



Injuries sustained by Nguyen Tin following the June protest ©Private

August 16, 2018

## **Viet Nam: Authorities must investigate alleged torture and ill-treatment of concert-goers by police**

Viet Nam's authorities must immediately investigate allegations that a group of activists were attacked and severely beaten by police officers while attending a private performance of pre-Communist era songs in Ho Chi Minh City yesterday, said Amnesty International.

After breaking up the event – a performance of pre-1975 apolitical love songs by the musician Nguyen Tin held in a small coffee shop – police searched everyone for their ID cards, and proceeded to beat the concert-goers, focusing their attention on prominent rights activists Pham Doan Trang, Nguyen Tin and Nguyen Dai.

“

**When the crackdown on Viet Nam's civil society reaches the point of beating and torturing people for listening to love songs, it is clear the situation is deteriorating to a disturbing level**

## Clare Algar, Amnesty International's Director of Global Operations

The three said they were subsequently taken to separate police stations and tortured, with Pham Doan Trang eventually requiring hospital treatment.

“When the crackdown on Viet Nam’s civil society reaches the point of beating and torturing people for listening to love songs, it is clear the situation is deteriorating to a disturbing level. It is not a crime to attend a concert, and people should not live in fear that they are putting their safety at risk if they do,” said Clare Algar, Amnesty International’s Director of Global Operations.

“Viet Nam’s authorities must immediately and independently investigate these serious allegations in line with their obligations under the UN Convention Against Torture.”

Pham Doan Trang, who recently gave a press interview criticizing the ruling party, says she was later dropped off by police at an unknown road outside the city, where she was beaten further to the point of disfiguring her face. She is currently receiving medical care in hospital.

Nguyen Tin and Nguyen Dai say they were blindfolded and hooded before they were taken to the police stations, then subjected to severe beatings before being released.

### Background

Public security officers in Ho Chi Minh city have increasingly resorted to the use of excessive force and ill-treatment against activists recently. In June 2018, many protesters reported that they were tortured by police officers after attending a mass protest opposing the New Economic Zone and Cyber Security laws.

Vietnamese authorities remain particularly sensitive about the cultural heritage of the south of Vietnam from the period preceding the Communist Party’s victory in the Viet Nam War in April 1975, even when there are no overt political elements. Nguyen Tin is well-known in Viet Nam for singing songs written before this period, and was also detained and tortured by the police during the June protest.

The latest claims of torture come three months before the fifth anniversary of Viet Nam becoming party to the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, which was celebrated as evidence of Viet Nam’s further positive integration into the international community.

### Topics

[NEWS](#)

[ASIA AND THE PACIFIC](#)

[VIET NAM](#)

[TORTURE AND OTHER ILL-TREATMENT](#)