

Ted Failon returns to work, airs side on wife's death for last time

by REINIR PADUA
Philstar.com

MANILA – An emotional Ted Failon, news anchor of ABS-CBN and radio dzMM, went back on air yesterday morning, the first time since the death of his wife Trinidad Arteche-Etong. Saying this was the last time he would talk about his family's ordeal, Failon (Mario Teodoro Etong in real life) recalled the day his wife was found last April 15 with a gunshot wound to the head inside their house in Tierra Pura Homes in Tandang Sora, Quezon City, during the first half of the two-hour morning radio show co-anchored by Korina Sanchez.

Failon, a news anchor of ABS-CBN TV Patrol, claimed that his wife committed suicide due to financial problems, but the police continued the initial investigation as if there was foul play. Even Trinidad's relatives believed Failon's claim, which was confirmed by the house helpers. Trinidad died the next day at the New Era General Hospital in Quezon City.

The QCPD had also filed charges of obstruction of justice against Failon, his driver Glen Polan, houseboy Pacifico Apacible, nanny Wilfreda Boll-ester, housemaid Carlota Morbos, and Trinidad's sister Pamela Arteche.

QCPD investigators said the house helpers had cleaned the bathroom where Trinidad was found while the driver cleaned the Mitsubishi Pajero that was used to transport the victim to

hospital. The house helpers claimed that they cleaned the crime scene on their own.

Failon's group denied that they committed obstruction of justice when they cleaned up the crime scene.

The prosecutors, however, dismissed the charges against Failon and the others. The National Bureau of Investigation took over the probe of the case from the Quezon City police, and concluded that Trinidad committed suicide, declaring the case closed.

Returning to his radio program after more than a month's absence, Failon thanked his superiors and co-workers at the network who helped him and treated him not as a colleague but as a friend in need.

He said there were people who "toyed with the tragedy (that struck his family), made it a joke and took advantage of the situation."

Failon was emotional and drank water to clear his throat, as he said the tragedy of his family has taught him lessons as a father and a husband.

"I am a communicator but I admit there were instances that I failed to communicate," Failon said, apparently referring to the family problems that he earlier made public in maintaining that his wife committed suicide.

Failon said that just like any ordinary family, he and his wife and children go to church every Sunday, have family dinner and occasionally go out together – things that he said were apparently not enough.

He said the death of his wife has left a void in their family, noting that the latter should have been there as their youngest daughter was fitting her uniform in preparation for entering high school.

Failon said the situation of their family would now be different because of the passing away of his wife.

He later opened the second

half of the radio program with an overseas telephone conversation with Sanchez who is currently in Japan.

Failon and Sanchez exchanged banter, including what Sanchez said was her plan of having Failon as part of her bridal entourage in her upcoming and much-publicized wedding with Sen. Mar Roxas, the presidential bet of the Liberal Party. ■



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Mancao out to implicate me – Estrada

by JOSE RODEL CLAPANO
Philstar.com

MANILA – Former President Joseph Estrada said over the weekend that former police superintendent Cezar Mancao is out to implicate him in the killings of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito nine years ago.

Estrada, one of the guests of the ANC's leadership forum held last Friday evening at the UP School of Economics auditorium, said Mancao is being dictated by Malacañang to implicate him in the Dacer-Corbito killings in November 2000.

"We all know that adminis-

tration men have talked to him (Mancao). Administration people told him isabit mo na si Erap (implicate Erap)," Estrada said.

The former president insisted that he has nothing to do with the killing of Dacer and Corbito.

"Dacer was my *kumpadre* twice in a row. First was when I was still a mayor, I stood as sponsor to one of his daughters when she was baptized. I served as principal sponsor in the wedding of the same daughter," he said.

Reports had it that an affidavit of Mancao tagged a certain "Bigote" as the alleged mastermind.

Estrada said Dacer himself was once also called "Bigote." He did not elaborate. ■

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