

## **FACT SHEET ABOUT WAT PHRA DHAMMAKAYA AND VENERABLE PHRATHEPYANMAHAMUNI**

### **SECTION I. Facts Regarding the DSI Summons to Phrathepyanmahamuni**

The Department of Special Investigation (DSI) has issued a summons to Phrathepyanmahamuni (Luang Por Dhammajayo) as a suspect in the crime of conspiring to launder money and receiving stolen property.

Case number 146/2556 states that Phrathepyanmahamuni received donations in the form of 10 cheques from Mr Supachai Srisupa-aksorn, former Chairman of the Klongchan Credit Union Cooperative (KCUC), and the prosecutor of the DSI seeks to call Phrathepyanmahamuni as a witness in the lawsuit against Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn.

The prosecutor in case 146/2556 has filed a lawsuit against Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn, the first suspect, and his conspirators under the charge of theft from his employer. The prosecutor recommended that DSI charge the first suspect with money laundering, using a connection with special case number 63/2557 for a charge of conspiring to commit fraud against the public. An additional order states that if the first suspect is found guilty of money laundering and there is evidence that he had other conspirators, or supported money laundering, or had ties with other offenses, the investigators of the case may have the authority to take further legal actions.

Mr. Thammanoon Attachoti has accused Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn of money laundering, and he has accused Phrathepyanmahamuni as a co-conspirator and the receiver of stolen property. The DSI's investigators then separated another special case number 27/2559, which is a duplicate of the special case numbers 146/2556 and 63/2557, and contravenes the original orders by the prosecutor of Special Investigations.

Previously, Mr. Thammanoon Attachoti had accused Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn and company of fraud against the public, an accusation already featured in case number 63/2557. The DSI investigators have already concluded their enquiries in both case number 63/2557 and case number 146/2557, and both cases are under consideration by the prosecutor.

By creating a new special case number 27/2559 from partial evidence given in the original case, this contravenes Thai law, which states, "One count of charge cannot be duplicated."

To accuse Phrathepyanmahamuni of receiving stolen property and money laundering, there must be evidence that he had the intention to conspire with Mr Supachai Srisupa-aksorn in embezzling KCUC money for personal use. The facts are that Phrathepyanmahamuni received

the donations in front of a large group, and all the handling of cheques and donations are the responsibility of the Wat Phra Dhammakaya financial officers, who also manage the building of religious structures and other temple expenses.

Further, the donations from Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn have been used to build religious structures, as requested by the donor. They were not spent for the benefit of Phrathepyanmahamuni, who has lived a life of great simplicity and purity for the past 47 years. The finances of Wat Phra Dhammakaya have previously been investigated by the Anti-Money Laundering Office (AMLO) and have been freely given to the DSI investigators.

When receiving the donations from Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn, neither Prathepyanmahamuni nor the Wat Phra Dhammakaya officers were aware that they came from any illegal activity. It was assumed that the money came from Mr. Supachai's successful and profitable business, as he also donated generously to other temples, schools, universities, public charities and government sectors. It has never been the policy of the temple to question the source of donations as is the case with many other religious and charitable organisations. Moreover, Mr. Supachai's donation while substantial, was not the largest donation the temple has received in the past.

Following the emergence of the case against Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn, the followers of Phrathepyanmahamuni raised the sum of 684,784,000 baht to assist the victims of the Credit Union, which issued a letter of appreciation and withdrew all complaints against the temple. Mr. Supachai also released a statement indicating that the money he borrowed from the Credit Union to make donations to Wat Phra Dhammakaya have already been repaid to KCUC in full.

Local media have also accused Wat Phra Dhammakaya of supporting the Pheu Thai Party which is not true. The temple has many supporters from different age groups, genders, regions, occupations and political views, but it has no involvement in politics and focuses solely on the Dhamma of Lord Buddha.

To accuse Ven. Prathepyanmahamuni of misusing temple funds is a total denial of his dedication to the cause of Buddhism. Since founding Wat Phra Dhammakaya in 1970, Luang Por Dhammajayo and his supporters have worked tirelessly to create the largest Buddhist temple in Thailand, with more than one million devotees, and over 4,000 monks and novices. He has helped to propagate the message of Buddhism throughout the world, with more than 80 Dhammakaya Meditation Centres in 30 countries.

