

10 fratmen in Atio hazing transferred to Manila jail

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A Manila court yesterday ordered the transfer to the city jail of the 10 Aegis Juris fraternity members tagged in the fatal hazing of University of Santo Tomas law student Horacio “Atio” Castillo III.

Judge Marivic Umali of the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 20 issued a commitment order directing the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), which has custody of the fratmen, to transfer the suspects to the Manila city jail within 48 hours.

In a six-page order, Umali cited the rules of criminal procedure, which state that an arrested person should be delivered to the “nearest police station or jail.”

“The NBI detention facility is neither a police station nor a jail,” the judge said.

The suspects have been detained at the NBI detention cell since March 23.

They are Ralph Trangia, Arvin Balag, Oliver John Audrey Onofre, Mhin Wei Chan, Danielle Hans Matthew Rodrigo, Joshua Joriel Macabali, Axel Munrio Hipe, Marcelino Bagtang, Jose Miguel Salamat and Robin Ramos.

Parents of the fraternity members earlier appealed to the court to keep them in the NBI custody for security reasons.

They cited the supposed bias of the Manila Police District (MPD), which is one of the complainants.

NBI spokesman Ferdinand Lavin said they received a copy of the court order yesterday afternoon.

Arrestment reset

The court reset the arrestment of the fraternity members to July 24 pending resolution of an appeal filed by Trangia before the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Escorted by NBI agents, the suspects appeared at the Manila RTC Branch 20 before 10 a.m.

Trangia has filed a petition for review before the DOJ, asking it to reconsider the hazing charges filed against him.

On March 6, a panel of DOJ prosecutors found probable cause to indict Trangia and the other suspects for violation of the Anti-Hazing Act, according to Justice Secretary Menardo Guevarra.

Another suspect, John Paul Solano, a medical technologist, was charged with perjury and obstruction of justice.

Solano was the one who brought Castillo to the Chinese General Hospital where the victim was pronounced dead on arrival.

Castillo’s parents, Horacio II and Carmina, and sister Nicole also attended the hearing.

Castillo died from massive injuries after attending the initiation rites of the Aegis Juris fraternity in September last year.