

Press Release

Devotees of Wat Phra Dhammakaya

Various media channels have reported that the Department of Special Investigation (DSI) has filed a lawsuit against me, Ong-art Thamnita, for charges of public defamation. I have been informed that Phra Suvit Thirathammo of Wat O-noi has also filed charges of defamation against me at Khlong Luang Police Station. Regarding this situation, I would like to make the following statements:

1. I would like to deny that I had any intentions to undermine the authority of either DSI or Phra Suvit.
2. The statements that have been made before the press have all been factual, on the principles that the government must operate with full transparency because government sectors are established by the mandate of the people. Its operations are funded by the tax-paying public, in order to support the public welfare. Therefore, they must proceed cautiously to prevent the people from suspecting that they are applying double standards or acting according to orders because it may cause the people to lose confidence. However, I would like to clarify that I am not implying that DSI or any government sectors have broken any laws.
3. DSI is a governmental department with over a thousand personnel, weapons, and billions of baht in funding. When DSI proclaims itself as a prosecutor against any one individual, that individual will be intimidated, because he is placed in a situation where he is helplessly fighting a giant—one armed with great military power and vast resources.

I am just a young man, devoid of any political or military power, but I solemnly believe I am innocent, and I am ready to prove my innocence in court, through the judicial process.
4. Instead of punishing citizens for their complaints against DSI—which, I admit, may induce fear of wrongdoing and thus create the respect and authority that DSI desires—DSI should see this as an opportunity to take the concerns of their citizens into consideration, and possibly alter their operations as they see fit to better accommodate the needs of their citizens. This would be beneficial for all parties involved and would demonstrate DSI's outstanding reputation as a governmental department that truly exists to serve the people.
5. There are many accusations made by Phra Suvit of Wat O-Noi and they are rather strange. For example, the devotees' creation of emergency relief funds to help members of the credit union who had suffered from the case is said to be wrong. We might have to let our legal team look into the finer details. Regardless, what I have noticed is that Phra Suvit very likely shares a similar objective as DSI, as they lodged their complaints against me on the very same day.

6. Tomorrow, at 14.00, the Devotees of Wat Phra Dhammakaya intend to visit the Department of Special Investigation to inquire into the case involving Phra Suvit of Wat O-noi and Mr. Paiboon Nititawan, and to raise consideration regarding possible ways to expedite their cases.

Mr. Ong-art Thamnita

Spokesperson, Devotees of Wat Phra Dhammakaya

27 June 2016