

This Day in History

(June 9)

Today is Tuesday, 20th of the Iranian month of Khordad 1399 solar hijri; corresponding to 17th of the Islamic month of Shawwal 1441 lunar hijri; and June 9, 2020, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

1952 solar years ago, on this day in 68 AD, the deceitful, cruel and bloodthirsty Roman Emperor, Nero, to evade a Senate-imposed death by flogging, committed suicide at the age of 31 by imploring his secretary Epaphroditos to slit his throat. Thus ended the 14-year reign of terror during which Nero tortured to death the monotheistic followers of Prophet Jesus (AS), killed his own mother Agrippina who had secured the throne for him through treachery, and torched the entire city of Rome while sadistically enjoying the sight of its burning from a hill.

1436 lunar years ago, on this day in 5 AH, the Battle of Khandaq or Ditch, also known as the Battle of Ahzaab or Confederates, which a 10,000-strong joint force of pagan Arabs and Israelites had imposed upon Muslims by laying siege to Medina as part of the plot to kill Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), ended in decisive victory for Islam, thanks to the valour of the Commander of the Faithful, Imam Ali ibn Abi Taleb (AS). To defend the city against the mighty horde led by Abu Sufyan, the archenemy of Islam, the Muslims dug a ditch around the sensitive parts of Medina on the suggestion of Salman Farsi, the Prophet's Iranian companion. When the joint Arab-Israelite force arrived, it was surprised to see a ditch around Medina, and decided to besiege the city in order to break the will of the Muslims. As days passed and no breakdown of morale occurred in Medina, the fearsome Arab pagan warlord, Amr ibn Abdudwad, along with some of his accomplices, leapt his horse across the ditch at its narrowest point and challenged the terrified Muslims to personal combat. Except for Imam Ali (AS), none of the companions of the Prophet dared to rise up against this veritable giant who had a nasty reputation of physical strength. A duel took place, and the Imam, despite receiving a wound on his forehead, knocked out Amr to the ground. At this moment, the fallen foe, turned out to be a coward, and spat at the Imam in a bid to avoid certain death. At this insult, Imam Ali (AS) gently withdrew to allow his emotions to cool down so that personal feelings do not mix with pure and sincere jihad in the way of God. The Arab infidel rose to his feet and renewed the life-and-death struggle, but this time the flashing sword of Imam Ali (AS), the famous double-bladed Zul-Feqar, made short work of the opponent who fell down dead to the ground. He then scattered the companions of Amr, and this valorous feat sent shivers down the spine of the Arab-Israelite hordes, making them break ranks and flee. The Prophet expressed the famous hadith this day: *"The Stroke of Ali on the Day of Khandaq is superior to the worship of mankind and jinn."*

1390 solar years ago, on this day in 630 AD, the victorious Iranian general Feroz Khan titled "Shahrbaraz", who had seized power as the 25th Sassanid Emperor, was killed.

1299 solar years ago, on this day in 721 AD, the Arab army suffered a setback at the Battle of Toulouse in southern France against Odo of Aquitaine.

1234 lunar years ago, on this day in 207 AH, Abu Salt al-Harawi, the loyal servant and companion of Imam Reza (AS), the 8th Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), passed away at the age of 45 and was laid to rest in the environs of holy Mashhad, where a shrine stands today and is a site of pilgrimage. Born in the holy city of Medina in an Iranian family from the Khorasani city of Herat, as is indicated by his surname 'Harawi', his name was Abdus-Salaam, the son of Saleh bin Sulayman bin Ayoub. He had the honour of meeting Imam Reza (AS) in Medina, and became a loyal disciple to him, never separating until the 8th Imam's martyrdom in Tous, Khorasan. He also holds the honour of being a narrator of Hadith from Imam Reza (AS). He has reported on the matchless virtues of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt and travelled over Hijaz, and to Yemen, Basra, Kufa, and through Khorasan to report narrations. Another of his virtues was that he used to debate the Murji'ya, the Jahmiya and the Qadariya sects regarding the genuine teachings of Islam. Aba Salt was the lone person at the side of the 8th Imam on his martyrdom through poisoning by the Abbasid caliph Ma'moun. After the Imam's martyrdom, he was imprisoned by Ma'moun and escaped from the prison following the miraculous appearance of the 9th Imam Mohammad Taqi (AS), after he had supplicated to God for release. According to the famous bibliographer an-Najashi he had compiled a book on the martyrdom of the 8th Imam titled *"Maqalat al-Reza"*.

