

AQ – Features of Singapore Society

“I am accused often enough of interfering in the private lives of citizens.

If I did not, had I not done that, we wouldn't be here today”

– Lee Kuan Yew (National Day Rally in 1986)

Note: This list is non-exhaustive; you should update your notes with the latest developments and issues featured in Singapore news.

Only use relevant issues / illustrations and policies in your response when they relate directly to the points you have identified from the passages.

	Descriptors	Relevant illustrations / policies
Economy	- Singapore's economic prospects are tied to the availability of a highly-skilled workforce given our scarce natural resources. - this has led to a reliance on foreign talent, as well as low-skilled migrants. - At the same time, it necessitates an emphasis on developing human capital (link to education / meritocracy) and the need for constant upskilling and innovation. - there is a reliance on trade / open markets (Singapore has a free-market economy with minimal trade barriers, making it one of the most open economies in the world). - business friendly regulatory environment (low tax rates) and a highly attractive investment climate, which has resulted in large inflows of FDI from global investors and MNCs over the years. - highly developed and diversified economy - state capitalism (the government plays a significant role through sovereign wealth funds like Temasek Holdings and the Government of Singapore Investment Corporation (GIC). These entities hold majority stakes in several of the nation's largest companies, such as SIA, Singtel, and ST-Engineering.	- Singapore is one of the leading financial centers globally, with a robust banking sector, active stock exchange (SGX), and a wide range of financial services. The economy is highly diversified, with key sectors including manufacturing (particularly electronics, pharmaceuticals, and chemicals), financial services, information technology, trade, and logistics. - The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is headquartered in Singapore. - Singapore offers one of the most competitive corporate tax regimes in the world, with a headline rate of 17%. There are also various tax incentives for businesses in key sectors, such as manufacturing, finance, and biotechnology. Singapore ranks consistently high in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index. The country has streamlined procedures for starting a business, often allowing companies to be registered within a day. The government provides various grants and incentives to support businesses, particularly in innovation and productivity. For example, the Productivity and Innovation Credit (PIC) scheme offers tax deductions or cash payouts for businesses that invest in activities like R&D, automation, and employee training.

	- fosters innovation and the adoption of technological solutions (Singapore invests heavily in R&D, particularly in high-tech industries, biotechnology, and digital technologies.) - high cost of living - competitive work culture	- Skilled Workforce Development - Through initiatives like SkillsFuture, the Singaporean government promotes continuous education and skills upgrading, ensuring that businesses have access to a highly skilled and adaptable workforce. - Smart Nation Initiative Transforming SG Through Tech (smartnation.gov.sg) - Singapore has an extensive network of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with more than 25 countries, including major economies. Singapore is also a proactive member of regional and international trade organizations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). - In April 2013, the country was recognised as an increasingly popular tax haven for the wealthy due to the low tax rate on personal income, a full tax exemption on income that is generated outside of Singapore. Australian millionaire retailer Brett Blundy, and multi-billionaire Facebook co-founder Eduardo Saverin are two examples of wealthy individuals who have settled in Singapore. Chinese Media TV celebrities Jet Li and Gong Li have also taken up naturalised Singapore citizenship. - Singapore has one of the highest Gini coefficients among developed countries (0.371. in 2023). Wealth is heavily concentrated at the top, with the richest 10% of households holding a significant portion of the country's wealth. - According to a 2022 report by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM), the average weekly working hours in Singapore were about 44.9 hours. This is higher than the average in many other developed countries. Singapore often ranks low on global indices measuring work-life balance - in a 2021 study by Kisi, Singapore was ranked 41st out of 50 cities for work-life balance, highlighting the long hours and high levels of stress faced by employees.
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Policies / Political System / Governance	- pragmatic and interventionist policies (the government intervenes extensively in areas such as population control, housing, education, medical and health services, compulsory savings, industrial relations, wage policy) - paternalistic government (the government takes an active role in guiding society and making decisions that it believes are in the best interest of the country and its people. This includes managing social behavior and promoting certain values.) - authoritarian, centralized power, heavy-handed approach to governance - secular state – religious groups have no influence on the decision-making process - single-party dominance yet contradictorily, this has been accompanied by a high degree of trust in the government, although the younger generation is arguably more questioning - rule of law (Singapore places a strong emphasis on the rule of law, with strict enforcement of laws and a robust legal system. This contributes to a high level of public order, safety, and low corruption rates.) - conservative (Singapore’s governance model prioritizes stability, tradition, and social cohesion, reflecting a blend of Confucian, Asian, and pragmatic principles. This has helped to create a society that is orderly and prosperous, though it also means that certain freedoms and liberal values may be more restricted compared to other developed nations) - meritocratic (leaders and public officials are selected and promoted based on their abilities, achievements, and potential, rather than on connections or favoritism. Strict laws and enforcement ensure a clean and transparent	- The government is able to implement policies effectively, thanks in part to the absence of a true parliamentary opposition and the PAP’s dominance of almost every aspect of the country’s political, military, and economic life. - At the 2020 general election, the PAP was returned to power but with a nearly 10 percent reduction in vote share compared to 2015. Younger voters increasingly demand fairness and transparency and desire to see a stronger Opposition in parliament - Under the Maintenance of Religious Harmony Act of 1990, religious leaders and groups are not even permitted to comment on political issues - Singapore’s social security system relies on individuals having mandatory savings, which are then managed and invested by the Central Provident Fund (CPF). This provides income security for retirees in their post-working years without placing an excessive fiscal burden on the state. Similarly, the health care system is characterized by a pragmatic mix of personal payments, limited national insurance coverage, and employment-based health care benefits. - “The Social Compact” – government leaders emphasize the necessity for “reservoir of trust” between government and people. This means that bitter pills, policy-wise, can be swallowed, understood, and accepted by the people, partly on account of the Party’s track record. - The government had laid out basic ‘Shared Values’ to develop a distinct Singapore identity – nation before community and society above self; family as the basic unit of society; community support and respect for the individual; consensus not conflict; racial and religious harmony.

