

Extracts from: COMMITTEE TO PROTECT FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Report on Violations of Freedom of Religion by the Government of Vietnam

Report Numbered 01/2014 for First Quarter of 2014.

FEBRUARY 2014

5. February 20th, 2014, Violations against Hoa Hao Buddhist Worshipers in Lap Vo district, Dong Thap province.

Hoa Hao Buddhist worshipers in Lap Vo district have constantly been harassed and threatened following the arbitrary arrests of Ms. Bui Thi Minh Hang, Ms. Nguyen Thi Thuy Quynh, and Mr. Nguyen Van Minh on February 11th, 2014. Mr. Nguyen Van Hoa, a Hoa Hao Buddhist worshiper in Long Hung B commune, Lap Vo district, Dong Thap province informed reporter An Nhien of Radio Free Asia that he and his family have been blocked in traffic, threatened with arrests. He also mentioned that police went to his home in large number to summon him for investigation at the commune's police station. Mr. Hoa insistently refused for fear that he would face beatings or even danger to his life inside the station. Police from Lap Vo district have constantly been harassing Hoa Hao Buddhist worshipers in the area.

Some Hoa Hao Buddhist worshipers have informed us that there are currently more than two million Hoa Hao Buddhist practitioners in Vietnam with the majority of them living in the Mekong delta region. Many Hoa Hao Buddhist practitioners have often been physically assaulted, imprisoned, and threatened because of their religious belief and their refusal to participate in Hoa Hao Buddhist Association organized by the government of Vietnam. The Vietnamese government continuously tells the international community that they respect freedom of religion, but their repetitive attacks on Hoa Hao Buddhist practitioners in the Mekong delta prove that the local governments betray words from the central government.

MARCH 2014

6. March 19th through 25th, 2014, Violation against Hoa Hao Buddhist Worshipers in Cho Moi district, An Giang province

Hoa Hao Buddhist Association usually conducts an annual memorial ceremony to mark the day Prophet Huynh Phu So was assassinated by Viet Minh on February 25th of the lunar calendar, which coincides with March 25th, 2014.

A group of Hoa Hao worshipers in Cho Moi district, An Giang province planned for a memorial ceremony at the residence of Mr. Nguyen Van Vinh at 393, Group 10, Long Hoa hamlet, Long Giang commune, Cho Moi district, An Giang province. In the afternoon of March 18th, 2014, the government of An Giang province came to this location to order a ban on the ceremony with threats of punishment for anyone who disobeyed this order. Mr. Tong Van Chinh and Mr. Nguyen Van Vinh fiercely attested this ban. They insisted on conducting the ceremony even if they had to face jail-time or even risk of being shot at. Mr. Le Quang Liem, the president of Central Traditional Hoa Hao Buddhist Association had issued a statement of condemnation from Saigon.