1184 lunar years ago, on this day in 257 AH, the Godless Ali bin Mohammad, a person of obscure origin and said to be a descendant of slaves, who styled himself Sahib az-Zanj or Leader of the black-skinned people of East African origin, entered the Iraqi port city of Basra, after his sedition met with failure in Bahrain, and launched a general massacre of the populace, burning entire localities including the Jame' Mosque, where he killed the eminent grammarian Abbas bin Faraj Riyyashi while in prayer.

348 solar years ago, on this day in 1672 AD, Tsar Peter the Great of Russia was born to Tsar Alexis.

246 solar years ago, on this day in 1774 AD, Austrian orientalist, Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, was born in Graz. He wrote several books including an English language translation (1834) of the first two volumes of Ottoman scholar Avliya Chelebi's travelogue titled *"Siyahat-Nameh"*.

178 lunar years ago, on this day in 1263 AH, the eminent scholar, Seyyed Ibrahim Karbalai, passed away in the holy city of Karbala in Iraq at the age of 49. Among the books remaining from this Islamic scholar, mention can be made of *"Dala'el al-Ahkaam"*, and *"Treatises on Hajj Pilgrimage"*.

155 lunar years ago, on this day in 1286 AH, the prominent scholar Seyyed Mohammad Quli Kintoori passed away near Lucknow in northern India. Scion of a scholarly family from Naishapur in Khorasan, Iran, which had migrated to India and settled in Barabankavi and the town of Kintoor, he is the author of *"Burhan as-Sa'adah"*, and *"Taqlib al-Maka'ed"*, which are refutations of the 7th and 12th Chapters respectively of the seditious book of Shah Abdul-Aziz Dehlavi against the beliefs of the Ahl al-Bayt of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) titled *"Tohfeye-Ithna Ashariyyah"*. He served in the judicial branch as a civil servant of the court of law, and presided as judge at the High Court of Meerut, where he authored the treatise *"Adalat al-Alawiyya"* on the exemplary judgements of Imam Ali (AS), the first Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). He also authored the book *"Thathir al-Mu'minin an Najasat al-Mushrikin"*. He strove to implement the Imami legal system in the kingdom of Awadh ruled by a family of Naishapur Seyyeds of Iranian origin, and adopted the code of governmental laws of the erstwhile Qotb Shahi kingdom of Golkandah-Haidarabad in the Deccan or southern India, ruled by an Iranian family from Hamedan. Mohammad Quli Kintoori was the father of the celebrated Ayatollah Seyyed Hamed Hussain Musavi the author of the famous book *"Abaqaat al-Anwaar"* on the merits of the Prophet's Ahl al-Bayt, as mentioned in the holy Qur'an by God Almighty and the Hadith.

150 solar years ago, on this day in 1870 AD, the English author and novelist, Charles Dickens, died at the age of 58. He was the founder of Realism Style in English literature. His books include *"Oliver Twist"* and *"David Copperfield"* which brought him world fame. Among his other famous novels, mention can be made of *"Great Expectations"* and *"The Tale of Two Cities"*. Dickens who was editor of *"Bentley's Miscellany"* a general interest monthly magazine, from January 1837 to 1839, paid tribute to the Martyr of Karbala in it, by writing: *"If Husain had fought to gain his worldly desires...then I do not understand why his sister, wife, and children accompanied him. It stands to reason therefore, that he sacrificed purely for Islam."*

53 solar years ago, on this day in 1967 AD, during the 6-day war, the usurper state of Israel seized the Golan Heights from Syria, and later illegally annexed it. Despite several UN Security Council Resolutions, the illegal Zionist entity, with the backing of the US, has refused to withdraw from occupied Syrian territory.

52 solar years ago, on this day in 1968 AD, the prominent Islamic scholar and mystic, Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Hassan Elahi Tabatabai, passed away at the age of 62. Among his valuable works is *"A Treatise on the Science of Music and Spiritual Relations with Sounds"*.

50 solar years ago, on this day in 1970 AD, Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Saeedi, attained martyrdom in the Shah's dungeons as a result of torture, at the age of 41. He wrote many books including *"Ittehad al-Islam"*.

9 solar years ago, on this day in 2011, the famous Indian artist and painter Maqbool Fida Hussain, died in self-exile in Qatar at the age of 96. Born into a family of Bohras of the Sulaymani Ismaili Shi'ite sect, he is considered the Picasso of India and was forced to leave his homeland because of threats against his life by Hindu extremists.

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

Berlin Festival Hosts 'Angels Do Not Die'

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- Alireza Biglari's 'Angels Do not Die' is scheduled to compete at the 2020 Berlin Flash Film Festival.

The flick will make its international debut at the Berlin online film festival.

Also written and produced by Biglari, 'Angels Do not Die' has been produced during quarantine days and is presented to Narjes Khanalizadeh, the first nurse who lost her life fighting coronavirus.

