



AS IT IS

## Vietnamese Man Has Not Cut His Hair for 80 Years

August 27, 2020

Coronavirus safety restrictions have caused many men around the world to grow their hair longer than usual. But none of them compare with Nguyen Van Chien of Vietnam. He claims to have gone almost 80 years without cutting his hair.

The 92-year-old has hair that is around five meters long. His hair looks like a long rope.

Chien believes that what a person is born with should be left untouched. He spoke to a reporter from Reuters news agency.

“I believe if I cut my hair I will die. I **dare** not to change anything, not even **combing** it,” he said. “I only **nurture** it, cover it in a **scarf** to keep it dry and clean and looking nice.”

Chien lives in a village about 80 kilometers west of Ho Chi Minh City. As a boy, he had to cut his hair when he was at school. But he left school after third **grade**. He said he decided never to cut, comb, or wash it again.

“I remembered my hair was black, thick and strong,” he said. “I combed it, **untangled** it to make it smooth. But when I heard the calling from the divine power, I knew immediately that I was chosen.”

He added, “I touched my hair and overnight it became really hard. It has attached to my head and became a thing of its own.”

Nguyen Van Chien believes in nine powers and seven gods. He follows a very rare religion known as “Dua”, or the coconut religion. The name comes from its founder, who claimed he survived only on coconuts. Dua is banned in Vietnam.

Chien's fifth son, Luom, helps him with his hair. He, too, believes in the connection between hair and death. Luom says he has seen a man die after trying to re-attach his hair with string.

"These things look simple but they are **sacred**," said 62-year-old Luom.

I'm John Russell.

*Thinh Nguyen reported on this story for Reuters. John Russell adapted the story for VOA Learning English. George Grow was the editor.*

---

## Words in This Story

**dare** – *v.* to do something that is difficult or that people are usually afraid to do); to not be too afraid to do something

**comb** – *v.* to smooth, organize, or separate hair

**nurture** – *v.* to care for the development of something

**scarf** – *n.* a piece of cloth worn around the neck of head

**grade** – *n.* a level of quality or intensity in employment or a school

**untangle** – *v.* to separate things that are twisted together)

**sacred** – *adj.* highly valued and important; very holy

*We want to hear from you. Write to us in the Comments Section.*

---