

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/vietnam-blogger-paulus-le-son-arrested-04-08-2011,40751.html>

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Asia - Vietnam

Police kidnapping

## Blogger Paulus Le Son arrested again amid mounting tension

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Reporters Without Borders condemns yesterday's heavy-handed arrest of the Catholic blogger **Paulus Le Son** (<http://paulusleson.wordpress.com/>) in Hanoi in the course of a major police operation targeting around 10 Catholics. It was the second time Son has been arrested this year.

The police arrested him outside his home at around 11:30 am. They blocked the road as he returned home on his motorcycle, deliberately causing him to fall. Four police officers then lifted him by his hands and feet and tossed him into a police car. It is not known where they took him. Reporters Without Borders is very concerned and calls for his immediate release.

"We are appalled by the brutality of Son's arrest, which has all the hallmarks of a police kidnapping," the press freedom organization said. "The government is clearly no longer trying to disguise its repressive policies. With the authorities now permitting themselves Chinese-style excesses, dissidents no longer risk just being arrested or censored but also abducted in front of everyone on the street."

On the eve of his abduction, Son tried to attend the hearing of the well-known cyber-dissident **Cu Huy Ha Vu**'s appeal against his seven-year jail sentence. Son was previously arrested in April while on his way to attend the trial at which Vu received the sentence.

Everything suggests that his arrest was linked to his coverage of the proceedings against Vu, whose sentence was upheld. Son's blog deals with social and political events in Vietnam. He recently covered anti-Chinese demonstrations and the increase in police violence. He also covers religious issues.

Vietnamese foreign ministry spokesperson Nguyen Phuong Nga insisted on 27 July that all of the basic rights and freedom appear in the Vietnamese constitution and are "respected." In Vietnam, "no one is punished for expressing their opinions," she said.

According to a Reporters Without Borders tally, 19 netizens and three journalists are currently detained in Vietnam. The situation for journalists and bloggers is getting more and more difficult. The Catholic priest **Nguyen Van Ly**, a human rights activist and editor of the underground publication Tu Do Ngon Luan, was returned to jail on 25 July despite being in very poor health.

"The arrests are very disturbing, coming as they do in the run-up to the 10 August trial of **Pham Minh Hoang**, a blogger with French and Vietnamese dual citizenship," Reporters Without Borders added. "We urge the government to free all prisoners of conscience and to respect its international obligations."

Vietnam has signed the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which says that "no one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention" (article 9) and that "everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression" (article 19).

Vietnam is on the Reporters Without Borders list of "Enemies of the Internet" and is ranked 165th out of 178 countries in the press freedom index that Reporters Without Borders released last October.

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