The short film is an attempt to appreciate the sacrifices of the

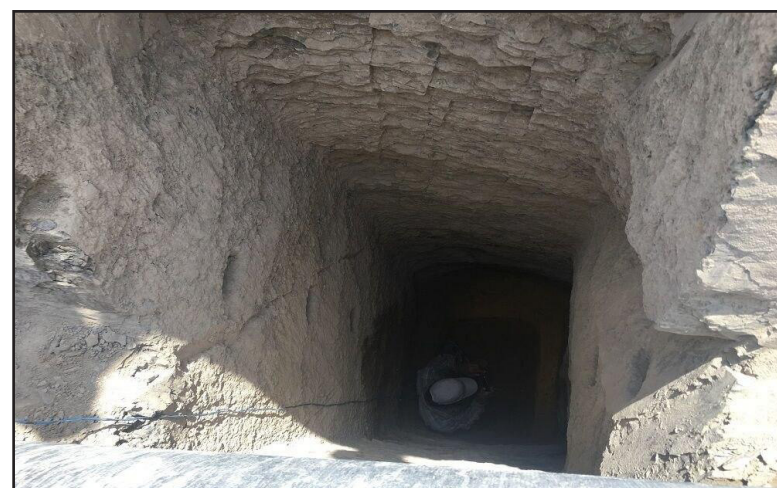
medical staff and the healthcare workers.

Berlin Flash Film Festival is a monthly, online film festival. On the last day of each month, a selected group of guest judges and industry professionals gather to view monthly category winners. Each monthly category winner is judged based on several factors spanning from story to sound.

The winners of monthly screening will progress as semi-finalists to the annual Berlin Flash Film Festival.



Sassanid-Era Stone Well Unearthed in Iran



The 6-metre well has been found on a historical hill called 'Ashraf'. (photo by IFP News)

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- A stone water well belonging to the Sassanid era has been discovered in Iran's

Isfahan province.

The 6-metre well has been found on a historical hill called "Ashraf".

Some clay works from Seljuk and Buyid dynasties have also been found while workers were digging the ground for water piping.

The square stone well is historically very valuable in terms of its physical shape and form. The well is dug among the rocks and is six metres deep, archaeologists say.

Alireza Jafari-Zand, Head of the Ashraf Hill Archaeological Team said that the hill's archeological findings date back from the Achaemenid period to the 12th century.

He said a valuable piece of pottery was also discovered above the stone well which is of great historical significance.

He also noted that the pottery

found in the projects are amazingly undamaged and they can help a lot to say the exact age of the ancient site of Ashraf and Jay. The artifacts found in this area belong mostly to pre-Islamic periods up to the 5th century AH, he reiterated.

Jafari-Zand added that Isfahan owes its historical identity to these two hills saying Ashraf and Jay Hills have been linked and are part of a cultural area.

So far, over 22,000 monuments and historical works have been identified in Isfahan province, 1,850 of which have been nationally registered.

Imam Square (Naqsh-e Jahan Square), Chehel Sotoun Palace, Kashan Fin Garden and the Grand Mosque are also registered as world heritage sites.

Universities Open to Foreign Students After Pandemic

TEHRAN (Tasnim) -- Foreign students who have left Iran due to the outbreak of the coronavirus can return to their universities in early September, an Iranian official said.

The director general of the Iranian Science Ministry's office of foreign students said plans have been devised to allow the foreign students to resume their courses as of September 5.

Abdolhamid Alizadeh said universities will be required to let the foreigners take exams if they have not participated in the online tests remaining from the previous semester.

He had said in March that 15,680 foreign students have left Iran for their respective countries as part of plans to contain the coronavirus epidemic.

A few days after the outbreak of COVID-19 Iran, the Science Ministry, the Immigration and Passport Police Office, and a number of other organizations made arrangements to let foreign students leave the country in the shortest time possible and without bureaucratic processes.

The outbreak of the coronavirus led to the closure of schools and universities across Iran.

University of Tabriz Among Top in Asia

TEHRAN (FNA)- Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2020 announced that Tabriz University stands among the top universities in Asia.

Some 40 Iranian universities have been mentioned in this ranking five of which stand among 100 top universities in the world.

Babol Noshirvani University of Technology (BUT), Sharif University of Technology and Amir Kabir University of Technology with 48, 75 and 83 rankings stand in first to third positions in Iran respectively.

"Times Higher Education World University Rankings, founded in 2004, provides the definitive list of the world's

best universities," the official website reads.

Data experts evaluate world-class universities with regards to 13 separate performance indicators, covering the full range of a top university's essential areas of activity: teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook.

Picture of the Day



The Vali Castle is a major tourist attraction in Iran's western province of Ilam which has been turned into a museum.

Courtesy of IFP News