

African urban fantasies

New generation urban 'master' plans, produced
by international architectural and engineering
firms.

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With Africa's resource boom, growing middle-class and rapid urbanization, this continent is seen as the next frontier for property developers and architectural consultancies running out of work in the global North.

The urban fantasies which are sold to politicians are based on images of Dubai, Shanghai and Singapore, but are still rooted in the work of 1930s French architect Le Corbusier. Politicians who always wanted to 'catch up with the West' are now being persuaded to 'catch up with the East'. Smart-cities and Eco-cities are other terms being used to disguise these profit-seeking initiatives.

These plans will have devastating consequences for African cities. They are environmentally unsustainable and car-oriented, and will lead to massive displacement of the urban poor which make up the majority of these cities. City budgets will be skewed away from basic services towards infrastructure for these visions. The property developers and their consultants will be the beneficiaries. Angola's 'ghost cities', standing empty, are an example of the result.

'Satellite cities' is one form being taken to avoid dealing with the messy reality of the existing urban areas – this is 'splintering urbanism' on a regional scale.

Kigale (Rwanda): the fantasy



Initiated as a vision by President Kagame, it was completed by the OZ Architecture Team in 2007 and adopted by Rwanda Parliament in 2008. OZ is a consultancy based in US. Google.



The KCMP has won key international planning awards including: The American Planning Association Daniel Burnham Award for Best Comprehensive Plan (2009) and the American Society of Landscape Architects Award for Best in Planning (2010).



Kigale

Kigale: the reality



“Current land and housing development policies in Kigale continue to force the vast majority (90%) of residents into informal [land] markets and illegality”. (UN Habitat 2010: The State of Cities in Africa. P 149 and 154).

Nairobi 2030: the fantasy



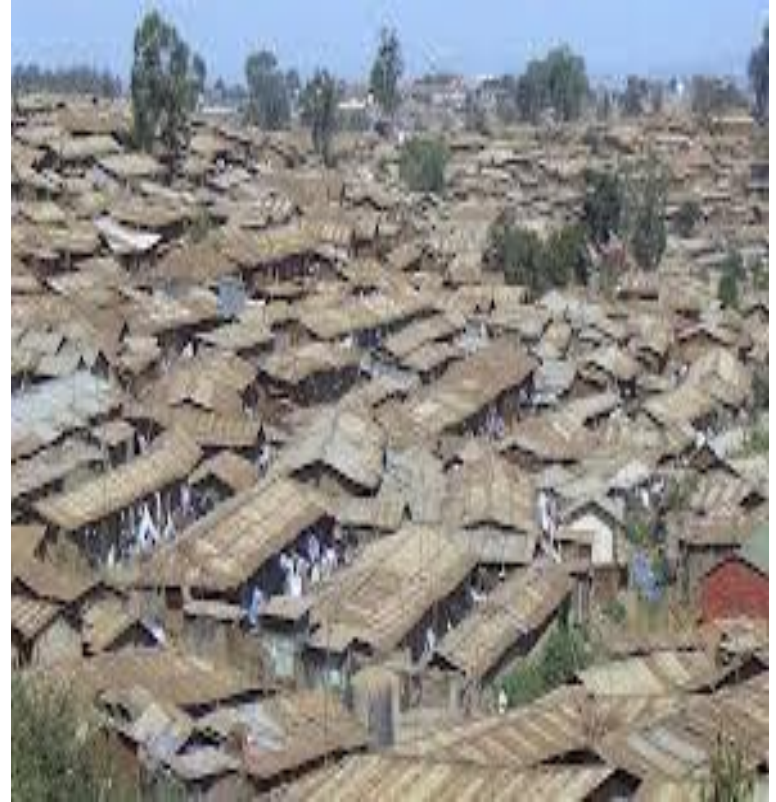
‘According to the Draft Spatial Plan for Nairobi Metropolitan Region, world-class living standards — good infrastructure, affordable housing for all, effective transportation, effective governance, secure neighbourhoods, and a booming economy’. Google.

