

THE PHILIPPINES

Sources

A total of 8 online English sources were reviewed: the *Philippine Star*, *Manila Bulletin*, *Asian Journal*, *Mindanao Times*, *Daily Inquirer*, *Daily Tribune*, *Asian Journal* and the *Filipino Express*. Most of the references to Canada were in the *Philippine Star*, *Manila Bulletin* and the *Asian Journal*.

References to Canada

In general, Canada was well covered in the Philippine newspapers. Canada was mentioned in 136 news articles and editorials, covering topics such as SARS, corruption, international death penalty, and the blackout in North America. Canada made the headlines 9 times in the *Manila Times*, twice in the *Manila Bulletin* and once in the *Asian Journal*, but the majority of references to Canada were “embedded” within articles about the United States, APEC, ASEAN, NAFTA, WTO, Iraq, money remittances, immigration, mad cow disease, and the Philippine elections.

Findings in the Philippine online press

Reporting on Canada in the Philippine online press was generally positive; it focussed mostly on political and security issues, business, sports, Filipinos in Canada and artistic events relating to Canada.

The Philippine papers reported Paul Martin’s displeasure with the United States over the Maher Arar case as well as Martin’s vows “to forge closer ties with the United States and continue economic discipline he started nearly a decade ago.” They also reported the overwhelming gratefulness of the Canadian Liberal Party to Jean Chrétien when he was in power.

The media reported the Philippine authorities’ displeasure about Canada’s renewal of its Philippines travel advisory which had placed particular emphasis on kidnapping cases in Mindanao and Metro Manila. Canada made headlines when the young Filipino student Mao Jomar Lanot was beaten to death in Vancouver by a group of Canadian youths, which sparked fears of racism among the members of the Filipino community in Canada.

Canada was frequently mentioned in the context of corruption charges led by Senator Lacson, who had accused the First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo of money laundering via his former secretary, Victoria Toh. Senator Lacson claimed that Miss Toh, who is living in Canada, held dummy bank accounts and bought an \$850,000 house in Canada. Canada was also described in a local survey as the favourite immigration destination for Filipinos, as well as a “safe heaven” for international fugitives.

Canada was referred to when President Arroyo decided to lift the moratorium on the death penalty. President Arroyo was criticised by ex-Senator and presidential aspirant Raul Roco who