5th Bonus Point (10/12): Comparative Analysis of the Lakbayan 2016 coverage and the Death of the Thai King

In the coverage of the Lakbayan 2016 which was held in the University of the Philippines Diliman last October 14, it talked about how the minority groups marched in the campus to fight for their rights. Basically, they are protesting against the militarization, as well as the ravaging of their ancestral lands. These 150+ minority groups, which includes the Lumads, the Ifugaos, and the Kalingas, among others, will be staying in the campus until October 28. In the meantime, during their stay, they will be visiting several government agencies such as the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, Department of Justice, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and Department of Agrarian Reform so that their voices regarding this issue will be heard and eventually, the government can do something about it.

On the other hand, there is the news coverage about the death of the king of Thailand, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, last October 13. He was only 88 years old when he died, which ended his 70-year reign in the country. It was 3:52pm when he passed away in the Siriraj Hospital, where he was admitted. The reason why he is so much revered is that during his reign as king, he helped in the process in unifying Thailand. Because of his death, the citizens cannot hold any entertainment activities for one month; meanwhile, they all have to wear black for one year, as a show of grief and mourning. His death affected a whole nation as he was like a father to all of them. Other countries have given condolences to the Thailand king, especially coming from USA President Barack Obama, who said that King Bhumibol was a man of “grace and warmth”.

Comparing these two news articles together, both of them followed a provisions in the 2014 ***SPJ Code of Ethics*** which is under the headline ***Seek Truth and Report It***. These were: ***1) Take responsibility for the accuracy of their work. Verify information before releasing it. Use original sources whenever possible and 2) Gather, update, and correct information throughout the life of a news story.*** Both of the authors of these news articles interviewed various people to cross-examine the information they have and see if what they know is legitimate. The interviews they had came from first-hand sources--for example for the Lakbayan 2016, these journalists asked students who are part of the UP Diliman University Student Council as well as professors about the issue. Meanwhile, in the news about King Bhumibol, they asked the Royal Palace about the details of his death. However, there is one difference between these two articles which would be one of them followed the provision: ***Boldly tell the story of the diversity and magnitude of the human experience. Seek sources whose voices we seldom hear*** that is still under ***Seek Truth and Report It***. The main difference can be seen how the articles were written. In the one regarding King Bhumibol, it did not just talk about his death wherein the information came from the Royal Palace, but also asked the common citizens for their opinions regarding what just happened. Normally, you wouldn’t hear their voices in media, but because of this, it was a refreshing way to hear another side of the story. In the case of the Lakbayan 2016 news article, the authors only asked those coming from UP Diliman as they were the ones handling the event. They did not even bother to ask the

minority groups about how they feel regarding their Lakbayan experience. It seemed as if the story was, in a way, just one-sided.

Sources:

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