

This Day in History

(May 7)

Today is Thursday; 18th of the Iranian month of Ordibehesht 1399 solar hijri; corresponding to 13th of the Islamic month of Ramadhan 1441 lunar hijri; and May 7, 2020, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

2419 solar years ago, on this day in 399 BC, Greek philosopher Socrates was killed during imprisonment by being forced to drink poison because of rejecting the Athenian democratic regime's tyranny and rejection of its demand to acknowledge its pantheon of gods. His preaching of moral virtue brought accusations of corrupting the youth.

1187 solar years ago, on this day in 833 AD, the historian Abdul-Malik bin Hisham ibn Ayyub al-Himyari, died in Fustat (Cairo). His family was from Basra in southern Iraq and migrated to Egypt, where he became known as a grammarian and said to have mastered philology in a way which only the famous Iranian scholar of Arabic, Sibawayh had. Ibn Hisham compiled the "Sirah" or biography of Prophet Mohammad (blessings of God upon him and his progeny). It is actually an edited version of the earlier "Sirah" compiled by Mohammad ibn Ishaq - grandson of Christian convert from Kufa. Ibn Hisham abbreviated, annotated, and altered the original text by adding what appealed to his inclination and removing several passages, however authentic. For instance, he deleted the hadith confirming Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS) as "wasi" (or testamentary legatee), including the famous event in Mecca on revelation of ayah 214 of Surah Shu'ara when Prophet Mohammad (blessings of God upon him and his progeny) soon after his formal entrustment with prophethood, invited his kinsmen for meals and announced to them the message of Islam, declaring at the end of the function his young, pre-teen cousin, Imam Ali (AS) as brother, legatee and caliph. The historian Tabari has preserved such hadith, citing Ibn Ishaq's work as his source.

533 solar years ago, on this day in 1487 AD, siege of the Spanish Muslim city of Malaga was started by a huge Christian army of 20,000 cavalry, 50,000 infantry, and 8,000 support troops including thousands of mercenaries from other parts of Europe, as part of the attempts of Ferdinand of Aragon and his wife Isabel of Castile to occupy the prosperous Nasrid Kingdom of Granada. The siege lasted about four months. Malaga was the second important city after Granada, a major trading port on the Mediterranean. The city was prosperous, with elegant architecture, gardens and fountains. It was surrounded by fortifications. Above it was the citadel, connected via a covered way with the impregnable fortress of Gibralfaro. A landside suburb was also ringed by a strong wall. Towards the sea were orchards of olives, oranges, pomegranates, and vineyards. The city was well-supplied with artillery and ammunition. After the city surrendered, Ferdinand broke all terms and ordered that the survivors, numbering around 15,000 should be killed or enslaved. It is also worth noting that the Mamluks of Egypt, who had assembled a special force for assisting the Spanish Muslims, could not march to their aid, because of the divisive diplomacy of Christian powers, who fearful of the Ottoman advance into Italy and subsequently Spain, tempted the Turkish Sultan of Istanbul to get embroiled in an unwanted fratricidal war in Syria.

208 solar years ago, on this day in 1812 AD, English poet, Robert Browning, was born in London. His works include "The Piper of Hamelin" and "The Ring and the Book."

159 solar years ago, on this day in 1861 AD, India's Bengali language poet and thinker, Rabindranath Tagore, was born. He travelled widely and wrote several books. He visited Iran and paid tributes to the famous Persian poet, Hafez Shirazi. Tagore travelled to Shiraz, Isfahan, Tehran and Kermanshah in Iran, from where he went by road to Baghdad in Iraq. Tagore's personal diary and public interviews capture fascinating details of his political and social observations. At the mausoleum of Hafez, he wrote in his travelogue, "Sitting near the tomb, a signal flashed through my mind, a signal from the bright and smiling eyes of the poet on a long past spring day - akin to the springtime sunshine of today." He celebrated his 71st birthday in Tehran and wrote a beautiful poem titled: "IRAN", on the occasion.

132 solar years ago, on this day in 1888 AD, on the pretext of trade, the crafty British established their foothold in what is now Zimbabwe, through the designs of the imperialist agent, Cecil Rhodes, who soon deceived the local African chiefs to declare the land as Britain's colony. The British troops massacred thousands of black people and in 1898 named the land Southern Rhodesia - the land of Zambesi across the river of the same name was called Northern Rhodesia. In 1965 with the intensification of the freedom struggle by the black people, British agent, Ian Smith, seized power, brutally suppressed the people and involved them in civil war, as his white racist policy of divide and rule. In 1980, the country became independent as Rhodesia, and the colonial capital, Salisbury was renamed Harare. Today, independence leader, Robert Mugabe, is the president. Because of his independent policies, the US, Britain, and Western Europe, have imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe's economy, and indulge in feverish propaganda against him. Zimbabwe is rich in diamonds and minerals.