The charges by the DSI against Phrathepyanmahamuni are baseless and a denial of his Human Rights. They choose to ignore the proven facts about the KCUC case, and offer no

consideration about the ailing health of Luang Por Dhammajayo and the tireless work he has performed for 47 years to support Buddhist monks and temples throughout Thailand.

## **SECTION II. Phrathepyanmahamuni (Most Venerable Dhammajayo) Has Not Received Fair Treatment**

Most Venerable Phrathepyanmahamuni has been ordained as a Buddhist monk for over 46 years and has performed virtuous deeds throughout his life. At the age of 72, he is now in the final stage of his life and his health is failing. Currently, he is being accused of money laundering and accepting stolen property. All these accusations are baseless and demonstrate to the injustice being brought against him in several ways:

- It all began when Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn, former chairman of Klongchan Credit Union Cooperative (KCUC) was suspected of laundering money from the credit union. He wrote a total of 878 cheques to various people and organizations, of which 10 were donated to the Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni. The Department of Special Investigation (DSI) had already investigated this matter with Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni and submitted their findings to the prosecutor. The prosecutor evaluated the case and opted not to press charges against Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni. Then suddenly, a new case with the exact charges was filed, with Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni being charged with money laundering and receiving stolen property as well. This was a duplication of the previous case and goes against the law that states: “One count of charge cannot be duplicated.”
- Money laundering and accepting stolen property technically occurs if Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni intended to collude with Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn to illegally extract money from KCUC for his own benefit. However, what actually transpired does not support the premise underlying these assumptions: Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni received the donations openly before a crowd of tens of thousands of people. He never saw the cheques. The temple’s financial department staff collected the donated cash and cheques, and deposited them into the bank, subsequently allocating them toward construction costs of religious facilities and various temple expenses as the donors had intended. This information had been previously disclosed to DSI.
- The assumption is that Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni colluded with Mr. Supachai to embezzle funds from the credit union. In truth, to do so, they would have had to conceal their illegal activity. Instead, the money can be clearly traced for every transaction, starting with the credit union cheques used as a form of “payment” for donations. Cheques for large sums like these would have certainly been subject to an audit, leading to significant non-liquidity within the credit union. Any person with mal intent seeking to launder money would not have used such transparent methods.

- Moreover, Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni did not withdraw a single baht of cash from his bank account. The cheques donated by Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn had been transferred from Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni's account in their full amount to pay contractors for the construction of religious facilities, in accordance with Mr. Supachai's wishes. They were never allocated for Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni's personal benefit. The transparent money trail had been verified by the Anti-Money Laundering Office and their findings were submitted to DSI.
- Questions have been raised as to why Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni and Wat Phra Dhammakaya were not suspicious of the source of Mr. Supachai's large donations. In truth, Mr. Supachai donated to other temples, schools, universities, public charities, and government sectors; moreover, his donations were not the largest in sum, compared to donations made by others to Wat Phra Dhammakaya. Mr. Supachai revealed that the funds for his donations were derived from his successful business, so Wat Phra Dhammakaya had no reasons to be suspicious and received the donations in the same manner as any donations by others. When the lawsuit was filed, Mr. Supachai released a statement indicating that he borrowed money from the credit union to make donations to Wat Phra Dhammakaya and Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni, and already repaid the credit union in full.
- Once the lawsuit was filed, supporters of Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni felt a decision left to the court would be exhaustive and credit union members would be in dire straits. They also felt that Wat Phra Dhammakaya and Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni's reputation would also be impacted. As a result, they raised a sum of 684.78 million baht and returned it to the credit union. This was an identical amount initially donated by Mr. Supachai to Wat Phra Dhammakaya and Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni; both parties acknowledged this transaction in court.

Afterwards, the credit union withdrew its lawsuit against Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni and Wat Phra Dhammakaya and released a statement indicating their intention not to move forward with both the civil case and the criminal case against Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni and Wat Phra Dhammakaya. They also issued a letter of appreciation to the supporters of Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni who generously raised the full amount of funds to aid the credit union.

Therefore, Klongchan Credit Union Cooperative didn't suffer any hardships from Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn's monetary donations to Wat Phra Dhammakaya and Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni. The President and Vice President of the Credit Union elected not to proceed with the lawsuit and even issued a letter of appreciation to the temple supporters. However, DSI continues to trump up charges and accusations against Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni. What is the motive behind this?

