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HOME

NEWS

IN DEPTH

WEEK IN FOCUS

PHOTOGALLERY

NEWS

- Politics
- Business
- Sci-Tech
- Social
- Lifestyle
- Sports
- International
- Education
- Travel

IN DEPTH

LIFE IN VIETNAM

PHOTOGALLERY

RESOURCES

STOCK MARKET

EXCHANGE RATES

WEATHER

WEEK IN FOCUS

SEARCH

Go

Hanoi greets UN Vesak Day with extravaganza

16:26' 14/05/2008 (GMT+7)

VietNamNet Bridge – A special programme of art performances will set off celebrations for the United Nations' Day of Vesak 2008, at the National Conference Centre in Hanoi tonight.



Spirit of things: Performances by Vietnamese artists will take place tonight at the Nations Conference Centre to honour the UN's Vesak Day.

The show will mark the first of three nights held to the honour Vesak Day, an official celebration of the birthday of Buddha, which wraps up on Saturday. A total of 200 artists will take part in the event.

The programme includes a dance, *Flower Blossom Buddha Is Being Seen*, based on an idea by Most Venerable Thich Minh Hien and choreographed by Tan Loc. The dances will be accompanied by

traditional musical instruments under the baton of composer Anh Quan.

Quan's latest piece *Singing for Vesak* will be performed by famous singers My Linh and Trong Tan. The two will be joined by newcomer Khanh Linh in renditions of songs celebrating Buddhism written by Pham Duy, Le Manh Chuong and Tham Oanh. The show will also include 100 Buddhist monks, mainly from pagodas in Ha Tay.

The monks will take the stage with chants and prayers. Giving the performance a distinctive Vietnamese flavour will be traditional drummers, dancers and *chau van* singer Thanh Hoai, according to the show's director Viet Tu.

Preparing the show was a challenge, Tu admits. "We didn't have much time or much information about Buddhism. It's taken a lot of energy to get the songs, costumes, music and lighting just right," he says.

The stage will be decorated with big screens and two giant lotus flowers designed by painter Dinh Cong Dat.

Also tomorrow, a special performance of *cai luong* (reformed opera) titled *Cuoc Doi Duc Phat* (Life of Buddhism) will be performed by artists from Tran Huu Trang Theatre.

The last night will be wrapped up with symphony *Khai Giac* (Begin the Enlightenment) by composer Nguyen Thien Dao.

The event starts at 8pm.

(Source: Viet Nam News)



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Politics



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→ President Ho's birthday celebrated nationwide

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Social



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- French spring in Hanoian summer (12/05/2008)

rate

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Sci-Tech

New visions for software industry

- Volunteers for H5N1 vaccine test get second injection
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- Russia willing to help Vn build nuclear power plant
- Network webfiltering arrives

Sports

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- Public Security, HCM City take champs
- When kings are chased
- Thong Lao's winner puts HAGL in top spot
- HCM City triumph at National Team tourney

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Tel: +844 7722729; Fax: +844 7722733; E-mail: evnn@vasc.com.vn (Editorial);