

Vietnam: Independent journalist Huy Duc sentenced to over two years in prison



ORGANISATION:  RSF_en

Reporters Without Borders (RSF) is appalled by the two-and-a-half-year prison sentence handed down to independent journalist Huy Duc, who has been found guilty of "abusing democratic freedoms," a charge frequently used by the Vietnamese regime to suppress press freedom defenders. The Vietnamese regime must release him immediately.

On 27 February 2025, a court in Hanoi [sentenced](#) independent journalist **Truong Huy San**, also known by his pen name Huy Duc, to 30 months in prison following a hurried trial. He was found guilty of "abusing democratic freedoms" under Article 331 of the Vietnamese Penal Code.

Huy Duc was [abducted](#) by state security agents on 1 June 2024 in Hanoi, just days after publishing articles on the ongoing political turmoil in Vietnam on Facebook. The Vietnamese regime waited a week before officially acknowledging his arrest.

"The articles of independent journalist Huy Duc are an invaluable source of information enabling the Vietnamese public to access information censored by the Vietnamese regime. By handing this prison sentence, the regime showed its contempt for press freedom, as well as its determination to silence independent voices. We call on the international community to step up the pressure on Hanoi to secure his release and of all journalists detained in the country."

Cédric Alviani

RSF Asia-Pacific Bureau Director

A seasoned journalist born in 1962, Huy Duc has worked for several Vietnamese newspapers, exposing abuses of power by numerous high-ranking officials. His critical stance led to his dismissal in 2009, after which he turned to blogging and social media, particularly Facebook, to continue reporting on Vietnamese politics. In 2012, he published *The Winning Side*, a book documenting Vietnam's recent political history.

Since taking power in August 2024, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, To Lam, has continued to crack down on press freedom, [following in the footsteps of his predecessor](#), Nguyen Phu Trong. Journalists critical of the government are frequently accused of spreading "propaganda against the state" or "abusing democratic freedoms" – charges that can lead to sentences of up to 20 years in prison. In 2021, journalist and writer **Pham Doan Trang**, recipient of the 2019 RSF Press Freedom Award, was [sentenced to nine years in prison](#) for publishing "propaganda against the state."

Vietnam remains one of the most repressive countries for press freedom. It ranks 174th out of 180 in the 2024 RSF [World Press Freedom Index](#) and is among the world's biggest jailers of journalists.

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