugh Beg, was killed by his rebellious son, Abdul-Latif "Pidarkush" (killer of his own father), while on his way to Mecca for pilgrimage after being deposed. Born in Soltaniyeh near Zanjan in northwestern Iran, his father was Amir Shahroukh, the son and successor of the fearsome Turkic conqueror, Amir Timur, while his mother was the cultured and religious Iranian lady, Gowharshad, the builder of the famous mosque in Mashhad adjacent to the shrine of Prophet Mohammad's 8th Infallible Successor, Imam Reza (AS). His seat of government was Samarqand (currently in Uzbekistan), where he built the great Observatory with the assistance of the famous Iranian astronomer, Ghiyas od-Din Jamshid Kashani. He also built the Ulugh Beg Madrasahs in Samarqand and Bukhara, transforming the cities into cultural centres of learning. He ruled for almost half-a-century the present-day countries of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and the southern parts of Kazakhstan – and for a while parts of Khorasan. Ulugh Beg determined the length of the sidereal year as 365.2570370, making it more accurate than Copernicus' estimate. He also determined the Earth's axial tilt as 23.52 degrees, which remained the most accurate measurement for hundreds of years. In mathematics, he wrote accurate trigonometric tables of sine and tangent values correct to at least eight decimal places. The crater "Ulugh Beg", on the Moon, is named after him.

**405 solar years ago**, on this day in 1616 AD, Spanish poet and novelist, Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, died in Madrid at the age of 59. Born near Madrid, his magnum opus "Don Quixote" is considered to be the first modern European novel.

**399 solar years ago**, on this day in 1622 AD, the strategically located Hormuz Island in the Strait of the same name at the entry of the Persian Gulf was liberated from over a century of Portuguese occupation by a joint Iranian-English fleet. The victory entirely changed the balance of power and trade to the benefit of the Safavid Empire and the English East India Company. The Iranians first besieged Qeshm Island – the largest in the Persian Gulf and also under Portuguese occupation. Shah Abbas the Great dispatched his famous general Imam Qoli Khan, the son of Allahverdi Khan, to negotiate with the English, and after the liberation of Qeshm, the joint Iranian-English fleet sailed to Hormuz and the Safavids captured the town by sinking the Portuguese fleet. Twenty years earlier, Shah Abbas I had liberated Bahrain from Portuguese occupation.

**297 solar years ago**, on this day in 1724 AD, Immanuel Kant, Russian-German philosopher was born in the Prussian city of Konigsberg, which since 1946 is in Russia and called Kaliningrad. His philosophy is based on criticism of mankind's wisdom and understanding and is therefore known as critical philosophy. His books include "Critique of Practical Reason".

**217 lunar years ago**, on this day in 1225 AH, Wahhabi heretics of Najd in Arabia raided Iraq and attacked the holy cities of Najaf and Karbala, massacring hundreds of fasting Muslims in Ramadhan and looting the holy shrines of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS) and the Martyr of Karbala, Imam Husain (AS). An eyewitness account of this blasphemous crime has been given by the scholar Seyyed Mohammad Jawad al-Amili, the author of the jurisprudential work "Miftah al-Karamah", who survived the attack. He has written that the Godless Wahhabis besieged the cities, blocked the roads, looted houses and shrines, and massacred pilgrims.

**126 solar years ago**, on this day in 1895 AD, the people of Cuba staged an uprising for liberation from the yoke of Spanish colonial rule. This was the third uprising of the Cubans during the second half of the 19th century for independence.

**117 solar years ago**, on this day in 1904 AD, US physicist and the builder of atomic bomb, Robert Oppenheimer, was born.

**106 solar years ago**, on this day in 1915 AD, modern chemical weapons were first used in a war. German troops released chlorine gas from several metal cylinders on the front lines at Ypres, Belgium, during WW I. The cloud of yellow-green gas with a strong odour was blown by wind over the French trenches, painfully killing 5,000 soldiers.

**73 solar years ago**, on this day in 1948 AD, the illegal European Zionist migrants in Palestine attacked and occupied the Mediterranean port city of Haifa, martyring 500 Palestinians and wounding several hundred others. When the terrified Arab women, children and old men fled to the harbour for possible evacuation to safe places, the Zionists brutally attacked them, martyring over 100 other innocent Palestinians and injuring more than 200. These and other massacres were a prelude to the illegitimate birth of Israel on Palestinian soil on May 14, 1948.

