



## Denmark funds TV documentary about skills to survive disasters



Danish Ambassador to Vietnam John Nielsen speaks at the launch ceremony of "Storm" in HCMC's District 3

By Kieu Giang  
The Saigon Times Daily

A Denmark-funded TV documentary entitled "Storm", which provides children and families with skills to protect themselves from natural disasters like storms and floods, will be launched on YouTube today before being premiered on regional and national televisions, websites and social media.

The 30-minute documentary, which is made by non-profitable organization World Climate Change Challenge with support of the Danish embassy in Vietnam, instructs families how to best prepare for and weather a major storm, flood, or natural disaster.

There are different versions of the documentary with different length of time for people in different regions of Vietnam, according to World Climate Change Challenge.

"We are making a new part in this film to instruct farmers in flood-hit regions how to protect their seeds," said Paul Phillips, producer of Storm/director of World Climate Change Challenge, at the launching event last week.

Phillips stressed the importance of sharing educational information. "If we all sit back and do nothing today, thousands of children will again become the unnecessary victims of the next super storm or flood that may hit the region this year or next. A huge number of deaths, injuries and illnesses can be prevented by putting into place educational

media that is relevant to urban and rural communities."

Phillips said the organizers are raising funds to run interactive community programs to educate secondary and primary school students to prepare and protect themselves from storms.

Denmark was the first country to support the Vietnamese Government's National Target Program of Response to Climate Change with US\$40 million to back Vietnam's efforts to combat global warming and improve energy efficiency. Denmark has also supported Earth Hour since 2011 and Danish Ambassador John Nielsen has for the last four years been acted as Earth Hour Ambassador.

Moreover, the European country has financed the production of more than 100 radio programs to equip people in remote and rural areas with knowledge on the effect of climate change.

Vietnam has been identified as one of the world's most vulnerable countries to the detrimental impacts of climate change due to its long low-lying coastline and exposure to typhoons, storms, and heavy variable rainfalls.

One study has found that sea levels in Vietnam may rise by 33 centimeters by 2050 and up to one meter by 2100. A one-meter rise in sea level would affect some 11% of the population, impact 7% of the country's agricultural land, and reduce its gross domestic product (GDP) by as much as 10%.

## AmCham supports World Environment Day

By Minh Nga  
The Saigon Times Daily

The American Chamber of Commerce in Vietnam (AmCham Vietnam) in cooperation with Intel Products Vietnam, the U.S. Consulate General in HCMC and the World Wildlife Fund in Vietnam organized a fun Green Bike ride in HCMC's District 7 on Saturday to support the World Environment Day on June 5.

Themed "Love our forest, love our planet," the bike ride focused on raising public awareness of protecting the environment and rare species in Vietnam including tiger, Asian elephant, sea turtle, red head crane and Sao La.

The event attracted more than 1,000 participants from nearly 60 companies, organizations and universities. They were encouraged to finish a trip of nearly ten kilometers and visit booths to get information about the rare species along the way.

Sherry Boger, general manager of Intel Products Vietnam, said the number of participants in this year's Green Bike event was higher than expected.

Van Ngoc Thinh, country director of the World Wildlife Fund in Vietnam, expected Green Bike would create a long-term effect on environmental protection in the country and its participants would continue their efforts to help protect flagship species and their habitats.

The World Environment Day is the United Nations' initiative aimed to encourage worldwide awareness and actions for the environment.



Participants of the Green Bike 2015 in District 7, HCMC on Saturday

This year's campaign centers to the responsible management of the planet's natural resources. Many activities are taking place around the globe, including seminars on raising awareness of

environmental protection from small and medium companies in Japan, cycle tours and organic fairs in Brazil, and a roundtable on sustainable procurement in Switzerland.

## Caravelle employees act to promote environmental protection



Employees of the mid-town Caravelle Saigon Hotel stage a flash mob performance in front of the Opera House in downtown HCMC over the weekend to raise public awareness of keeping the city clean and green. Some 100 employees of the five-star hotel assembled for the five-minute show in the run up to the World Environment Day (WED) on June 5. On this occasion, the hotel overlooking the Opera House also donated dustbins to help keep the surrounding area of the theater clean.

News: Minh Nga

### INTERNATIONAL

## 'San Andreas' set to shake up box office despite faults

LOS ANGELES (REUTERS) - Director Brad Peyton grilled scientists, scoured earthquake footage and submerged sets in one of the world's biggest water tanks to create the biggest earthquake ever to hit California in his new film "San Andreas."

That effort might pay off at the box office, where the Warner Bros film is expected to be the top earner in its debut this weekend, with an estimated \$40 million in ticket sales.

"We spent a lot of time grounding the experience and researching what a tsunami did, what it looked like, earthquakes, different types of earthquakes," said the Canadian director. "OMG! A chasm? If the fault could open up, there'd be no friction. With no friction, there'd be no earthquake," tweeted U.S. Geological Survey seismologist Lucy Jones during the premiere Tuesday.

