The Story of Singapore

Building a Nation from Scratch
I’m not Singaporean.

I’m also not saying this is the ideal way to run a nation.
The Story Begins..
Pre-Independence

- Sir Stamford Raffles, 1819
  - British East India Co.
- Japan WW2 Invasion, 1942-45

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/81/StamfordRaffles.jpeg
Pre-Independence

- 1948 Self-governance as British colony
- 1963 Merger with Malaysia
  - Political/cultural tensions
- 1965 Expelled from Malaysia by vote
The Situation

- No natural resources, no fresh water
- Low levels of education
- ~10–15% unemployment rate
- Lack of viable housing
- In middle of military conflict
- Has no military
But We Know How The Story Ends!
Singapore 2016

- A major hub for international business
- $85,300 GDP p.c. (6th in world)
  - 11000% increase from 1965
- #1 “Ease of doing business” index
  - World Bank 2006 - 2016
Singapore 2016

- 719 sq. km, 5.7M people (3rd in density)
- 97% literacy rate
- Low crime rates
- “Healthiest country” in the world
  - WHO 2013
Building a Nation 101
Lee Kuan Yew

- Singapore PM (1959–1990)
- Founder of People’s Action Party (PAP)
- Father of Singapore
- Passed away March 2015
“No matter what problem Singapore encounters, somebody, somewhere, has solved it”

– Dr. Goh Keng Swee, former deputy prime minister
1960s - 1970s

- Make friends. Lots of friends.
  - UN Member 1965
  - 5 year foreign tax relief plan
    - USA, Western Europe, Japan, Hong Kong, Australia investing
  - Naval Trade (3rd busiest port in 1975)
1960s - 1970s

- Leverage the population.
  - Strict labour laws (1968)
  - National service program, aided by Israel (1967)
1960s - 1970s

- Housing and Development Board (HDB)
  - Demand/income based pricing program
  - Affordable: 90% of residents are homeowners
  - Ethnic Integration Policy (1989)
  - Must be 35 or married. Must live there if bought.
Traffic Jams in China

- - -
Avoid transportation woes.

- Certificate of Entitlement program
  - Compact: S$71,999 – S$89,500
  - Mid-size: S$81,999 – S$149,000
  - Full-size sedan: > S$150,000

- Build a world class MRT
1980s - 1990s

- Garden City Plan.
  - Less cars, less pollution
  - 47% green space coverage
  - Urban Redevelopment Authority
    - Build self-sufficient isolated districts
WHERE URBAN LIVING MEETS NATURE

http://newlaunchguru.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/The-Interlace-Bldg-Prospective.jpg
Laws in Singapore
Eliminate “Crime”

Things you can’t do:
  ○ Chew gum
  ○ Spit
  ○ Drink or smoke in public
  ○ Have long hair (lifted in 90s)
  ○ Forget to flush a public toilet
Ruling with the “Iron Fist”

- Death penalty for drug smugglers
- Public caning for vandals
  - Michael Fay (1994)
- Low press freedom
  - Reporters Without Borders ranked 154/180 in freedom of press
Closing Remarks
The Future

- A hypothetical future
- Will Singapore continue to be tightly controlled and optimized?
- Will they need to be?
Thanks!