

# This Day in History

(June 20)

Today is Sunday; 30<sup>th</sup> of the Iranian month of Khordad 1400 solar hijri; corresponding to 9<sup>th</sup> of the Islamic month of Zil-Qa'dah 1442 lunar hijri; and June 20, 2021, of the Christian Gregorian Calendar.

**1564 solar years ago**, on this day in 457 AD, Yazdegerd II, the sixteenth Emperor of the Sassanid Empire of Iran, died after a reign of 19 years, and was succeeded by his son, Hormizd III. Son and successor of Bahram V, he spent most of his reign in war against the Hephthalites (Pashtuns) and imposing Zoroastrianism on other people. In 440, Yazdegerd II waged a war against the Roman Empire, making Emperor Theodosius II sue for peace by sending his commander, Anatolius, to the Iranian Emperor's camp with promise of payment. He then subdued Armenia and sent many Armenian nobles, priests, and troops, to the eastern Sassanid provinces to protect the borders from the invasions of the nomadic Huns. In 453, he moved his court to Naishapur in Khorasan to face the threat from the Huns. He spent many years in war against the Huns, and after that again turned his attention towards Armenia, Caucasian Albania and the Roman Empire. Yazdegerd II was known for his religious zeal in promoting Zoroastrianism, leading to persecutions of Christians, mostly Assyrians. Under his reign, 153,000 Assyrians were massacred solely in Kirkuk in what is now Iraq.

**1048 lunar years ago**, on this day in 394 AH, the renowned Iranian Ismaili Shi'ite scientist, philosopher, poet, author and traveler, Naser Khosrow, was born in Qobadian in northeastern Khorasan, which is now part of modern Tajikistan. He memorized the Holy Qur'an while still a child, and in addition to philosophy, learned a wide variety of natural sciences, such as medicine, mathematics, astronomy and astrology. He was fluent in several languages, and besides his native Persian, mastered Arabic, Hebrew, Greek, Turkish and the Indian vernaculars of Sindhi and Punjabi. He joined the Ghaznavid court as secretary, but following a major development in his thoughts, shunned politics, and after a while started on a long journey to Egypt to meet the Fatimid caliph. During the over six years he spent in travel until his return home, he visited the different cities of Iran, Iraq, Syria, Arabia, and Egypt, and performed the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina four times. He penned his travels in the famous book titled "Zaad al-Musafereen", which is also known as "Safar-Namah" or Travelogue that contains an interesting description of the peoples, the customs, the conditions, and geographical factors of the lands he visited. Naser Khosrow has composed some very fine odes in Persian in praise of Imam Ali (AS), the First Infallible Successor of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). He died in 481 AH at the age of 87.

**1016 solar years ago**, on this day in 1005 AD, the 7<sup>th</sup> self-styled caliph of the Ismaili Shi'ite Muslim Fatimid Dynasty of Egypt-North Africa-Syria, Ali az-Zaher, was born in Cairo to al-Hakem be-Amrillah, at whose mysterious disappearance in 1021, he was proclaimed caliph at the age of 16 under the regency of his aunt Sitt al-Mulk - notorious for her extermination from Egypt of the Druze sect, which regarded Hakem as God's incarnation. He died at the age of 31 due to a plague after a 15-year reign. His weakness allowed the Turkic slave guards to vie for power, as a result of which the Empire slipped into decadence, although his able Iraqi vizier, Ali bin Ahmad Jarjarai, restored order and stopped the bid of the Byzantine Christian Empire to encroach upon Syria and Aleppo.

**523 solar years ago**, on this day in 1498 AD, the Iranian historian, Mohammad bin Khwandshah, popularly known as Mir-Khwand, passed away in Herat, which was then part of Khorasan and is now in present day Afghanistan. He was from a well-known Seyyed family of Bukhara tracing descent to Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). Spending most of his life in Herat in the court of the last Timurid sultan, Hussain Bayqarah, he enjoyed the patronage of the renowned minister, Ali Shir Nava'i, a celebrated writer and poet himself. At the request of his patron, he wrote the general history in Persian titled "Rowzat os-Safa" (Garden of Purity). The work is composed of seven large volumes and a geographic appendix, often considered an 8th volume. The history begins with the pre-Islamic Persian kings and surveys the major Muslim rulers of Iran up to his times. Mir-Khwand's maternal grandson, the historian Khwandamir, who migrated to Mughal India, wrote a sequel to it, and in the 19th century the Iranian scholar Reza Qoli Khan Hedayat wrote a supplement to this work. Mir-Khwand is often criticized for his highly embellished and bombastic style and for his uncritical approach to the sources, but his history preserves sections from earlier works that have since been lost. Volumes 5 and 6 are particularly reliable, for they utilize the abundant historiographic materials of the Mongol and Timurid periods and furnish independent information on events contemporary or near contemporary to the author's lifetime.