Jones noted that the San Andreas Fault could never trigger a tsunami, and that only one in 16 buildings are expected to sustain serious damage if the fault were to set off a quake.

No matter. In Hollywood, artistic licence is written into just about every script.

Besides, many moviegoers, even in California, do not know what a big quake feels like. The last one to hit a major city in the Golden State was the 1994 Northridge quake near Los Angeles, a magnitude 6.7.

"San Andreas" serves up a whopping 9.1 magnitude that wreaks havoc on Los Angeles and San Francisco. It is up to the helicopter pilot played by Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson to help rescue his family in the chaos.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Cast member Dwayne Johnson poses at the premiere of "San Andreas" in Hollywood, California May 26

Predicting the next Big One is, of course, impossible. But actor Paul Giamatti actually does that in his role as a seismologist, and he enjoyed taking a crack at the challenging topic.

"I had to do a little bit of, like, science-y talk, but that was actually fun," Giamatti said. "It's hard playing a scientist. You don't want to look stupid."

Peyton did not want to limit the film to disaster, and sought to infuse

it with "emotional value." Critics who praised the film's visual achievements were nevertheless left cold by the storyline.

"San Andreas" is chock-full of cliché characters, staggering coincidences and wild improbabilities," wrote Kenneth Turan in the Los Angeles Times. "And its dialogue is so of the 'this is gonna hurt' variety that I tallied close to half a dozen 'Oh, my Gods' before I stopped counting."

## Michael Jackson's Neverland ranch on market for US\$100 million

NEW YORK (REUTERS) - The sprawling Neverland ranch in California once owned by the late pop star Michael Jackson is for sale for US\$100 million, Sotheby's International Realty said on Friday.

The 2,700 acre (1,100-hectare) estate in Los Olivos, which once featured a zoo and amusement park where Jackson entertained children, has been renamed Sycamore Valley Ranch. It is being sold jointly by Sotheby's and Hilton & Hyland. "It officially went on the market this morning," Suzanne Perkins of Sotheby's said.

Jackson, who died from an overdose of the anesthetic propofol at age of 50 in 2009, had purchased the property in 1987 for US\$19.5 million. After financial troubles, in 2008 he handed over the title to the ranch to investment firm Colony Capital LLC, which held his US\$23 million loan on the property.

"We hope and trust that any new owners of Neverland will respect the historical importance and special nature of this wonderful property. Michael's memory lives on in the hearts of his fans worldwide," the singer's estate said in a statement on Friday.

Jackson, a former child star whose hits included "Thriller" and "Billie Jean," was one of the most successful entertainers of all time and the recipient of 13 Grammy Awards.

He named the property - located in Southern California about 40 miles northwest of Santa Barbara - after the land in the fairy tale of Peter Pan by author J.M. Barrie about a boy who refused to grow up. The ranch has been extensively renovated but the floral clock with the word Neverland spelled out and the railway still remain. Perkins said she would not be giving tours of the property.

## Toilet brushes and vacuum cleaners turn musical in hands of Nils Frahm

LONDON (REUTERS) - Three pianos, a wood pipe organ, a synthesiser and toilet brushes are the standard setup for a show by German experimental composer Nils Frahm.

He navigated masterfully between the instruments this week during his second sold-out show at London's Roundhouse venue, playing lush compositions drawing on the electronica of Aphex Twin and the melodious patterns of Chopin. The organ of wood and vacuum cleaner tubes and the piano muffled with strips of felt were custom made, highlighting Frahm's unconventional approach to classical music.

"Sometimes it is easier to create your own instrument and probably cheaper and it is also fun," he explained. "It is great to use something which isn't out there."

Toilet brushes are Frahm's rhythm instrument.

"It looks ridiculous but sounds so

cool," he said.

Berlin-based Frahm, 32, will play big festivals around Europe this summer, including the BBC Proms 120th anniversary show at The Royal Albert Hall on Aug 5.

He has been playing the piano since childhood and was trained by Nahum Brodski, a student of Tchaikovsky's last protégé. Frahm gained international recognition after releasing his album "Felt" in 2011, whose distinctive deep piano sound creates a feeling of being inside the instrument.

"I tried to record it in a conventional way and it sounded very conventional, it sounded like an average piano," Frahm said. So he dampened the piano sound with a layer of felt and placed microphones close to the strings.

"It was so quiet, you could barely hear anything. You would hear a mouse walking by louder than the

keys. Then the noise appeared and I started shaping it too. All these things started to become an instrument as well. And I realised I had a whole band with this piano," he said.

"This particular piano sound, it started to become my voice, my tone," Frahm said. "Now people, even if the song is unfamiliar to them, they can guess it is me because of the depth of the sound."

Often compared with French avant-garde pianist Erik Satie for his minimalist approach, Frahm describes his music as a "dynamic journey" and says wants to show simple compositions can be breathtaking.

"There are a thousand million piano players out there but if somebody says, 'Oh, this must be Nils,' then I achieved my goal," he said.

German composer Nils Frahm rehearses on stage at The Roundhouse in London, Britain May 25

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