Currently over 1m (or 33%) people in Nairobi live in informal settlements (UN Habitat 2010)

Future Kibera – Nairobi



Present Kibera



Google.

Kibera is currently an informal settlement of 383,922 people (UN Habitat 2010: The State of Cities in Africa).

Konza ICT city 60km from Nairobi



Austin-Smith Lord Architects UK (declared insolvent 2011 due to failure of Abu Dhabi project.). Bought by.....? (google)



TATU CITY

KENYA

‘**Imagine** a new lifestyle for you and your family - in a safe and beautiful urban environment, only a short distance from the Nairobi Central Business District. Tatu City is poised to make a significant contribution to Kenya’s renewed growth in economic and social development through a strategic partnership with Kenya Vision 2030 and the Grand Coalition Government Policy Agenda’.

Tatu city has a price of tag of ksh.240 billion, with the support of the Moscow bank and government of Kenya. Renaissance Partners, the investment unit of Moscow-based Renaissance Capital Financial Holdings Ltd. Google.



Lagos

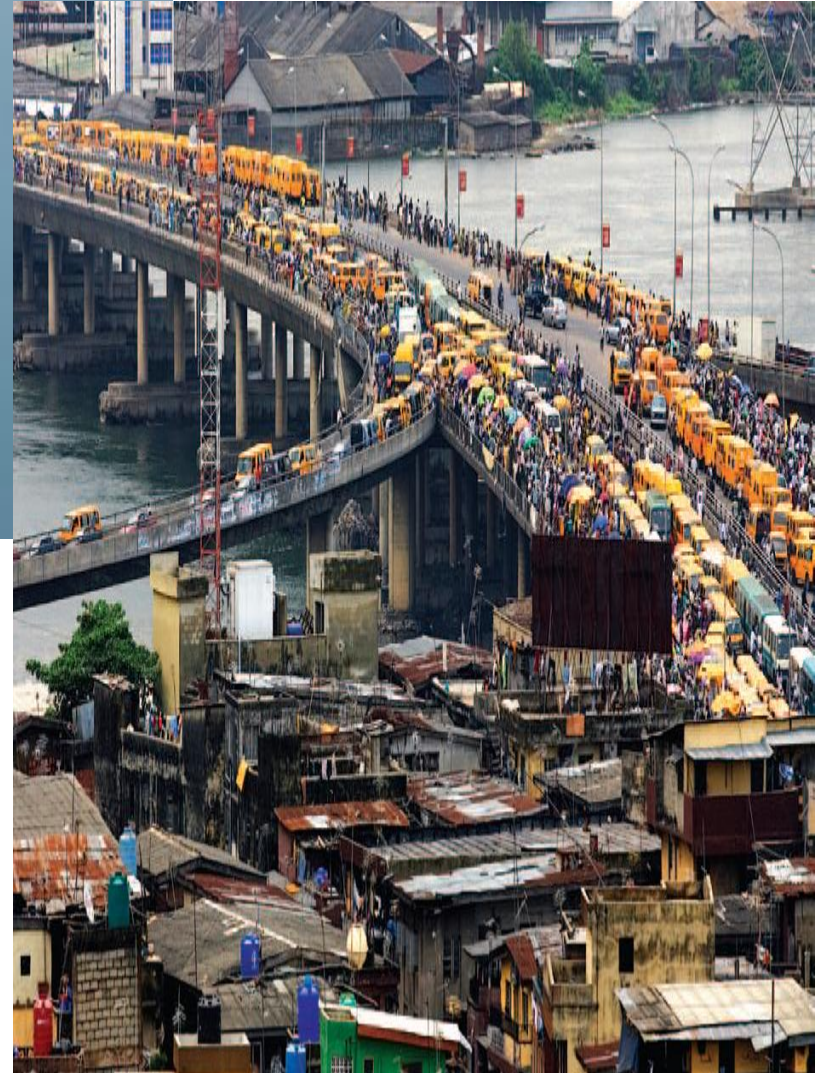


Surbana International Consultants, Singapore. Google

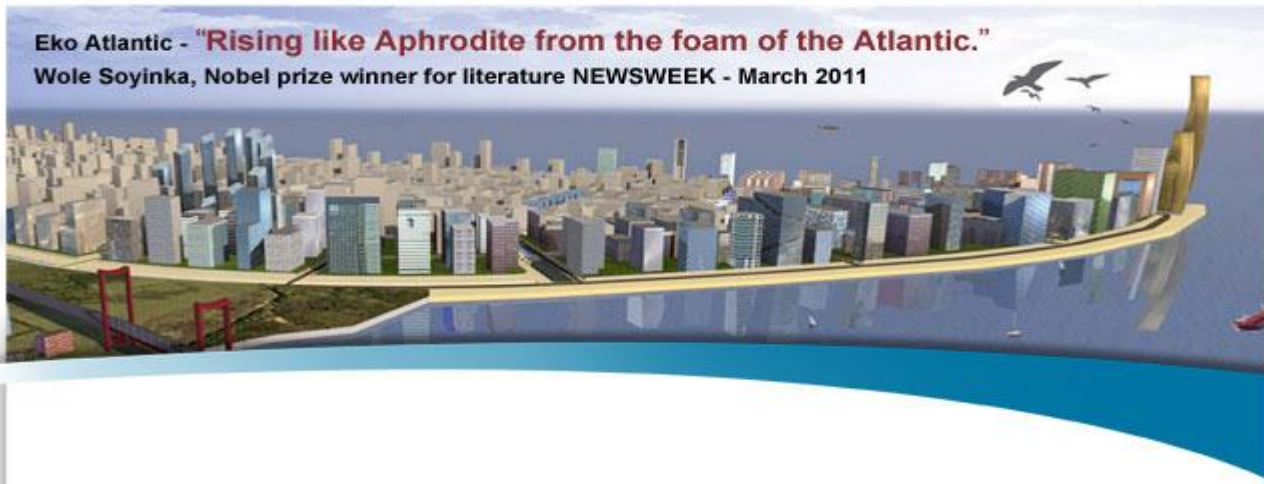


‘By implementing a green master plan, Lagos can employ more 50,000 people in less than 2 years, generate more income and be a true mega city it aspires to be, it can be a city of the 21st century, a colourful one of glamour and glitz, filled with contemporary vibes, development, richness, cleanliness, vibrancy, modernity and excellence’. Google





