



Ho Van Hai **Vietnam**

Dr. Ho Van Hai is a blogger who has been detained since November 2016. He is serving a four year prison sentence related to his posts about government corruption and the Formosa waste spill.

Dr. Ho is a graduate of Ho Chi Minh City University of Medicine and Pharmacy. After graduating, Dr. Ho began working at Cho Ray Hospital—the largest general hospital in Ho Chi Minh City—but opened a private clinic in 2004 called Asia Polyclinic, where he worked until his arrest.

In 2014, Dr. Ho received permanent residency in the United States for ten years. He came to the United States through the Orderly Departure Program (ODP), a program that allowed the immigration of Vietnamese to the United States and to other countries. However, he decided to go back to Vietnam to finish some projects and sell his properties. Dr. Ho had a flight scheduled to the United States in November of 2016, but was arrested before he could leave.

Dr. Ho was also a blogger and actively posted on Facebook and his blog under the names “BSHoHo” and “DrHoHo.” Dr. Ho posted about corruption in Vietnam’s one-party Communist government and the Formosa environmental disaster.

Dr. Ho was arrested on November 2, 2016 at his clinic by the Ho Chi Minh City Police after they searched his computer and found 36 articles “disseminating anti-state information.”

His trial began on February 1, 2018 – fifteen months after his initial arrest – and lasted one day. The trial was replete with procedural violations. It was held in secret, Dr. Ho’s family was only given two days notice, and he was not able to hire a lawyer to defend him. Dr. Ho was charged under Article 88 of the Penal Code for conducting propaganda against the state. The Ho Chi Minh City Police alleged Ho disseminated “distorted” information that caused the public to lose trust in the government. The police also alleged that he “posted many articles with libelous content, slandering leaders of the Party and State of Vietnam, distorting the policies and directions, calling on people to participate in anti-Formosa protests, participating in the civil disobedience movement, and failing to abide by the guidelines of the Party and the State.” A spokesman for the Ho Chi Minh City police, said police officials had been monitoring Dr. Ho's online activities before his arrest

The court sentenced him to four years in prison and an additional two years of house arrest.

Dr. Ho has been held in Chi Hoa prison since December 2017 where he shares a cell with 10 other prisoners. He suffers from several chronic health problems, including high blood pressure, and diabetes. Due to the conditions at the prison and lack of adequate medical

treatment, Dr. Ho's health has deteriorated rapidly. He is also unable to receive food or medical supplies from his family.