

"THE STORY OF HCMC", 2008

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TRAN

INTERVIEWEES BAO LOC, RAT VU, LINH CHI, NAM DO,
TUAN ANH, DIEP NGUYEN, HONG NGUYEN, TOI
NGUYEN, THAO

English translation by Dung Luong

Nguyen Thi Diep: I think the government should find a way to ban prostitution. They also do robbing. Once, in the evening, there's a tourist came and knock my door for a place to stay. As I opened the door, there're two young ladies (I'm sure they're prostitution) suddenly jumped into my house and started flirting that guy. Easily, I could see that they were pretending, they were actually trying to steal the wallet from the tourist. But I didn't dare to tell him. After those ladies went away, I told him what had happened and he was really amazed.

Tuan Anh: The first time I came here. Everything was very surprising and strange for me. People think I was short of a countryside guy so I met a lot of difficulties to accommodate.

Nguyen Thi Diep: Now it is more developed than in 1975. The economy is improved and everybody has better living conditions. There's more buildings and better infrastructure. I think it much more beautiful. Before 1975, I did not live in the city center. Moreover, they did not call it Ho Chi Minh City like they do now. It was known as Sai Gon capital. Before, I lived in Phu Nhuan district and my husband was a soldier so most of my time was spent at home. Every few months, I sometimes visited my folks in the center, that's when I had a chance to see Sai Gon.

Linh Chi: I have a family, that's an advantage compared to the other kids who unfortunately lack of that. But my parents are busy working so most of the my childhood memories are with my grandmother and aunts. They took care of me, and those are the good memories that I remember. My friends are also my good memories.

Bao Loc: So many historical incidences that directly influence one's life in either a negative or positive way. There're always good and bad aspects existing together. Some make our life become better but some likely to impose people. However, we have to live with them. Same thing happen to every type of society.

Nguyen Thi Diep: In the last few years, there're usually robbers around this area. But now, there's less. I think it's getting better.

Nguyen Thi Thuy Hoa: We need to help others live better, no crimination. There are always good and bad people everywhere.

Vu Khac Rat: Yet it's more developed. There're more foreigners coming here for both investing and visiting our country. The city becomes bustling and busy. Along with, there's also pollution that is not very good. That's about the outside, inside, people are now facing a hard time in living. The price keeps climbing everyday and everything is so expensive. It's difficult to earn that much of money to accommodate with the current conditions. There's even unemployment.

Linh Chi: My family and friends are here. But there're things that are not very satisfying about living here like the pollution affects my health, social issues, the education is not very suitable for the students. Finding a job here is also difficult since people are fond of foreign degrees. It'd be better if I had a chance to travel or study abroad.

Nam Hoang Do: The people around here are generally concern a lot about making a living. They are very kind and close-knit people.

Linh Chi: the Vietnamese's tradition of helping each other in a neighborhood. Even sometimes there are conflicts. For example, there has to be competitions with my family business from the others but when we need assistance, they would kindly help us.

Nguyen Thi Toi: Everybody is same. Some richer has a better living and a different way of thinking and poor live harder so they have another way thinking and the poor live harder so they have another way of thinking. just like that.

Nguyen Thi Hong: Citizen's life should be settle to live more easily. Now, the price keeps climbing so high. Everything is expensive. And, we are the ones who suffer. Such a critical time! It's kind of afraid when we cannot earn money. But, I finally think it does not matter. Whatever will be will be. I especially worry about rice price. We can live without other food but not for rice. The price is changed every day.

Tuan Anh: Inflation leads to price increasing. We encounter many difficulties in daily life. It affects a lot to our lives.

Nguyen Thi Toi: How can we think? It's the city head's business. For the poor like us, we cannot expect anything. The poorer, the more dangerous, it's true.

Bao Loc: The immigration in to the city has somehow affected the citizens' behaviors like: in traffic, in communication etc. It goes in a negative way that makes somehow remove my love for this city. There's too much in our city already but the government still allows some organization to build new building inside the city. This will lead to the regular traffic jam as well as overloading situation. We should look at how Phu My Hung has done to create such a new organized city. About our city, everything happening seems to be temporary.

Nguyen Thi Thuy Hoa: I think in the future everything will be better. There'll be many good things happen to the society. I'm not going out a lot so I have no idea. But I just hope that things will get better, poor people will have better lives. In the future, I only hope I will have a good health to help other people, especially the tourist. If they ever encounter any difficulty I'll be very happy to help.

Thao: I hope there is more school, less orphan and poor people have a better living

condition. Everybody lives well.

Tuan Anh: There will be some new communities out of the city center. People may move to new cities and the center of the city will become only the major point of economic of the society.

Nguyen Thi Hong: In the future, it could more developing. For now, the civilization is getting better and also the living conditions. In the past, there's lot of low infrastructures, drug addicts and beggars but now, the number has significantly decrease. I'm seeing obvious development. Beautiful house and buildings are built.

Vu Khac Rat: I do not know about the future. In the mean time, I see that government is planning a lot to develop the country just like uncle Ho used to promise; after the liberation there'll be a reconstruction for our country bringing a better life for every citizen.

Bao Loc: This is a big question. Not any of us as a citizen can give an answer for this. I hope the city be more opened space. The civilization will be improved. Personally, I wish I can own a house in the countryside, it'll be more fresher and easier to live. Basically, I can do it now, but my working and my children studying conditions do not allow us to.

Nguyen Thi Toi: It's the future of country and government. We, as people live hard and raggedly, will still stay same. We don't dare to think about it...

Linh Chi: If we try, we will get better. Of course, everybody has to be cognitive.