Lagos (fantasy and real).
Google



The most impressive feature of the Business District will be a spectacular central boulevard that will be about 2 kilometres long and 60 metres wide. It will be similar in size to the Champs Elysees in Paris or Fifth Avenue in New York. Google

LAGOS

'Eko Atlantic will be a new home to 250,000 people and the workplace of another 150,000. The nine square kilometre development will have waterfront areas, tree-lined streets, efficient transport systems and mixed-use plots that combine residential areas with leisure facilities, offices and shops'.

Dar Al-Handasah (Shair and Partners) Engineers
Royal Haskoning (marine engineering)
MZ Architects (Mid-East)



Kinshasa (Cite de Fleuve): the fantasy



Citilinks – a network of international agencies formed by professionals and researchers involved in the fields of Urban Design, Architecture, Landscape Architecture, Urban Transportation and City Branding. Europe / Asia / Africa Google

Kinshasa: the reality



Over 50% of Kinshasa population survives in the informal sector (UN Habitat 2010 p. 182 and 184 below).

Dar es Salaam – the fantasy



Dodi Moss S.I.r, (Italy) which submitted its proposals in association with three other firms: - Buro Happold Ltd (Britain based firm), Afri-Arch Associates and Q-Consult Ltd (both based in Tanzania) won the tender.

