



Singapore's location straddling the shipping lanes that connect China with global markets has helped turn the city into one of the world's biggest commodity hubs © Bloomberg

Singapore's Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority said "most private companies adopt the accounting standards that are similar to those prescribed for listed companies and the international accounting standards . . . [they] are also required to make disclosures that are comparable to listed companies in Singapore, as well as companies incorporated overseas".

The recent failures in Singapore have also shone a light on broader issues with commodity trading. These include aggressive lending practices and archaic paper-based systems that are vulnerable to abuse and forgery.

Baldev Bhinder, managing director of Singapore-based law firm Blackstone and Gold, said the people who vilified the city-state for the recent collapses should also look at the part played by the banking sector.

"The spotlight is on the traders for some sharp and shoddy practices but it is also on the banks for some better lending practices," said Mr Bhinder.

Hin Leong Trading's financial position (US\$m)

Liabilities	Apr 9 2020	Audited Oct 31 2019
Bank debt	3,850	1,704
Accounts payable	200	2,349
Equity	[]	509
Total	4,050	4,562