125 solar years ago, on this day in 1895 AD, In Saint Petersburg, Russian scientist Alexander Stepanovich Popov demonstrated to the Russian Physical and Chemical Society his invention, the Popov lightning detector - a primitive radio receiver. In Russia the anniversary of this day is celebrated as Radio Day.

69 solar years ago, on this day in 1951 AD, Iranian poet, researcher, and translator, Rashid Yasami, passed away. He founded the magazine "Daneshkadeh" with the cooperation of the celebrated Iranian poet, Malek osh-Sho'ara Mohammad Taqi Bahar. He published his writings in this magazine and other magazines as well. Yasami has left behind numerous compilations and translations, including "The History of Iranian Literature", and "Iran in the Sassanid Era".

66 solar years ago, on this day in 1954 AD, the Battle of Dien Bien Phu ended in a French defeat and a Vietnamese victory after almost two months of fighting. The Viet Minh forces besieged Dien Bien Phu Castle, forcing Colonel Christian de Castries to surrender, thus ending French colonial rule over Vietnam. The meddling Americans, however, started interfering in Vietnam and on the pretext of spread of communism, landed troops, divided the country into two parts and imposed an unwanted war that dragged on till 1975, resulting in the death of tens of thousands of Vietnamese, but ultimately ending in a humiliating defeat for the US.

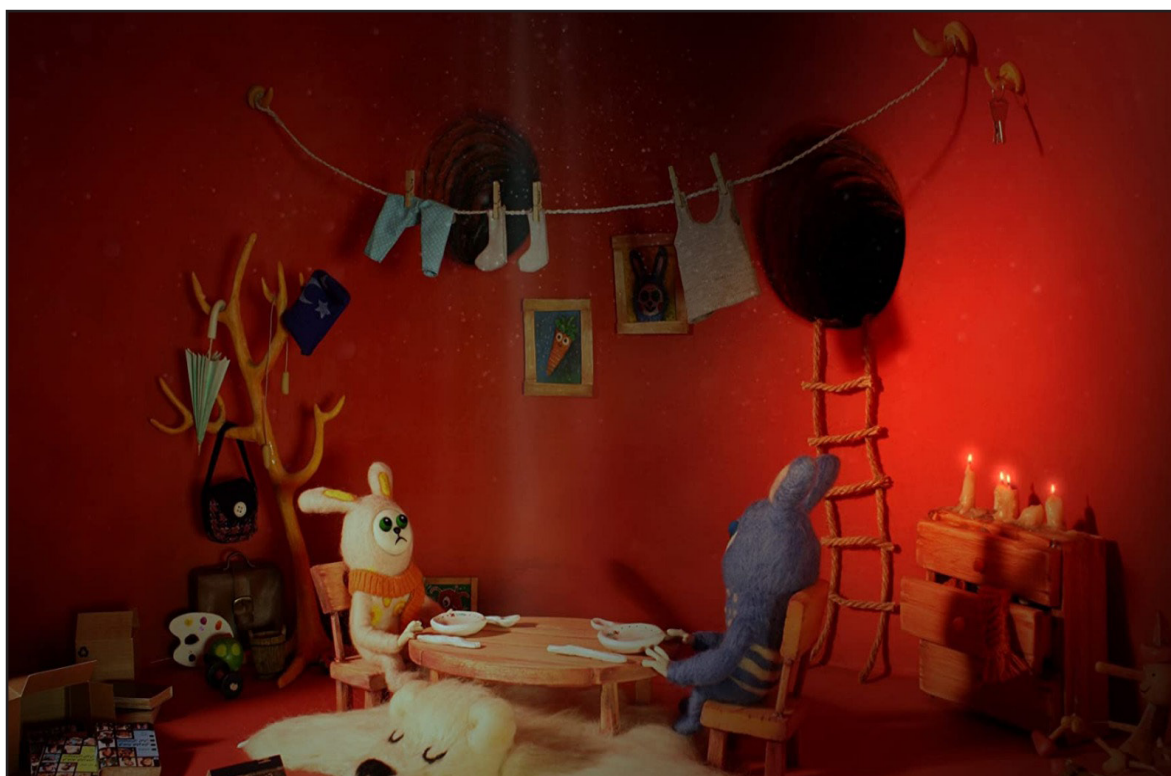
38 solar years ago, on this day in 1982 AD, the town of Hoveizah in Khuzestan, southwestern Iran, was liberated from Ba'hist occupation by Iran's Muslim combatants during the Bayt al-Moqaddas Operations, which would eventually lead to the liberation of the once-thriving port city of Khorramshahr. Among the heroes of Hoveizah was Hussain Alam-Hoda, who defended the town till the last drop of his blood.