	government. This has fostered trust in public institutions and attracted foreign investment.) - maintaining harmony in a multicultural society is a priority, sometimes even taking precedence over certain freedoms. - suppression of opposition / limited political pluralism (critics argue that the People's Action Party (PAP), has maintained its dominance by limiting political competition, gerrymandering (re-drawing of electoral boundaries), defamation suits, and a lack of equal access to media and resources for opposition parties. - low press freedom (most mainstream media outlets being owned or closely linked to government-related entities. This has led to concerns about the lack of independent journalism and the ability of the media to hold the government accountable.) - freedom of speech is curtailed and the government controls public discourse	- Strict laws that govern public behavior, speech, and assembly, often justified as necessary to prevent social unrest in a multiracial society. Demonstrations and protests, which count as "public assemblies" in Singapore, are not permitted without prior approval from the police. The Speaker's Corner in Hong Lim Park is the sole place in Singapore where protests are largely allowed without prior police approval. - Corruption in the civil service is lowest in the region, and the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) investigates corruption in the private and public sectors. The recent investigations into former Transport Minister S. Iswaran, along with the Ridout Road bungalow rentals involving Ministers K. Shanmugam and Vivian Balakrishnan, underscore the government's commitment to transparency and its stance that ministers are not above the law. - Capital punishment is a legal penalty in Singapore, and one that still retains support from a large majority of Singaporeans (60-70%) despite international criticism. (However, opposition to this has also been growing, especially when the death penalty is doled out for less serious crimes like drug trafficking - How a Singapore execution set off a wave of protest (bbc.com)) - The Maintenance of Racial Harmony Act introduce powers that would allow pre-emptive action to be taken to maintain religious harmony in Singapore. NDR 2021: New law to deal with racial offences, promote harmony through softer approach The Straits Times - The Internal Security Act (ISA), which allows for detention without trial, has been used in the past against political opponents and activists, raising concerns about civil liberties. - According to the 2023 World Press Freedom Index, Singapore was ranked 129th out of 180 countries. Laws like the Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA), are
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		viewed as tools to suppress online political dissent under the guise of combating fake news. - Since 2013, the Media Development Authority requires online news websites with significant reach to follow the same regulatory framework as traditional news media. According to IMDA, registered Internet content providers such as The Online Citizen (TOC), which promote or discuss political issues relating to Singapore online, are "required to be transparent" about their sources of funding. This is to prevent foreign influence in domestic politics. In 2021, TOC had its license suspended and social media accounts deactivated for failing to declare all of its funding sources. - The Foreign Interference (Countermeasures) Act (FICA) was passed in October 2021. This act aims to prevent and disrupt foreign interference in domestic politics, but many non-governmental organisations and academics have criticized this law as one intended to suppress dissent.
Socio-cultural	- a "kiasu" mentality (meaning the fear of losing out) pervades many aspects of life, driving people to be overly competitive. This can manifest in a relentless pursuit of success, often leading to a workaholic culture where long hours and high expectations are the norm. - there is a strong emphasis on material wealth / materialism and social status in Singaporean society. This is often reflected in the pursuit of luxury goods, high-end real estate, and prestigious schools, sometimes leading to a culture where worth is measured by one's income and possessions rather than character. - in our fast-paced, success-driven society, there can be a tendency toward individualism, where people prioritize their own needs and goals over collective well-being. This	- In 2023, a teenager was mocked online after uploading a video on TikTok where she called a S\$79.90 tote bag from local fashion retailer Charles & Keith a "luxury" item. - In the past, the "5Cs" (Cash / Car / Condo / Credit Card / Country Club membership) were considered highly desirable material markers of success, especially during the 1990s and early 2000s. However, more recent attitudes suggest a shift towards other priorities, such as work-life balance, experiences, and sustainability, especially post-Covid. - During crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, instances of panic buying and hoarding essential items like toilet paper and groceries were reported, leading to shortages and exacerbating social tensions. - A slew of government campaigns have attempted to socially engineer more civic-minded behaviour and nudge citizens