Dar es Salaam – the reality



Dar es Salaam – some 70% of the population lives in ‘unplanned’ settlements

Luanda (satellite city)



Luanda



Bom
Jesus
satellite
city,
45km
from
Luanda



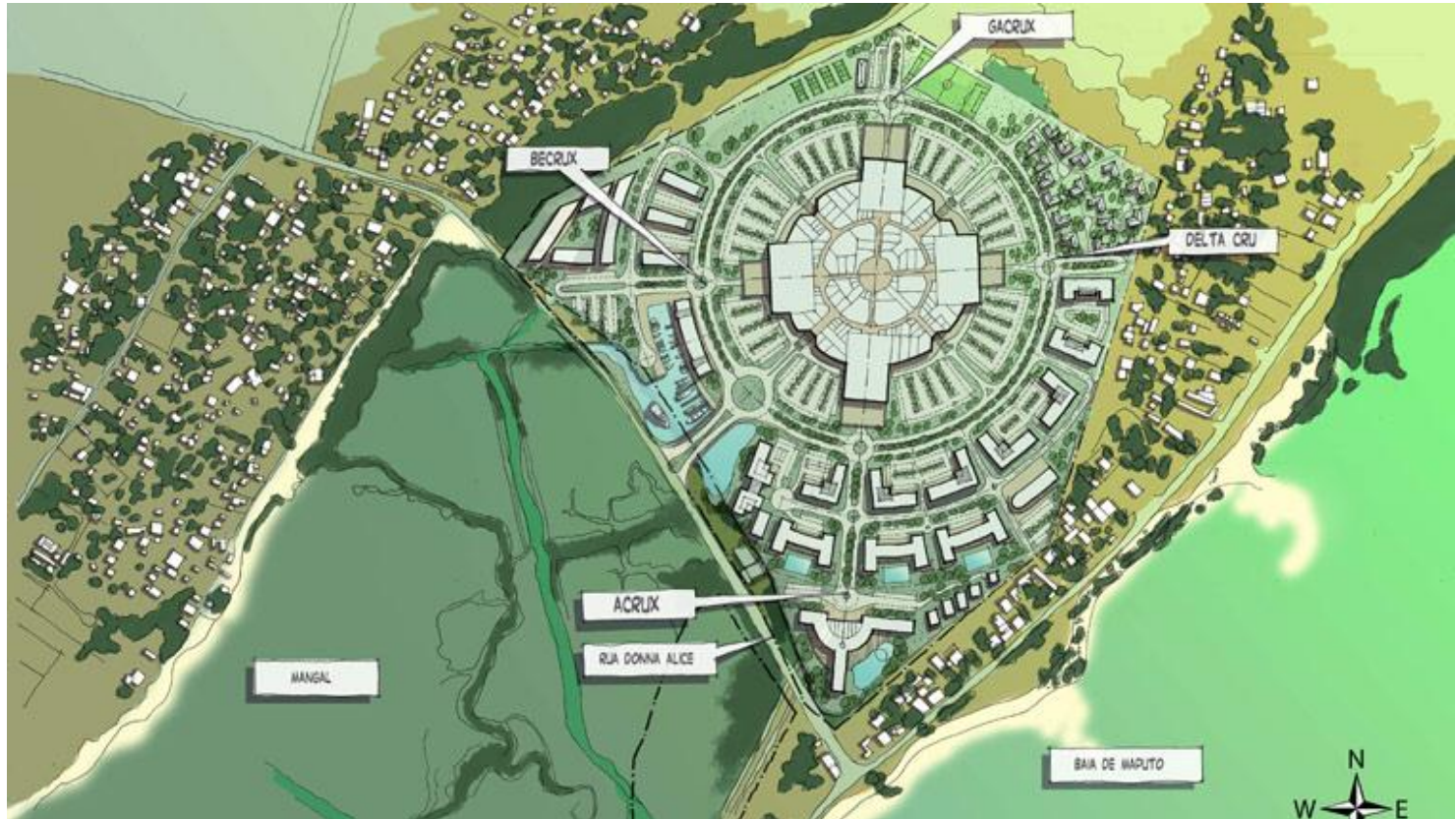
‘Dar Al-Handasah (Shair and Partners) has been a pioneering force in the planning, design and implementation of development projects in the Middle East, Africa and Asia since its beginnings in 1956. Today we are one of the largest engineering and design practices in the world, with 43 offices throughout 29 countries’.
Google.