**60 solar years ago**, on this day in 1961 AD, the actions of the French secret army for continued occupation of Algeria resulted in the killing of at least 1,200 people in the capital, Algiers.

**51 solar years ago**, on this day in 1970 AD, Earth Day and Earth Week were marked for the first time as a result of a lifelong campaign by peace activist, John McConnell, for ensuring clean and healthy environment in view of the hazards posed by industrialization.

**42 solar years ago**, on this day in 1979 AD, the Father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (RA), ordered establishment of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC). The main duty of IRGC is defence of the Islamic Revolution, and since its formation IRGC has decisively confronted anti-revolutionary groups and their plots to destabilize the country. The IRGC personnel showed their skill and valour during the 8-year war imposed on Iran by the US through Saddam of the repressive Ba'th minority regime of Iraq, thereby thwarting enemy designs. After end of the imposed war, the IRGC has maintained its military preparedness in the face of enemy threats against the Islamic Revolution and Iran by actively participating in various development projects at home and abroad, including defending the oppressed people of the region against state and non-state terrorists.

**41 solar years ago**, on this day in 1980 AD, the University of Tabriz was liberated by the Muslim masses of this northwestern city from occupation of the US-backed MKO hypocrites. Five days earlier, following the takeover of Tabriz University by Muslim students, the hypocrites who had entrenched themselves in the Teachers' Training College were given a 3-day ultimatum by the Revolutionary Council, and when they refused to evacuate, the public burst into the campus to drive them out. Imam Khomeini (RA) supported the move and agreed with the closure of universities all over the country for conducting a fundamental review of the system of education in line with Islamic teachings. The universities were finally reopened on 18 December 1982.

**37 solar years ago**, on this day in 1984 AD, the war of tankers was started by Ba'thist Iraq following blocking of Iraqi exports of oil via the Shatt-al-Arab waterway, and Syria's closure of Iraq's pipeline to the Mediterranean Sea. Iraq attacked Iranian tankers and the vital oil terminal at Khark Island. It then attacked Kuwaiti and Saudi tankers in a bid to lay the blame on Iran, so that its godfather the US would intrude into the Persian Gulf on the pretext of preventing Iran from blocking the Hormuz Strait. The Iranians limited their retaliatory attacks to Iraqi shipping, leaving the Hormuz Strait open to general passage to thwart the plot. Nonetheless, as Iraq's lawlessness continued, Kuwait officially requested mischief-monger US to provide its tankers with naval escort.

**27 solar years ago**, on this day in 1994 AD, 7,000 ethnic Tutsis were slaughtered in stadium of Kibuye in Rwanda by the Hutu. Initially gasoline was used to set ablaze a building where 500 Tutsis were hiding. In 2001 Benedictine Sister Maria Kisito stood trial in Belgium for providing the gasoline.

# Iranians Observe National Day of Saadi Shirazi



TEHRAN(MNA) – April 21st is the National Commemoration Day of the renowned Persian poet Saadi Shirazi, born in Shiraz around 1200 and died around 1292.

Abu-Muhammad Muslih al-Din bin Abdallah Shirazi, known by his pen-name Saadi, was one of the

major Persian poets of the medieval period.

Saadi is known as a mystic and metaphysician in the history of Persian literature. He is recognized for the quality of his writings and for the depth of his social and moral thoughts.

The ancient scholar has gained worldwide fame, not only in the Persian-speaking countries but in western societies, with his poems being quoted in a multitude of sources.

Saadi's best-known masterpieces are Bustan (The Orchard) completed in 1257 and Gulistan (The Flower Garden) in 1258.

Bustan, as his best-known work, was completed in 1257. It is quite in verse, including 4,000 verses in 183 stories about the virtues such as justice, kindness, love, modesty, liberality, generosity, satisfaction and happiness, and the ecstatic practices of dervishes addressing all people to have a better and happier life.

A year after the completion of Bustan, Saadi composed his masterpiece Gulistan.

Gulistan, comprised of 8 chapters is mainly in prose. The book widely addresses kings' morality, dervishes' behavior, benefits of contentment, silence and talking in proper time, love and youthfulness, weakness in old age, and education.

Saadi attempts to advise people to live freely and to improve the quality of their lives in Gulistan.

Saadi elaborately distinguishes between the spiritual and the mundane aspects of life in his works. He tries to visualize the deepest meanings of life in the most tangible contexts and close to conversational language as far as possible in such a way that even common people can get the most out of his writings.

