

Hanoi court sentenced freelance journalist Pham Doan Trang to 9 years in prison

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VNEXPRESS

| Pham Doan Trang at the court hearing on December 14, 2021 (screenshot)

The first-instance trial of journalist Pham Doan Trang ended at the end of the afternoon on December 14 with a 9-year prison sentence for her for "conducting propaganda against the State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam", as prescribed at Article 88 of the Penal Code 1999.

Ms. Pham Doan Trang's mother and brother were allowed to attend the court, however, Mr. Pham Chinh Truc was kicked out of the courtroom shortly after his sister's last words, before the court entered the deliberation session.

It is known that the reason why he was taken out of the courtroom by security forces was because he stood up and clapped his hands, loudly saying that his family was proud of his sister and protesting the unfair treatment attitude of the court.

Several international diplomats were allowed to observe the trial, including representatives from the embassies of the United States, Canada, Germany and the European Union.

International Publishers Association: 'Respect Doan Trang, condemn the Vietnamese government'

From the trial of Pham Doan Trang, what does Vietnam expect from the US on human rights issues?

Supporters wrote poems and letters to Pham Doan Trang before the trial

What did you see before the trial of Pham Doan Trang and Trinh Ba Phuong?

Speaking to BBC News Vietnamese right after the trial, lawyer Ngo Anh Tuan, one of the defense lawyers for Ms. Doan Trang, said:

"The representative of the Procuracy suggested 7 to 8 years in prison. The trial panel sentenced him to 9 years in prison. They pronounced this sentence not against the law. Previously, the trial panel only pronounced within the framework proposed by the Procuracy, but according to the new law. Now, they have the right to declare higher than the proposal of the Procuracy."

When asked whether the lawyers and Ms. Pham Doan Trang were able to present enough arguments in the trial, lawyer Tuan briefly said, "incomplete".

The Vietnamese media said, "The prosecution assessed that Pham Thi Doan Trang's anti-corruption activities seriously affected security and order, causing anger and anger among the public and the people."

On his personal Facebook page, lawyer Dang Dinh Manh, one of Pham Doan Trang's defenders in court today, wrote:

"Talking to us at the detention center the day before the trial, perhaps 90% of Ms. Pham Thi Doan Trang will decide to appeal the first-instance judgment."

Pham Doan Trang was arrested on the day of the end of the two-day Vietnam-US human rights dialogue, October 6-7, 2020.

During more than a year in detention, Ms. Pham Doan Trang only met her lawyer once on October 19, 2021 and never met her family.

Lawyer Ngo Anh Tuan recounted his exchange with Ms. Doan Trang on October 19, 2021 on his personal Facebook:

"In 10 times, she was pressured but she refused to answer and asked for a new lawyer to declare but was not accepted;

During the working process, Ms. Trang did not cooperate, did not confess and never confessed, so if there is a clip of confession released in any form, it means that it was cut, not correct. the truth."



Ms. Bui Thi Thien Can (right), journalist Pham Thi Doan Trang's mother, outside the court before the trial begins

What does the international say?

After the trial, Phil Robertson, Deputy Asia Director, Human Rights Watch, issued a statement saying:

"It is infuriating that Pham Doan Trang was sentenced to 9 years in prison just for expressing his views and defending his beliefs."

"The imprisoning of a reformer dedicated to promoting human rights, good governance and justice is a stinging indictment."

[HRW talks about Pham Doan Trang trial and Vietnamese human rights](#)

[Judgment from the UN on the case of activist Pham Doan Trang](#)

[Pham Doan Trang case: What does the indictment say?](#)

[Fighting with the pen and the Freedom of the Press award](#)

Answering BBC News Vietnamese on December 14, Mr. David Brown, a former employee of the US Department of State in Vietnam said:

"The trial of Pham Doan Trang will demonstrate that from the point of view of the police, prosecutors and their judges, it is a felony to say or write anything critical of state actions.

"This is nothing new. Over the years, many other people have been convicted of the same 'crimes'. In the last few years, many Facebook users have been prosecuted simply for sharing information critical of the home. country.

Trang's unique crime of 'subversion' lies in her pretending that Vietnam's institutions are in fact what the constitution describes, i.e., democracy, so that what she is doing becomes helping the State teach people how to be good citizens.

"The so-called 'Democracy Movement' is in complete disarray. The best leaders of the Vietnamese Democratic Movement are either in prison or in exile, while many of the rest are wasted. their time to admire Donald Trump The regime now has much more draconian control over what the public can see on the internet It deploys technology and gimmicks to sidestep arguments, Well-founded criticism What is considered online conversation nowadays is mostly just slander.

"Will this hard line outlast Mr. Trong? That's the big question now. Trong's health is not good, and some of the younger leaders - the current prime minister, the leader of the National Assembly, and perhaps even the current president - is said to be considering the opportunity to succeed Mr. Trong as party leader. At the 14th National Congress, if still in office, Mr. Trong will no doubt aim to secure an election. whatever the scenario, we can expect to see another intense battle between the conservatives in the Party and the 'progressive' and open-heart more."





LAN THANG

| Pham Doan Trang during a demonstration in Hanoi on June 5, 2011

What does social media say?

Writer Nguyen Vien: In the trials of dissidents like Pham Doan Trang, we cannot hope or wait for the lawyer's arguments to be heard in the spirit of the court, which is the place to show what LAW of LAW, but we have the opportunity to see the crude power of the dictator on display.

On the other hand, we will also find out in those trials who really is the defendant.

A sentence for Pham Doan Trang is also a sentence for the regime.

Facebooker Nguyen Hoang Vi: Today, several judges and prosecutors tried Pham Doan Trang, but the authorities have to face judgments from the international public and those who love freedom and peace.

Activist Pham Thanh Nghien: Those who have dared to commit themselves to freedom are always Liberals even if they are imprisoned. Pham Doan Trang has always been a free man.

Pham Doan Trang's activities

Journalist Doan Trang, 43 years old this year, residing in Cat Linh ward, Dong Da district, Hanoi; graduated from Hanoi-Amsterdam School and Hanoi Foreign Trade University and worked as a reporter for Vnexpress Electronic Newspaper, an employee of HAKI Advertising Company, VTC Digital Television Company, a contributor to Vietnamnet Newspaper and a Newspaper Reporter. Law of Ho Chi Minh City.

The journalist was arrested on October 7, 2020, after publishing the book Popular Politics and a number of other journalistic works.

Before being arrested, journalist Doan Trang wrote: "I don't need my own freedom, if that's all it is too easy. I need something bigger than freedom and democracy for Vietnam. That's a sound goal. seems far-fetched, but it's actually possible, with all of your contributions."



BBC READER

Journalist Pham Doan Trang in a photo taken at Loc Hung vegetable garden in procession when arrested by Vietnamese police in October 2020