



Statement from Wat Phra Dhammakaya
9 March 2017

1. News outlets have reported about the arrest warrant issued against Ven. Sanitwong Wuttiwangso, Director of Communications at Wat Phra Dhammakaya, for content posted on social media. The charges were libel and insurrection, inciting public unrest, disobedience, disturbance in the Kingdom, or encouraging the public to violate the laws of the country, specifically the Computer Crime Act.

We would like to explain that as Director of Communications, one of Ven. Sanitwong Wuttiwangso's many functions is to make public the news and details of upcoming religious ceremonies or events associated with Wat Phra Dhammakaya. These are details released to the devotees and the general public to provide accurate information coming from the temple. There was never any intention to disparage or malign anyone, incite, cause unrest or disturbance to the public or the Kingdom, or to encourage the public to break the law in any way.

Once news of the court-approved arrest warrant came out, we contacted the police about the conditions of his surrender. However, we would like to emphasize that no summons was ever given, and the police were fully cognizant that Ven. Sanitwong was still at the temple. If he had received the summons, he would turn himself in.

We want to reiterate that we respect the law and have always cooperated with the judicial process.

2. On July 19, 2016, on Asalha Puja Day (the day before the Buddhist Rains Retreat begins), Wat Phra Dhammakaya initiated a project to encourage people throughout the world to chant the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta. The objective was to instill a love for Buddhism in people of all ages through the chanting of verses that form the heart of Buddhism. A running tally of the number of times chanted is normally displayed so that people can feel proud of their achievements and good deeds. There are special set goals for the number of chants that usually coincide with auspicious days like Visakha Puja Day or Buddhist Holy Days. Our next goal is to achieve 30 million rounds by the full-moon day of March 12, 2017.

With this project, chanting can be performed at home or at any one of our branch centers worldwide. Those who are able to make the travel to the temple are encouraged to come join others at the Grand Meditation Stadium of the Dhammakaya Cetiya. We have had students from various schools throughout Thailand take part in this event, and they have submitted over a million rounds of chanting with us. There is no intention to rally people to create a mob at Wat Phra Dhammakaya to protect the temple from the current situation in any way.