**390 solar years ago**, on this day in 1631 AD, Baltimore in Ireland was attacked by a naval force of Algerians and Ottoman Turks, along with Dutch converts to Islam, in the biggest such operation by Muslims in the British Isles in retaliation for European Christian acts of piracy on the African coasts for abduction of black people and their selling as slaves in the Americas.

**265 solar years ago**, on this day in 1756 AD, with the fall of the British garrison of Fort William to Mirza Mohammad Siraj od-Dowla, the 18-year old Nawab of Bengal, John Zephaniah Holwell invented the myth of the "Black Hole of Calcutta" to tarnish the image of the Indian people by alleging that 146 Englishmen were crammed in a 14 by 18 feet (4.3 x 5.5 m) dungeon that resulted in the death of 123 of them. Holwell, who claimed to be a survivor, has long been disproved by historians and researchers.

**146 solar years ago**, on this day in 1875 AD, Ryukyu Islands in the Pacific Ocean, where for several centuries the independent Ryukyu kingdom ruled, were seized by Japan, and in 1879 named the Okinawa Prefecture. Towards the end of World War II, the Okinawa archipelago, which covers an area of 1250 sq km, was occupied by US forces who killed over a quarter of the local people. The US has refused to withdraw from Okinawa, even after 1972 accord for withdrawal, and the frequent demand by the local people for end of American military presence.

**144 solar years ago**, on this day in 1877 AD, Alexander Graham Bell installed the world's first commercial telephone service in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

**109 solar years ago**, on this day in 1912 AD, Polish Scientist, Dr. Casimir Funk discovered vitamins.

**61 solar years ago**, on this day in 1960 AD, the Mali Federation gained independence from France and later split into Mali and Senegal.

**45 lunar years ago**, on this day in 1397 AH, Ayatollah Seyyed Mostafa Khomeini, the elder son of the Father of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (RA), was martyred in the holy city of Najaf in Iraq by agents of Iran's Pahlavi regime. Born in holy Qom, where he mastered Islamic sciences and reached the level of Ijtihad at the young age of 27, for ten years he lectured at the Najaf Islamic Seminary, and was always alongside his father in the struggle against the despotic Shah's regime. His martyrdom accelerated the pace of struggles of the Iranian people and led to the victory of the Islamic Revolution a year and four months later.

**27 solar years ago**, on this day in 1994 AD, the MKO terrorists committed a blasphemous crime in Mashhad by triggering a bomb blast in the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS), the 8<sup>th</sup> Infallible Heir of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), while pilgrims were commemorating the anniversary of the tragedy of Ashura - the 10<sup>th</sup> of Moharram. Scores of pilgrims were martyred or wounded and part of the holy shrine was damaged. The Leader of Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, in his message of condolences to the Iranian nation, said: By committing such a sacrilegious crime, the MKO terrorists showed they are not committed to any humanitarian principle; and their enmity toward the courageous and faithful Iranian nation has no limits.

**19 solar years ago**, on this day in 2002 AD, the renowned Islamic missionary, Hojjat-al-Islam Seyyed Sa'eed Akhtar Rizvi, passed away at the age of 75 in Tanzania, and was laid to rest in Dar-es-Salaam. He traveled and lectured to university students in Africa, Europe, Canada and USA; and authored over 140 books, of which 22 have been translated into several world languages. Through his selfless endeavours, over 100,000 ethnic Africans discovered the truth of Islam, and became followers of the School of the Blessed Household (Ahl al-Bayt) of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA). His son, Hojjat-al-Islam Seyyed Mohammad Rizvi, is based in Canada, and is the Chief Missionary of the Islamic Shi'a Ithna'asheri Ja'fari Centre of Toronto.

# Joint Production Animation Crowned Best in U.S.



A still from Iranian-French short animation 'The Musician' (Le Musicien).