	can manifest in behaviors like cutting queues, or a lack of empathy for the struggles of those left behind. - there is a fading sense of community spirit in housing estates compared to the past, although grassroots organizations and community centers still play a significant role in fostering social ties and addressing local issues.	towards making lifestyle choices deemed desirable by the city state. By using positive reinforcement and indirect suggestion, the Singapore government has been ensuring that people make "better" choices while still feeling like they are retaining their freedom of choice. E.g. The government discourages smoking by restricting the number of places people can smoke, mandating gruesome warnings on cigarette packs, and increasing taxes on cigarettes. The Land Transport Authority (LTA) has also launched initiatives like the "Stand Up, Stacey!" Campaign to encourage able-bodied commuters to give up their seats to those in need. Posters, announcements, and friendly mascots to remind people of the importance of courtesy in shared spaces. (https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20180220-the-nation-that-thrived-by-nudging-its-population) - The Singapore Kindness Movement was launched in 1979 by the Ministry of Culture, encouraging Singaporeans to be kinder and more considerate to each other. Government efforts to foster more considerate and civic minded behaviour have continued till this day, evident through events and campaigns like Kindness Day Sg and Singapore's Friendly Neighbourhood Award. - Public housing policies and the design of Housing Development Board (HDB) estates are aimed at fostering community interaction. Features like void decks, playgrounds, and common areas are designed to encourage social mixing and a strong sense of community, nudging residents to be more civic-minded and engaged with their neighbours. - The SG Cares Movement and VIA programmes in schools promote volunteerism and community involvement, encourage Singaporeans to contribute to society in meaningful ways from a young age.
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	INEQUALITY / POVERTY - Singapore encourages self-sufficiency through its support schemes, emphasizing personal responsibility and community support while providing targeted assistance. - In recent years, however, income inequality and social stratification is becoming more pronounced - while the government has implemented a range of social welfare programs to support the elderly, low-income and persons with disabilities, the disparity in income and living standards remains a point of concern. - Although all Singaporeans have access to equal educational opportunities, some degree of racial discrimination persists and may account for income inequality in certain cases. - In some cases, meritocratic systems in schools and workplaces also create the mindset that those who are less well off deserve their state as they are not sufficiently deserving, leading to a lack of empathy for the less fortunate.	- There is no minimum wage or unemployment benefits – historically, Singapore has preferred to focus on programs to get unemployed people back into work under the SkillsFuture scheme, and promotes upskilling through the Progressive Wage Model (PWM). Housing grants and subsidies are often tied to employment status, incentivizing individuals to stay employed to benefit from these schemes, which in turn promotes self-sufficiency. - During the Covid-19 outbreak, however, the government provided financial aid for employees who lost their jobs or experienced salary cuts or income loss, receiving up to \$700 for a three-month period. - Social security schemes primarily focus on individual contributions to social insurances (CPF), and schemes that target the poor undergo thorough means-testing (e.g. ComCare provides monthly cash assistance to help cover basic living needs and assistance with household bills and medical expenses / the Workfare Income Supplement (WIS) scheme is available to Singaporean workers over 30 with earnings in the bottom 20% of Singapore’s workforce to boost their CPF savings). - While it may be argued that there are comprehensive schemes addressing different areas of need that low-income individuals face, the process of applying for different forms of assistance might be challenging and frustrating for the low-income elderly or the less literate, who might not be aware of the different provisions and their eligibility criteria, or how to apply for them. - Individuals who might not have the means to earn a stable wage (e.g. freelancers, gig-economy workers, the disabled) are unable to save as much in their CPF accounts as they do not benefit from employer contributions, end up having less disposable income, and might consequently struggle to accumulate sufficient funds for housing and retirement.
