The merits of an unfinished city

Singapore is a global city, says the don who coined the term, but it has to resist the urge to plan perfectly and forget about improving the social order to be more resilient.

By CHEN GEONG-RAI, SERENI WHITE

THE SINGAPORE government has been making it into the Top Ten of the world’s smartest cities regularly in recent years. The city-state, with its high GDP and low poverty rates, is a “working state that ensures productivity and quality of life,” according to scholar Saskia Sassen. This “global city” is “not only an economic engine for the rich to make money, but also a wide window for the rest of the world to live well,” she says.

Sassen is among the 100 global thinkers named by Foreign Policy magazine’s Top 100 global thinkers. She is a professor of social work and an author based in New York. Her work provided the foundation for what global cities are and she coined the term ‘global city’.

While many think globalisation is about taking things of one country to the world, the reality is that in most cases, the reverse is true. The Singapore government knows all these differentiations and knows how globalisation is changing how all societies of the time.

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