

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/viet-nam-wife-confesses-to-murdering-23-02-2011,39441.html>

Asia - Vietnam

Confession

Wife confesses to murdering journalist

23 February 2011

The police say journalist **Le Hoang Hung**'s wife, Tran Thuy Lieu, came to them on 20 February and confessed to causing his death by spraying him with a chemical as he slept and setting him on fire.

Lieu told the police she deliberately misled them by making it look as though an intruder was responsible. Her motives were linked to family and economic problems. Any connection with Hung's work as a journalist can now be ruled out.

Hung died of his injuries in hospital on 29 January, 10 days after the attack.

Set on fire while sleeping, investigative reporter dies from burns

01-02-2011

Reporters Without Borders is dismayed to learn that **Le Hoang Hung** an investigative reporter for the newspaper *Nguoi Lao Dong* (Workers), died in hospital on 29 January from the injuries he received when an intruder sprayed him with chemicals and set fire to him while he was asleep in his home in Tan An, a town near Ho Chi Minh City in southern Vietnam, on 20 January.

"We are appalled by the barbaric fashion in which Le Hoang Hung was murdered and we call on the Long An province police to do everything possible to arrest those responsible as soon as possible," Reporters Without Borders secretary-general Jean-François Julliard said. "Our thoughts are with the victim's family. Such cruelty must not go unpunished."

Fatal attacks on journalists are very rare in Vietnam even if the media are exposed to harassment and arbitrary treatment by the authorities. The last case was on 21 January 1988, when the journalist Duong Hung Cuong died in detention as a result of suspected mistreatment. Isao Takano, a Japanese journalist, was fatally shot in the head in Lang Son, near Vietnam's border with China, on 7 March 1979.

Vietnam was ranked 165th out of 178 countries in the 2010 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index.

Hung's wife, Tran Thi Lieu, told the newspaper *Tuoi Tre* that she and her children were in another room when she saw her husband on fire, running and shouting: "Help me! Someone has tried to kill me!" She pushed him into the bathroom in order to put out the flames and then rushed him to hospital. She added that he had received anonymous threatening SMS messages shortly before the attack.

A local journalist said the attack was almost certainly an act of revenge. Hung covered prostitution, drug addiction and organized crime, including both Vietnamese and Cambodian gangs.