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	GENDER ISSUES - there is equality of opportunity due to meritocratic values in education and the workplace, and gender-inequality is relatively low. However, some sexist mindsets persist among the traditional older generations, and women are still expected to be the primary care-givers in households with dependents. - For middle and high-income households, there is a tendency to outsource care-giving responsibilities to domestic helpers, something the government seems to encourage given its pro-family stance. - Recently, there was some progress made in terms of civil rights as the government abandoned legislation that had previously criminalised male homosexual activity and repealed Section 377A of the Penal Code. Simultaneously, the government amended the constitution to define marriage as between a man and a woman, making it more challenging to advocate for marriage equality in the future.	- In a 2018 survey conducted by the Institute of Policy Studies, 51.6% of Malays reported experiencing at least occasional discrimination when applying for a job. Similarly, nearly 60% of Malays and 56% of Indians felt they were treated discriminatorily in their work environment. - Singapore scored 0.0040 on the 2021 Gender Inequality Index, ranking as the 54th most equal country in the world. More women are taking on roles among Professional, Managerial, Executive and Technician (PMET) at 46.7% and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) occupations at 34.3% respectively. The unadjusted gender pay gap in Singapore has narrowed from 16.3% in 2018 to 14.3% in 2023. - There is a lack of female representation in professional categories at managerial levels, partially due to a lack of flexible working hours. Only 29% of the members in parliament are women. - In 2021, a male Member of Parliament, Poh Li San, faced backlash for a comment made during a parliamentary debate, where he suggested that women should "settle down early" and "have children early" to address the declining birth rate. The comment was criticized for perpetuating outdated gender roles and pressuring women into traditional roles. - A 2021 survey by the Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE) found that 56% of women in Singapore had experienced some form of workplace discrimination. This includes unfair treatment due to pregnancy, caregiving responsibilities, or gender-based assumptions about their capabilities.
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		- The government's White Paper on Women's Development proposes 25 action plans to be implemented over 10 years, outlining their commitment to closing the gender gap. - To encourage shared parental responsibility, Government-Paid Paternity Leave was introduced, and take-up rates have increased from 47% in 2016 to 53% in 2021. To enable fathers to be more involved in caring for their children, the Government has doubled Government-Paid Paternity Leave from two weeks to four weeks in 2024, with the additional two weeks provided on a voluntary basis. (https://www.msf.gov.sg/media-room/article/progress-on-singapore-women-s-development-2024) - To support working mothers, in particular those living with children below 16 years old, elderly or persons with disabilities who require domestic help, the Government introduced a concessionary levy of \$60 per month (usual levy is \$300 or \$450 per month for the first and subsequent helper respectively). The concessionary levy benefits families who need caregiving help, including those who do not pay income tax. - The Working Mother's Child Relief (WMCR) tax benefit is provided to encourage women to continue working after having children. Eligible working mothers will be able to claim \$8,000 annual relief for her first child, \$10,000 for her second child, and \$12,000 each for her third and subsequent child.
	ELDERLY & AGING POPULATION - Singapore is facing significant demographic challenges due to its rapidly aging population and persistently low birth rates. - Changes in family structures, such as smaller family sizes and higher mobility of younger generations, can lead to	- As of 2023, about 19% of Singapore's resident population (citizens and permanent residents) are aged 65 and above, up from 10.5% in 2011. This proportion is expected to rise further, potentially reaching 25% by 2030.

