VIETNAM, TRAPPED BY THE MONSOON

Director(s): Jean-Marie BARRERE, Hervé REBILLON

Writer(s): Hervé RÉBILLION

At the age of 30, Tuong Nguyen is already an old hand at truck driving... so he should have known that the heavy rains of the monsoon would turn the sharply winding roads of Northern Vietnam into a dangerous venture. Up here, when the heavens open, a man can get completely trapped. At the height of the monsoon, the mountains receive a rainfall that is the equivalent of a mass of water three metres deep...
It's a trip of 500 km from the capital Hanoi to Dien Bien Phû, a name forever etched into history as the very symbol of the French army's defeat at the hand of Vietnamese troops in 1954. Usually, it takes Tuong and his trucker friends two days to run the distance with a cargo of cement, fertilizers and various agricultural products. To the farmers of this region, caught between Laos and China, these are eagerly awaited, vital goods. That year, however, the monsoon started much earlier than expected. The heavens took Tuong by surprise ... and the farmers had no way of knowing when the precious shipment would arrive.

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