Luanda – the reality



Greater Luanda Region, some three million people lack decent housing (UN Habitat 2010)

Maputo – the fantasy



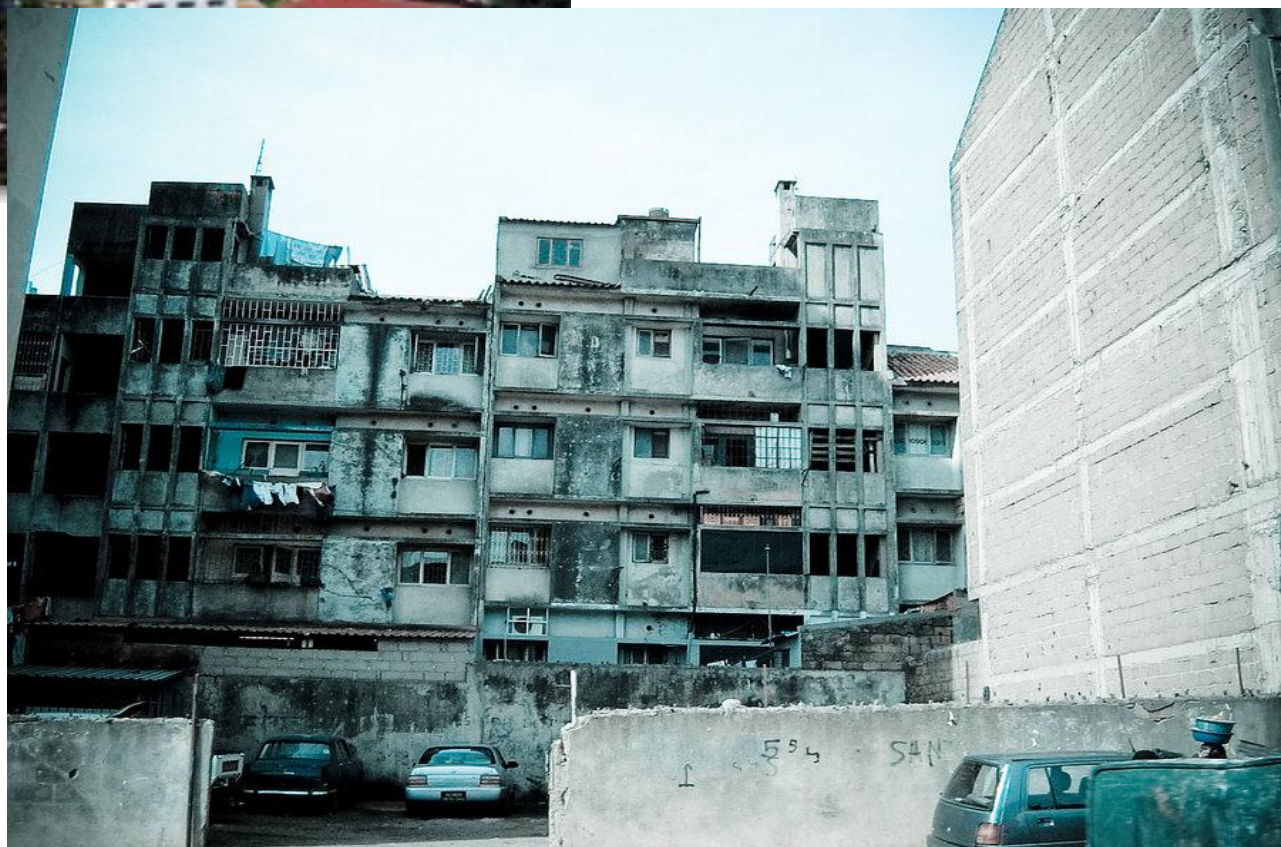
Boogertman and ptns architects (Johannesburg).
Google

Maputo-Sul city plan, 2012. Commissioned by the Development Agency of Maputo-Sul (SDMS) in partnership with BETA (BETAR Group), Mocambique.