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- Iranian-French short animation 'The Musician' (Le Musicien) has been awarded at the Tribeca Film Festival in the U.S. Directed by Reza Riahi, the 15-minute short

film was awarded the Best Short Animation of the American event's 20th edition.

'The Musician', a narrative of love, war and hardships, is about a musician and his beloved that have fallen apart due to a cruel attack on their land.

When the Mongols attack Iran, the musician gets robbed of his beloved. Around 50 years later, he is invited to the court where his love is kept to play his instrument.

Riahi, being a famed Iranian artist and filmmaker, has been on the directorial team of renowned animation 'The Breadwinner' made by Nora Twomey.

Founded in 2002 with Robert De Niro among its founding members, the TFF is a distinguished film festival held in New York City's Tribeca neighborhood drawing approximately three million people annually.

The festival showcases a variety of independent films, turning into a noteworthy hub for independent filmmakers from all genres to reach out to a broad audience.

This year's edition of the event kicked off on June 9, 2021.

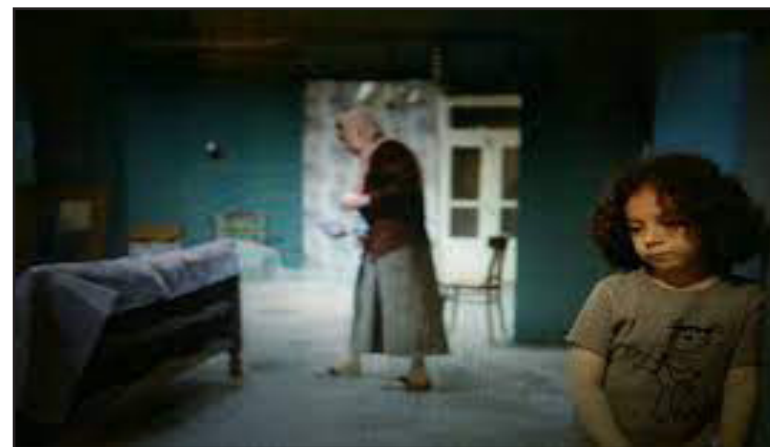
## 'Feng Shui Upside Down' Makes It to Italian Festival

TEHRAN (IFILM) -- Iranian short film 'Feng Shui Upside Down' has received a nomination at Toko Film Festival in Italy.

The Iranian Youth Cinema Society reported that 'Feng Shui Upside Down' has made its way to the competition section of the seventh edition of the Italian event and was nominated for Best Film.

The short film is written and directed by Zivar Hojjati.

"A mother's parenting style



A scene from Iranian short film 'Feng Shui Upside Down'.

leads to contradictory results," a synopsis for the film reads.

The upcoming edition of Toko Film Fest will take place on July 29- August 1.

Toko is a word used in Italy's southern town of Sala Consilina. It means something is cool, fun and well-done.

The festival aims to create "a dialogue between people from South Campania and the world of cinema, especially the independent and experimental one".

## Childhood Exercise May Promote Better Cognitive Function

TOKYO (Dispatches) -- A research has illuminated the changes in the brain's neural network and cortex structure that underlie the positive association between childhood exercise and the maintenance and promotion of cognitive function in later life.

A research group including Professor MATSUDA Tetsuya of Tamagawa University's Brain Science Institute (Machida City, Tokyo; Director: SAKAGAMI Masamichi) and Assistant Professor ISHIHARA Toru from Kobe University's Graduate School of Human Development and Environment showed that people who are physically active during childhood (up to 12 years of age) have higher cognitive functions in later life. However, they could not find a correlation between cognitive function and post-childhood physical activity.

The positive association between childhood exercise and cognitive function was evident in the modular (\*1) segregation of brain networks, strengthened inter-hemispheric connectivity, greater cortical thickness, lower levels of dendritic arborization and decreased density.

During childhood, the formation of the brain's network is susceptible to environmental

and experience-related factors. It is thought that exercise during this period optimizes brain network development and is linked to the maintenance and promotion of cognitive function in later life.



## Picture of the Day



Jing jelang are traditional shoes worn by those who could afford them in Baluchestan. They are made from natural leather, and in the old times, when people walked with them on, the shoes made a loud noise. For this reason, the local people called them Jing jelang in imitation of the sound they made.

Courtesy of IFP