

SINGAPORE

Sources

Five main English Singaporean daily online newspapers were consulted, including *The Singapore Straits Times*, *The Business Times*, *The New Paper* and *Today Online*. Newspapers such as *Asia One* contained many outdated articles related to Canada.¹¹

References to Canada

During the three month period, Canada was mentioned in 49 news articles and editorials but only 4 times in the headlines. *The Singapore Straits Times* had 32 articles, *The Business Times* 5, *The New Paper*, 9, and *Today Online*, 3. Only two full individual articles were devoted to Canada: one when Canada stopped allowing free entry visas to Malaysian nationals, and the other when the Canadian EPS firm filed an appeal in Singaporean courts. In general, the majority of references to Canada were mostly “embedded” within articles related to ASEAN, NAFTA, WTO, terrorism, the Asian financial crisis, mad cow disease, Canadian Grand Prix, and Jacques Villeneuve.

Findings in the Singaporean online press

Canada was covered in a neutral way by the Singaporean online papers with an emphasis on business, trade and health news.

Canada’s role in the WTO was criticized in columnist Andy Ho’s article in *The Singapore Straits Times*’ “Deficit spending to save jobs is wise.” He referred to some “practices” of the Canadian government: “In Canada, junior airline employees that put on a reduced work-week will be retrained and collect federal unemployment benefits for the days they are off work. The Canadian government even knowingly contravened World Trade Organization rules in approving US\$80 million in loans to reopen a mothballed Quebec paper mill to create 320 new jobs.”¹²

Canada’s FTA initiative with Singapore was also mentioned in news related to Singapore’s recently launched Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States that is likely to produce tariff savings for the Republic of up to \$300 million a year. The former Canadian firm Energy Power Systems (EPS) was mentioned in the headlines of *Business Times* when the company filed for an appeal in Singapore on November 13, 2003 against a High Court decision.

News related to the fugitive financial advisor, Rakesh Saxena, who allegedly contributed to the Asian financial crisis and caused the collapse of Thailand’s Bangkok Bank of Commerce, was widely reported. Mr. Saxena was described as “being under house arrest in Canada while making

¹¹ No Arabic Singaporean online papers were identified for this study.

¹² *The Singapore Straits Times*, October 17, 2003