28 solar years ago, on this day in 1991 AD, Iranian poet, author, and researcher, Mehrdad Avesta, passed away at the age of 62. He was an authority on the classical Persian poet Shaikh Sadi's famous works "Bostan" and "Golestan", in addition to Arabic grammar. He lectured on Iranian and global arts and literature at several colleges in Tehran. He started political activities against the repressive rule of the Pahlavi regime through his poems. He has written beautiful poems on the Islamic Revolution and in admiration of the Founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Imam Khomeini (RA). He researched and published the works of prominent classical Persian poets, such as Hafez, Sa'di, Mowlavi, Khaqani, San'aei, and Salman Saavaji.

14 solar years ago, on this 2006 AD, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad wrote to US President George Bush, proposing "new solutions" to differences between the two countries, in the first letter from an Iranian head of state to his US counterpart in 27 years. This bold move went unanswered because of the timidity of Bush and the lack of confidence in the powers that controlled him, especially the Israeli lobby that has continued to target Iran, through manufactured crises, since the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

(Courtesy: IRIB English Radio - <http://parstoday.com/en>)

'Eaten' Makes It to Stuttgart Animation Festival



TEHRAN (IFILM) -- The of Animated Film (ITFS) in animated short film 'Eaten'. Stuttgart International Festival Germany is screening Iran's Directed by Mohsen Rezapour,

the film is about life on a mysterious and unknown planet.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, ITFS is being held online. The virtual edition kicked off on Tuesday and lasts until May 10.

The festival "ranks among the world's most important events for animated film in all its aspects", the event's website reads.

It is an Oscar-qualifying festival which "offers directors, production companies and distributors as well as talent and all further professionals from the animation and games industries a platform to present their films, interactive and transmedia works ... to an interested, wide audience and a large number of industry representatives."

Antibodies From Llamas Could Help in Fight Against COVID-19

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- The hunt for an effective treatment for COVID-19 has led one team of researchers to find an improbably for their work: a llama named Winter.

The researchers from The University of Texas at Austin, the National Institutes of Health and Ghent University in linked two copies of a special kind of antibody produced by llamas to create a new antibody that binds tightly to a key protein on the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. This protein, called

the spike protein, allows the virus to break into host cells. Initial tests indicate that the antibody blocks viruses that display this spike protein from infecting cells in culture.

"This is one of the first antibodies known to neutralize SARS-CoV-2," said Jason McLellan, associate professor of molecular biosciences at UT Austin and co-senior author, referring to the virus that causes COVID-19.

When llamas' immune systems detect foreign invaders such as bacteria and viruses, these animals (and other camelids such as alpacas) produce two types of antibodies: one that is similar to human antibodies and another that's only about a quarter of the size. These smaller ones, called single-domain antibodies or



nanobodies, can be nebulized and used in an inhaler.

The team engineered the new antibody that shows promise for treating the current SARS-CoV-2 by linking two copies of

the llama antibody that worked against the earlier SARS virus. They demonstrated that the new antibody neutralizes viruses displaying spike proteins from SARS-CoV-2 in cell cultures.

Picture of the Day



Piles of wool yarns being put into dye baths of different colors to prepare one of the basic materials for producing the renowned Persian handmade carpets.

Courtesy of Mehr News Agency

Iran's Student Festival extends Submission Deadline



TEHRAN (IFILM) -- Nahal International Student Short Film Festival in Iran has extended the submission deadline amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Due to the coronavirus that forced the closure of universities and suspended cultural events, the deadline has been extended until May 20.

Those interested to see their films taking part at the 2020 edition of the Iranian festival can register via the festival's website or the online submission platform, FilmFreeway.

Nahal International Student Short Film Festival was scheduled for June, but is postponed until further notice.

The festival aims to provide a space for students to present their works to international audience members.