He is a well-known poet among world scholars.

## 'TiTi' Premieres at Iranian Festival in Australia

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- Ida Panahandeh's 2019 production 'TiTi' is set to inaugurate the 10th edition of the Iranian Film Festival Australia (IFFA) to be held in different Australian cities in both online and physical formats.

As put by the official website of the IFFA, 'TiTi' is the story of "a hospitalized, critically ill physicist, working on a theory about black holes and the end of the world, who meets a rather eccentric hospital housekeeper named TiTi.

Though single, TiTi is acting as a surrogate mother for an infertile couple in order to serve humanity and raise money to build a small room of her own. When the physicist falls into a deep coma, TiTi, rose by Iranian gypsies and pos-



A scene from Ida Panahandeh's 2019 production 'TiTi'.

sessing supernatural powers, performs a strange ritual to save him. This is the start of an odyssey; an

odyssey that changes their lives forever." 'TiTi' made its first international

premiere at the 2020 Tokyo International Film Festival.

Parsa Pirouzfar, Elnaz Shakerdoust and Houtan Shakiba star in the film as three leading roles.

'Israfil' and 'Nahid' are two of Panahandeh's award-winning works that grabbed awards and nominations at international film events.

The Iranian Film Festival Australia will run through May 20-26 in Perth and then will pursue in Brisbane from May 27 to June 2.

Melbourne will be the next city to host the festival from June 3 to 9, and the festival will come to an end in Sydney on June 16. Afterwards, the IFFA will be held online for 10 days all over Australia.

The festival's full lineup will be announced in a not-distant future.

## Catholic Priest Authors Four Books on Shia Heritage

TEHRAN (IBNA) -- A South African Catholic priest and scholar Christopher Paul Clohessy has published four books in English on Shia heritage including those on Karbala event, Fatimah (SA) and Zaynab (SA).

The books that Clohessy himself has authored are 'Fatima, Daughter of Muhammad', 'Half of My Heart: The Narratives of Zaynab, Daughter Of Ali', and 'Angels Hastening: The Karbala Dreams'.

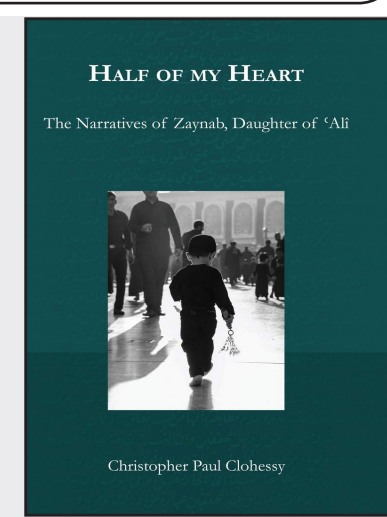
Part of 'Fatima, Daughter of Muhammad' reads: "The only child of Muhammad to survive him, Faṭimah [SA] was from early times taken up by Shia Islam, for whose adherents she is the virgin mother, the heavenly intercessor with untold power before God's throne, and the grieving mother of al-Husayn [AS], the Shi'a's most important martyr.

'Half of My Heart: The Narratives of Zaynab, Daughter Of Ali' reads: As Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ḥusayn [AS], son of 'Ali [AS] and Faṭimah and grandson of Muḥammad [PBUH], moved inexorably towards death on the field of Karbalā, his sister Zaynab [SA] was drawn ever closer to the center of the family of Muḥammad, the 'people of the house' (ahl al-bayt).

'Angels Hastening: The Karbala Dreams' is introduced as: "When, on an autumn Medina night in 61/680, the night that saw al-Ḥusayn killed, Umm Salama was torn from her sleep by an apparition of a long-dead Muḥammad, she slipped effortlessly into a progression of her co-religionists who, irrespective of status, gender or standing with God, were the recipients of dark and arresting visions.

Christopher Clohessy is a South African Catholic priest who holds a BST from the Pontifical Urbanium University in Rome, and a Ph.D. from the

Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI), also in Rome. He is at present a resident faculty member of PISAI, lecturing there in Shia Islamic studies, Quran and Islamic Ethics, and is visiting lecturer at the Pontifical Beda College in Rome, where he lectures in Fundamental Theology, Ecclesiology and Mariology.



## Picture of the Day



Woodcarving is among the oldest arts preserved in the northern Iranian provinces including Mazandaran, where the abundance of wood has led to a form of woodcarving known as 'Laktarashi'.

Courtesy of Mehr News Agency