	reduced family support for the elderly. This shift can result in fewer caregivers and less intergenerational interaction. - There are instances of ageism in Singapore, where older adults may be perceived as less capable or less relevant in the workforce. This can lead to discrimination in hiring, promotions, and workplace dynamics, especially with the shift to more high-tech and digitised work environments. - culturally, there is a high degree of respect for the elderly and filial piety is regarded as a virtue (a result of traditional Asian values and government policies), although other stressors sometimes make it challenging for individuals to make time for quality interaction with the elderly. - ensuring that the elderly are treated with dignity in their golden years remains an ongoing concern. Loneliness, depression and unreported deaths among the elderly appear to be on the rise, especially elderly singles living alone.	- In 2022, the Total Fertility Rate dropped to a historic low of 1.05, down from 1.14 in 2021. This is one of the lowest fertility rates in the world. With fewer children and an aging population, traditional family support systems are under strain. The "sandwich generation," those supporting both their aging parents and their own children, faces increasing financial and emotional pressures. In 2022, there were 370 elder abuse cases seen at family service centres (FSCs), up from 338 in 2021 and 283 in 2020. - In April 2024, 3 dead bodies of elderly residents living alone were found within the same week, sparking concerns over the lack of community care for these isolated elderly. - In other to address the future challenges of elder care, the government strongly emphasises the role of the family in social support, reducing the need for government intervention. For instance, the Proximity Housing Grant offers housing subsidies to young couples who purchase a flat near their elderly parents, making it easier for them to provide care if needed. - (LEGAL) The Maintenance of Parents Act allows Singapore residents aged 60 years and above - who are unable to provide for themselves - to claim maintenance from their children who can support them, but are not doing so. - (ECONOMIC SUPPORT) Policies like the Pioneer Generation Package and the Merdeka Generation Package, offer subsidies and support to the elderly for healthcare and other services. Beyond the financial benefits, these policies also role-model the notion of appreciating and reciprocating the older generation for their contributions to nation building, shaping social attitudes towards the older generation. (VALUES / MINDSETS) - (SOCIO-EMOTIONAL) To keep the elderly healthily occupied, the Council for Third Age (C3A) offers a wide range of courses and workshops designed specifically for older adults. These
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	courses cover various topics, including digital literacy, arts and culture, health and wellness, and lifelong learning. - (WORKPLACE POLICY) By 2030, the retirement age will be increased to 65, and the re-employment age will be increased to 70 (employers must offer medically fit and satisfactory employees re-employment until they reach 70 years old). These legislations highlight our nation's commitment to protecting older workers as an economic asset, rather than a burden. - (SOCIO-EMOTIONAL) In 2021, Singapore's first assisted living flats (Community Care Apartments) for the elderly were launched as a public housing option. These flats featured senior-friendly designs, and all residents have access to 24-hour emergency monitoring and dedicated programming to facilitate the building of a close-knit community amongst residents. (The piloting of such housing options indicates how forward-thinking the government is in addressing the problems of an aging population).
	NATIONAL IDENTITY AND IMMIGRATION - Diversity and inclusion are part of our national DNA due to our immigrant heritage – Singapore's success story was founded on immigrants through the 19th and 20th century, and their presence remains necessary for future economic growth (given our aging workforce) - multiculturalism is a cornerstone of national identity, symbolized by official recognition of four languages (English, Mandarin, Malay, and Tamil). - cosmopolitan society - as a global financial hub, Singapore attracts a significant expatriate population, adding to its cosmopolitan nature and global outlook. - conscious governmental efforts to encourage and promote racial harmony / ethnic integration have largely

