Beat: Vips

`Jurassic Park` actor, `Gandhi` director Richard Attenborough dead at 90

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USPA News - Richard Attenborough, the acclaimed British actor who portrayed billionaire businessman John Hammond in "Jurassic Park" and who won two Oscars for directing the 1982 epic "Gandhi," died in London on Sunday, less than a week before his 91st birthday. Attenborough had been in ill health since 2008 when he suffered a stroke at his home in London, causing him to fall down stairs and leaving him in a coma for several days.

The actor-director never fully recovered and was forced to stop working, making the 2007 film "Closing the Ring" his last film. Attenborough and his wife, Sheila Sim, later sold their house and both moved into a nursing home in west London, where he died early Sunday afternoon. The actor`s son, theater director Michael Attenborough, confirmed his death, which came just five days before he was due to turn 91. "His acting in `Brighton Rock` was brilliant, his directing of `Gandhi` was stunning - Richard Attenborough was one of the greats of cinema," British Prime Minister David Cameron said in a statement. Labour Party leader Ed Miliband said the death of Attenborough, who was a Labour Party supporter, marked "a sad day for the film world and the Labour movement." The British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) said it was "deeply saddened" by Attenborough`s death and offered its deepest sympathy to his family. "Lord Attenborough occupies a special place in the hearts of so many and will be missed enormously," a statement said, adding that the former BAFTA president was a "monumental figure" in the Academy`s history. Attenborough was born in Cambridge, England, in 1923 and attended the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) before making his feature film debut in 1942 with "In Which We Serve." His real breakthrough came just a few years later, in 1947, with his role as Pinkie Brown in the British film noir "Brighton Rock." Years later, Attenborough appeared in the ensemble cast of the 1963 World War II war film "The Great Escape." He won his first two Golden Globes, for Best Supporting Actor, in 1967 and 1968 before directing and producing the 1983 epic "Gandhi," which earned him two Academy Awards. But in more recent years he was best known for his role as John Hammond, the billionaire businessman in the 1993 film "Jurassic Park," which became one of the most successful films of all time. He also appeared in the sequel, "The Lost World: Jurassic Park," in 1997, but not in two later sequels, "Jurassic Park III" in 2001 and "Jurassic World," which premieres in June next year. Attenborough is survived by his wife Sheila Sim, who is 92.

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