- DSI issued a summons for Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni to appear before investigators at its headquarters on 25th April 2016. At 11.00 hrs. that day, Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni's attorney submitted a request for postponement due to the ailments he presented, accompanied by a medical certificate. After the investigators reviewed the request, they informed the attorney at 11.30 hrs. that the postponement was approved. The appearance would be postponed for 10th May 2016. The attorney then departed the DSI HQ. However, at 13.30 hrs, investigators phoned the attorney to inform him that they rescinded the postponement and would seek an arrest warrant, on the grounds that Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni was well enough to make the trip to DSI HQ.

However, DSI did not appoint a physician from the police hospital or any other department to determine whether Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni was truly ill or not. This begs the question: How did DSI know whether or not Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni is ailing? DSI claims that Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni was fully able to join the ceremony on 22nd April 2016. However, the medical certificate clearly indicates that he was suffering acutely. DSI's claim is unsupported.

This past year, Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni has been ailing and has not stepped foot outside the temple. He has been suffering from deep vein thrombosis (DVT) in his left leg, which has swelled to twice the size of the right leg; chronic ulcers on the left leg from diabetes; and severe allergies. DSI examined his medical conditions when they met him at the temple last year in 2015, but have yet to make the visit with a physician this year.

Ultimately, the courts made the decision to refuse to issue an arrest warrant on the basis that Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni was not a flight risk.

The following questions remain unanswered:

- For what reason weren't they able to meet him at the temple this time?
- Why did DSI alter their words? First, they allowed for a postponement, then rescinded, and then sought an arrest warrant. Why did they go back on their words?
- Was an arrest warrant necessary?
- Why such aggressiveness with a senior monk who has only done wholesome deeds throughout his life?
- Millions of Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni's supporters are utterly perplexed.

### **SECTION III. Q & A about Klongchan Credit Union Cooperative (KCUC)**

1. Does Wat Phra Dhammakaya have any complicity in Mr. Supachai Srisupa-aksorn's alleged embezzlement of KCUC funds?

A: Wat Phra Dhammakaya and Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni have zero involvement in the alleged embezzlement. After the allegations were made, the Temple asked Mr. Supachai regarding the source of the funds, and he disclosed that he had taken out a loan from KCUC and repaid it.

2. Were any suspicions raised when donations in the amount of hundreds of millions of baht were being offered?

A: Mr. Supachai is not the biggest donor at Wat Phra Dhammakaya; there are other generous donors who donate greater sums. When he came to offer these large donations he indicated a few business and mining investments of his were highly profitable, thus giving the Temple no reason to be suspicious.

3. What did Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni and Wat Phra Dhammakaya do with the donations?

A: The entire donation was allocated toward the construction of religious facilities according to the donor's wishes. Since a great number of people participate in mass meditation at Wat Phra Dhammakaya, up to a million on special events, it was necessary to have facilities that can accommodate those in attendance.

4. Why did Wat Phra Dhammakaya return the donation, in the amount of 684 million baht, to Klongchan Credit Union Cooperative?

A: Wat Phra Dhammakaya received these donations with transparency and in good faith, and subsequently allocated all the funds toward the construction of religious facilities in accordance with the donors' wishes. When the lawsuit was filed, supporters of Wat Phra Dhammakaya realized if the case were to go to court, the trial would be exhaustive, affecting the reputation of the Temple and Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni, and bringing hardship to credit union members of the credit union. Therefore, funds to compensate the credit union members in the full amount that Mr. Supachai donated to the Temple and Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni was established by the Temple supporters.

5. What is the Temple's current relationship with KCUC?

A: The credit union issued a letter of appreciation to the supporters of Wat Phra Dhammakaya for their compassion in raising the funds to aid the credit union and its members. The supporters did not have any legal obligations to return any of the funds

since the donations were received with transparency and allocated toward religious structures as the donors had intended.

Mr. Supachai had also offered donations to other temples, schools, and many other organizations; they have yet to return their donation to the credit union in any way.

6. The general public believes that donations made to temples should be more transparent and include the source of each donation. Does Wat Phra Dhammakaya agree with this view?

A: Temples, organizations, or various foundations rely on donations to operate. Therefore, questioning the donors about the origin of their donations would be extremely impolite and inappropriate. In practice, this idea would be quite difficult to implement. However, the Temple agrees with having as much transparency as possible and invites every sector to propose a solution that is practical that benefits all parties involved.