	been effective, although there is rising discontent over the influx of foreign talent, and xenophobic sentiments. - a survivalist mindset, especially in the post-independence / post-war period, makes up a crucial part of our national identity. The government has consistently emphasized the narrative that Singapore's small size, limited natural resources, and external threats as reasons why Singaporeans must prioritize national survival over ethnic or individual differences. This was again evident during the Covid-19 pandemic, where an emphasis on overcoming the crisis as one (SGUnited) led to many Singaporeans' rallying in support of one another. - Singapore's identity is shaped more by a focus on progress than by a connection to the past, with Singaporeans often regarding issues through a rational, cost-benefit perspective rather than an emotional attachment to cultural values. (The goal of achieving "happiness, prosperity and progress for our nation" is a shared aspiration) - As a relatively young nation-state, Singapore often grapples with defining a unified national identity amidst a mix of ethnic traditions, influences from the West, and its role in the global economy. - Singaporeans often face a balancing act between preserving their ethnic heritage and embracing a shared Singaporean identity. Many Singaporeans, especially the younger generations, have been criticized their lack of knowledge and interest in their cultural heritage and mother tongue languages. - Hawker culture, featuring a wide variety of dishes influenced by Malay, Chinese, Indian, and other cuisines, is an integral part of daily life and was recognized by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage.	observance of Racial Harmony Day to foster coexistence across aspects of society. - National Service is compulsory for all Singaporean males, regardless of race or background, creating a common experience that bonds individuals from different ethnic groups. - Significant racial tensions or conflicts are relatively rare given these government policies. However, there have been racially charged incidents and discussions on race in more recent times that have sparked public debate about racism and privilege. E.g. A viral video of a Chinese man (Ngee Ann Poly lecturer) berating an interracial couple / In 2021, a 30-year-old Chinese man was arrested for allegedly assaulting and hurling racial slurs at an Indian woman who was walking along Choa Chu Kang Drive. These incidents highlighted lingering racial prejudices in society. - Xenophobic attitudes are more directed towards foreigners due to the notion that they are a strain on resources, and compete with locals for jobs. The government introduced measures like the Fair Consideration Framework (FCF) to ensure that employers give Singaporeans a fair chance in hiring, but concerns about discrimination persist. - Especially after the Population White Paper was released in 2013 which proposed that 30,000 new permanent residents and 25,000 naturalised citizens needed each year to help aid Singapore's population due to falling birthrates, Singaporeans showed their discontentment overtly through comments on social media and even organized a public protest at Hong Lim Park. - Low-wage migrant workers from less-developed countries tend to be stereotyped in Singapore as being more likely to offend, suffer poor living conditions (highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic), and limited access to public spaces or recreational
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		areas. In 2008, some residents in Serangoon Gardens expressed their opposition to a dormitory for migrant workers being set up in their neighborhood, stating that women might be at risk of sexual assault, and that the dormitory would lower the price of their properties. - The portrayal of foreigners in the media (social media especially) have contributed to Singaporean's viewing foreigners as a threat to their culture and lifestyle. E.g. the "curry dispute" between a migrant family from China and their Indian neighbours in 2011 (a member of the public uploaded a Youtube video criticizing the Chinese family, and Chinese nationals in general for their bigotry towards Singaporeans / When mainstream media reported on Covid-19 cases in Singapore, the number of confirmed cases in foreign worker dormitories, and amongst work-permit holders, were kept separate from the numbers for Singaporean residents, suggesting that they are a separate unit of Singapore society) - Ironically, the emphasis on racial harmony can sometimes create an environment where open and honest discussions about race are restricted. This can result in a lack of deeper understanding and a superficial approach to diversity, where people adhere to policies but may not fully engage with or appreciate the complexities of racial and cultural differences. (e.g. issues tend to be addressed through official channels by the government rather than grassroots conversations – see the response to the DBS Blackface ad and the conditional warning directed at Preeti and her brother). https://www.straitstimes.com/politics/rap-video-by-local-youtube-star-preeti-on-brownface-ad-crosses-the-line-not-acceptable - Local literary authors Gopal Baratham (who paints a very sinister image of Singapore in his work), Hwee Hwee Tan (whose book Mammon Inc. deals with materialism), and Alfian
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		Sa'at (a playwright and poet who criticized his country in his poem "Singapore, you're not my home") all deal with the difficult of defining the Singaporean identity in their works. - Singlish is growing in importance as a symbol of social identity and cohesion. For many Singaporeans, Singlish has become a "badge of identity". However, the government has opposed these attempts and reacted with the Speak Good English movement. Dialects do not fit in with its developmental plans very well, as they contradict the globalization of Singapore's economy.
Environmental Issues	- Singapore is known as a "City in a Garden," with abundant green spaces, parks, and nature reserves deliberately integrated in its urban planning, reflecting a commitment to environmental sustainability. - The city-state is recognized for its long-term planning and innovative policies (made possible by a stable government), and a focus on balancing urban development with environmental preservation. - Singaporeans are generally law-abiding and follow regulations like the ban on plastic bags in certain sectors, recycling mandates, and the anti-littering fines. This attests to the effectiveness of government intervention in driving sustainable habits and consumer behaviours. - Singaporeans live in a highly developed, consumer-oriented society, and habits like frequent shopping, single-use plastics, and a fast-paced lifestyle can clash with environmental goals. Many people continue to use plastic bags and disposable products despite awareness of the environmental impact, suggesting that consumer behavior is hard to shift. - For some, sustainability is more of a lifestyle trend rather than a deep-seated value. The popularity of eco-friendly	- Approximately 47% of Singapore is covered in green space, helping to reduce the urban heat island effect and improve air quality. Parks, nature reserves, rooftop gardens, and vertical greenery are scattered among urban developments. - The Park Connector Network (PCN) has created a system of continuous green corridors that connect parks, nature reserves, and green spaces across Singapore. This not only provides recreational space for residents but also allows biodiversity to thrive in an urban setting. It facilitates the movement of wildlife between green areas, preserving ecosystems within the city. - <i>Car-Lite Nation</i> Initiative: Singapore encourages the use of public transport, cycling, and walking to reduce carbon emissions from vehicles. This includes expanding the Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) system, promoting electric vehicles, and creating dedicated cycling paths. By 2040, Singapore aims for 75% of all trips during peak hours to be made via public, active, or shared transport, significantly reducing the city's carbon footprint. - The Certificate of Entitlement (COE) system contributes to environmental sustainability by limiting vehicle ownership and encouraging cleaner transportation methods. However, it faces criticism for making car ownership unaffordable, deepening

