

Reporters Without Borders

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Asia - Vietnam

Arrests

Reporter who investigates corruption arrested for "corruption"

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Reporters Without Borders questions award-winning investigative reporter **Vo Thanh Tung's** arrest in the southern province of Dong Nai on 7 August for suspected corruption.

Two people who had assisted Tung in previous investigations into highway police corruption, identified only as **Tai** and **Minh**, were arrested with him. Also known by the pen-names of Vo Tung and Duy Dong, Tung works for the newspaper *Phap Luat TpHCM (Ho Chi Minh City Law)*.

"We are puzzled by Tung's arrest for alleged corruption, a subject he specializes in covering," Reporters Without Borders said. "There are several reasons for thinking he was set up, starting with the presence of many police officers at the very moment he was handed a lot of money. We urge the authorities to explain this and other curious aspects and, if necessary, to carry out an internal investigation."

Tung was arrested by members of a Public Security Department crime unit just as he was being handed a bundle of US banknotes in a hotel. Police subsequently searched his home, and the homes of Tai and Minh. Tung's wife was summoned to Ho Chi Minh City yesterday so that she and Tung could together sign a statement acknowledging that their home was searched.

Reporters Without Borders has been told that the person who handed him the money was the representative of an entrepreneur with business links to many bars on Dong Nai province.

Tung, who began working for Phap Luat TpHCM last year, has made a name for himself with investigative stories about police corruption with such headlines as "[The pain of always having to bribe Highway 20 traffic police](#)" and "[Highway 20's powerful gas stations](#)." He also criticized bar owners in a story headlined "[Pole dancing and drugs in Dong Nai province bars](#)."

He [won the top Ho Chi Minh City press award](#) in June 2012 for exposing the incorrect procedures used by the Dong Nai authorities to destroy 2.5 tons of rotten meat.

[Two journalists](#) and a total of 35 bloggers are currently detained in Vietnam, which is ranked 172nd out of 179 countries in the [2013 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index](#). You too can request the release of the 35 jailed bloggers by [signing this RWB petition](#).

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