

Blogger Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh (pen name Mother Mushroom)

Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh, 30 years old, was arrested at midnight on September 2, 2009 in her home in Nha Trang, a coastal city in Central Vietnam.



On the morning of September 2, Quynh wrote on her blog that she had been summoned to appear before the local police station for interrogation on the following day. However, an armed public security force of more than 15 men stormed her house in the middle of the night on September 2 and took Quynh away while she was sleeping with her three year old daughter.

According to her mother, Quynh was accused of violating article 258 of Vietnam's Penal Code which prohibits "abusing democratic freedoms to infringe upon the interest of the state."



On her blog (<http://menam0.multiply.com>), which she writes under the pen name *Me Nam* or Mother Mushroom, Quynh criticized the Vietnamese government's handling of land and sea disputes with China. This is an issue which caused students to take to the streets in late 2007 and has been heavily discussed on Vietnamese blogs.

She also blogged about the highly controversial bauxite mining project in the Central Highlands which a Vietnamese state-owned firm is undertaking with the

Aluminum Corporation of China (Chinalco).



On July 20, 2009, Quynh was photographed wearing a t-shirt with the words "No Bauxite. Paracel and Spratly Islands belong to Vietnam." This picture was posted on numerous blogs and she was interrogated by police for six hours in late July 2009, according to her interview with Radio Free Asia.

Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh remains in prison in Nha Trang. According to a statement on September 11 by a Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson, Quynh is "still under detention for further investigation" although two other bloggers have been released.

In a phone interview with AFP, Quynh's tearful mother called on the international community to help free her daughter. To date, leading free speech groups including Committee to Protect Journalists, Reporters Sans Frontiers, and Global Voices have spoken out on her arrest.