	products, green buildings, and "zero-waste" cafes (driven by social media) might indicate an emerging environmental consciousness, but it may not always translate into consistent action. - With Singapore's low-lying geography, many citizens are aware of the country's vulnerability to rising sea levels and extreme weather. The government's communication around climate adaptation and infrastructure (e.g., coastal defenses) has heightened public concern about these issues.	social inequality, and not fully addressing issues of congestion and pollution. - Carbon Pricing Act: Singapore is the first Southeast Asian country to introduce a carbon tax. Companies emitting large amounts of greenhouse gases are required to pay a tax, encouraging industries to adopt cleaner and more sustainable practices. - Singapore has introduced a comprehensive EV policy that includes incentives for purchasing electric vehicles, a planned phase-out of internal combustion engine vehicles by 2040, and the installation of 60,000 EV charging points by 2030. - To address resource scarcity, Singapore's NEWater plant is a pioneering effort that recycles wastewater into high-quality drinking water through advanced treatment processes. The government aims to use this technology to provide up to 55% of Singapore's water needs by 2060. - The Zero Waste Masterplan aims to reduce waste sent to Singapore's only landfill (Semakau Landfill) by 30% by 2030. The plan promotes a circular economy by focusing on reducing food, packaging, and electronic waste and enhancing recycling practices. - It is mandatory for suppliers to affix energy labels on air-conditioners, refrigerators, clothes dryers, televisions and lamps sold locally. Information on the annual energy consumption and running cost is displayed together with a rating of the appliance's energy efficiency (with the best rating being three ticks for lamps and five ticks for other appliances). This makes it easier for consumers to make eco-friendly choices. https://www.greenplan.gov.sg/
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