

## Then<sup>1</sup>

- Besides adults, many children were also involved in street hawking in the 1800s.
- By the 1930s, there were Chinese, Indian and Malay street hawkers plying the streets in Singapore.

## Today<sup>2</sup>

- Hawkers operate in clean food centres, maintaining high standards of food preparation and personal hygiene.
- High standards of hygiene are essential in safeguarding Singapore against diseases such as typhoid and cholera.
- Hawkers are required to have licenses to operate their businesses.

A common sight in the 19th and mid-20th centuries, street hawkers could be found on busy streets and intersections, selling quick and cheap food to the working classes such as coolies and office workers. Besides food and drinks, they also peddled fresh produce such as vegetables and poultry. Some wholesalers even commissioned street hawkers to sell their goods such as sandalwood, brooms and other basic wares. Street hawkers plied their goods on foot or on wheels, in both the city as well as suburban areas, to the convenience of many households.<sup>3</sup>



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The low overheads of street peddling provided a quick way of earning an income for many unskilled immigrants in Singapore, making them a frequent sight as their numbers increased.

### *Issues and problems*

Unfortunately, street hawking created many problems such as traffic-congestion, food contamination, as well as environmental hazards, as food items were discarded in public areas.

### *Managing the problem*

Managing street hawking was a struggle during colonial times. The Municipal Office tried to control the number of hawkers through the issuance of licenses.

The post-independence period saw some 25,782 licensed hawkers, of whom 192 were still operating on the streets in 1985. By end of 1986, the last batch of street hawkers were re-sited to hawker centres.<sup>5</sup>

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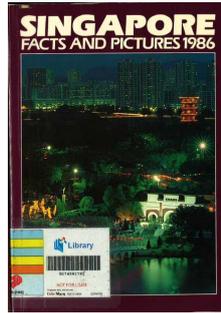


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- "Pictorial works"
- "Photos"
- "Singapore Postcards"
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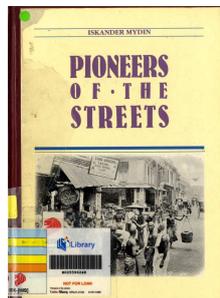
## Singapore Yearbook



Provides updates and policies from official sources, such as government ministries and statutory boards.

**1986 Singapore Facts and Pictures. Singapore : Ministry of Communication and Information. Call no.: RSING 959.57 SIN**

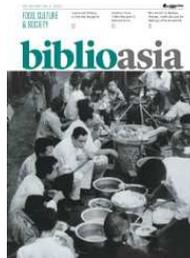
## Publication



Offers a glimpse into the lives of people who toiled on Singapore's streets as hawkers, peddlers, tram drivers and coolies.

**Iskander Mydin (1989). *Pioneers of the Streets. Singapore: Art, Antiques and Antiquities.* Call no: RSING 959.57 ISK**

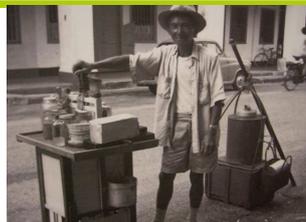
## Infopedia and BiblioAsia online articles



**Naidu, R. T. (2016). *Travelling hawkers.* Infopedia. National Library Board.**

**Lim, T.S. (2013, October-December). *Hawkers: From public nuisance to national icons.* BiblioAsia. 9(3), pp. 10-17.**

## Images from the National Archives and PictureSG



**National Archives Online**  
[www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline](http://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline)

**PictureSg**  
[eresources.nlb.gov.sg/pictures](http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/pictures)

## REFERENCES

1. Iskander Mydin. (1989). "*Pioneers of the Streets*" (pp. 14-18). *Singapore: Art, Antiques and Antiquities.* (Call no.: RSING 959.57 ISK)
2. Kwang, M. (1994, December 11). [Some new rules in recent years.](#) *The Straits Times, Sunday Review,* p. 6. (Call no.: RCLOS 052 GHCGJ)
3. Naidu, R. T. (2016). *Travelling hawkers.* [Infopedia.](#) National Library Board.
4. Sullivan, M. (1993). "[Can survive, la](#)": *Cottage industries in high-rise Singapore* (pp. 153-154). Singapore: Graham Brash. (Call no. RSING 338.634095957 SUL)
5. *Singapore Facts and Pictures.* (pp. 131). Ministry of Communication and Information. (Call no.: RSING 959.57 SIN)