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**Statement from Wat Phra Dhammakaya  
21 March 2017**

**Wat Phra Dhammakaya denies all reports linking the temple to Kotee and the stockpiling of firearms in Boonraksa Medical Building.**

1. Wat Phra Dhammakaya denies all news reports connecting the temple with Kotee (Mr. Wuthipong Kochathamakun). We have no affiliation whatsoever with this individual.
2. An article in the *Daily News* issued on 21 March 2017 reported:

“Information released by DSI (Department of Special Investigation) reveals that they believe Boonraksa Medical Building and the adjacent areas are stockpiled with weapons, because negotiations to enter the premises for a search operation were always met with constant resistance and obstruction, especially from a group of 2010 hardcore protesters. Authorities decided not to deploy any personnel to search the premise for fear that it may escalate to heavy skirmishes. Only after the weapons had been removed was a search of the suspected areas permitted. The investigation team believes that the recently seized cache of weapons had come directly from these suspected areas.”

**Wat Phra Dhammakaya firmly denies this report and would like to provide a timeline of the sequence of events:**

In the late hours of 15 February 2017: The Thai Junta or National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) invokes Article 44 to take control of the premises of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, deploys roughly 4,200 police and soldiers to barricade all entrances to the temple, including the Boonraksa Medical Building. Starting from midnight of 15 February 2017, people were also prohibited from traveling along alternate roads that skirt Klong L road and pass Boonraksa Medical Building.

16-18 February 2017: DSI, along with other personnel, searched every square inch of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, including the Boonraksa Medical Building. The search team inspected the medical building rapidly and thoroughly, without permitting any monks, devotees, or media from entering the building until they were completely satisfied with the search.

23 February 2017: A number of soldiers attempted to enter Boonraksa Medical Building, but they were met by monks and devotees asking the soldiers not to enter since prior negotiations and arrangements had not been made.

6 March 2017: Soldiers maintain their occupation of the 196 Rai section and Boonraksa Medical Building after ditches and oil barrels were discovered. (Along with a rumor from an individual that the temple was preparing to set the oil barrels ablaze in order to obstruct the authorities.) The truth is these barrels were completely empty, without a single drop of fuel.

10 March 2017: Most Venerable Phrathep-Ratanasuttee, Provincial Ecclesiastical Head of Pathum Thani; disciplinary monks; DSI; police; soldiers; administrative officers; and media from every news outlet, inspected Boonraksa Medical Building for the second time and “did not find anything that violated the law.” Once the search operation was complete, DSI Chief Paisit Wongmuang delivered a press statement that entering and leaving Wat Phra Dhammakaya was now permitted and that they were reducing of the number of police and soldiers at the temple. A small unit of soldiers are ordered to remain to keep an eye on the area within Boonraksa Medical Building, while another set was positioned outside. Other personnel were assigned to various posts along the temple’s perimeter to protect against third-party involvement and to enforce Article 44 to this day.

21 March 2017: Authorities have remained their presence throughout the temple’s perimeter. Therefore, it is impossible to transfer firearms in and out of the temple as reported by the news. Even monks going on their morning alms were subject to inspection by DSI officers upon their return to the temple. The officers would only allow monks to carry food enough for one meal to enter the temple. Devotees who entered empty handed were required to have their identification verified, and cars were thoroughly inspected and license plates recorded before being allowed inside.

Therefore, Wat Phra Dhammakaya would like to deny the news report that Boonraksa Medical Building and adjacent areas have weapons stockpiled. We would like to affirm that we have always fully cooperated and maintained continuous dialogue with DSI throughout the entire siege.

Communications Department  
Wat Phra Dhammakaya