#### **SECTION IV. Wat Phra Dhammakaya Denies All Allegations: Most Venerable Phrathepyanmahamuni has Performed Good Deeds Earnestly for More than 50 Years**

According to news media, the Department of Special Investigations (DSI) has summoned Venerable Phrathepyanmahamuni (Luangpor Dhammajayo) to acknowledge allegations that he has committed wrongdoings by conspiring to launder money and to receive stolen property. Wat Phra Dhammakaya affirms Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni's innocence and denies all such allegations.

##### **The real Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni**

Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni (72), Abbot of Wat Phra Dhammakaya, began studying Dharma in 1963 while he was a freshman at Kasetsart University. He practiced meditation with Khun Yai Chand Khonnokyoong, top disciple of Luangpor Sodh, the famed Abbot of Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen, without missing a day even during final exams at the university. Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni graduated from Kasetsart in 1969 with a Bachelor's degree in Economics. He took the saffron robe to become a Buddhist monk for life at Wat Paknam in 1969, whereupon, he was given a monastic name, "Dhammajayo".

In 1970, one year after Ven. Dhammajayo's ordination, Lady Prayad Pattayapongsavisuttatibodi donated 78 acres of land at Klong Sam Precinct, Klong Luang District, Pathumthani Province, to the group to build a Buddhist temple. Ven. Dhammajayo and his team spearheaded the

development and building of the temple facilities, which were later to be known as Wat Phra Dhammakaya. The temple was formally established on Magha Puja Day, February 20, 1970.

The temple continued to prosper since. On important Buddhist days tens of thousands of people came to practice meditation at the temple. The land eventually became too small to accommodate the ever-increasing number of laypeople who came to use the facilities. Through the years that followed, temple congregations contributed funds to acquire more land, now grown to 1,000 acres.

Substantiation of Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni's innocence and his pure-heartedness  
Anyone can say anything, good and bad. What is more reliable than words is action—more than fifty years of continuous action.

One thing is clear: Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni has dedicated his entire life to Buddhism. Whether one agrees or disagrees to his method of propagating Buddhism is one's own right to do so. It is subject to each one's taste and temperament. But it is unconscionable for one to accuse him of wrongful intention. One who has wrongful intention as a motive is often one who seeks rewards and gains. Such a person would not have done what Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni has done. He or she would never have the ability to accomplish any of the following tasks:

- Building religious facilities capable of accommodating one million Buddhists. This is an exceptional job that requires a lifelong dedication. The cetiyas, the chapel, the meditation halls and numerous other facilities, the combined values of which amount to billions of Baht, belong to the nation and the religion. Not one single Baht has been subsidized by the government.
- Producing more than 4,000 monks, novices and temple staff and helpers who dedicate their lives to Buddhism, as well as a million laypeople who have found refuge in Buddhism.
- The Buddha said, "Morality can be recognized when people live together." Those who have lived together for tens of years obviously must have known the character of the people they have lived with. If Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni is not truly virtuous, would you expect any of the monks, novices, temple staff and helpers, to have dedicated their lives to the religion under his leadership like they have done? It is only natural that one has to realize the goodness of something before one is willing to dedicate one's life to that something.

Can one accuse a person who has done goodness consistently throughout his life of pretense?

### **Dedicated his life for the sake of society**

Ven. Phrahepyanmahamuni has contributed billions of Baht to public charities. Here are some examples:

- Performing robe offerings for monks in 323 temples in the Southern provinces every month for the past twelve years
- Creating more than 30,000 financial aids to teachers in the South
- Provided requisites and food for mass-ordinations of more than 10,000 monks in towns and villages throughout Thailand, twice a year, every year. This is a campaign to prevent temples from being abandoned.
- Group ordination of one million novices to revive morality for youths
- Provide reliefs for people in Thailand and other countries who suffered natural disasters, such as floods, hurricanes and tsunamis.

### **Plea for justice**

Ven. Phrathepyanmahamuni has lived a life of purity from a very young age to now an advancing age. At age 72, his health is failing. This is the final stage of his life. To accuse a virtuous person such as him of money laundering and receiving stolen properties is groundless and unconscionable. Think of it logically. Why would someone like him want to do such a thing? He has done a great deal for Buddhism and the society.