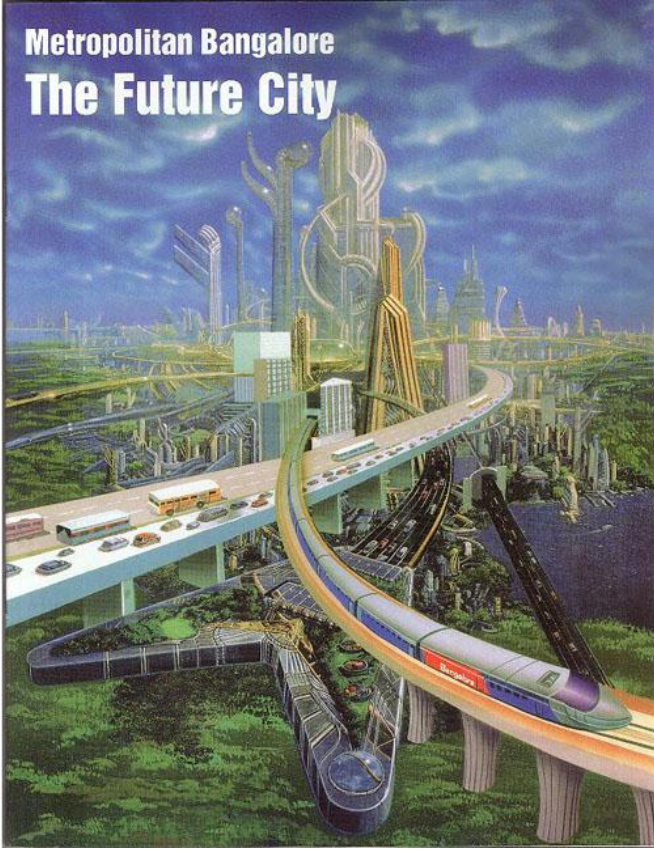


Maputo: the reality

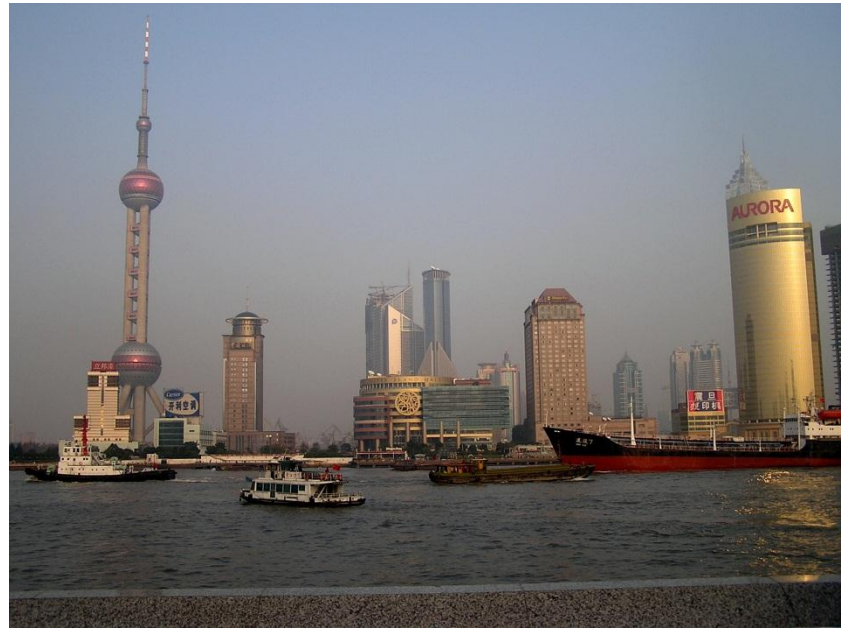


AND INDIA

Metropolitan Bangalore The Future City

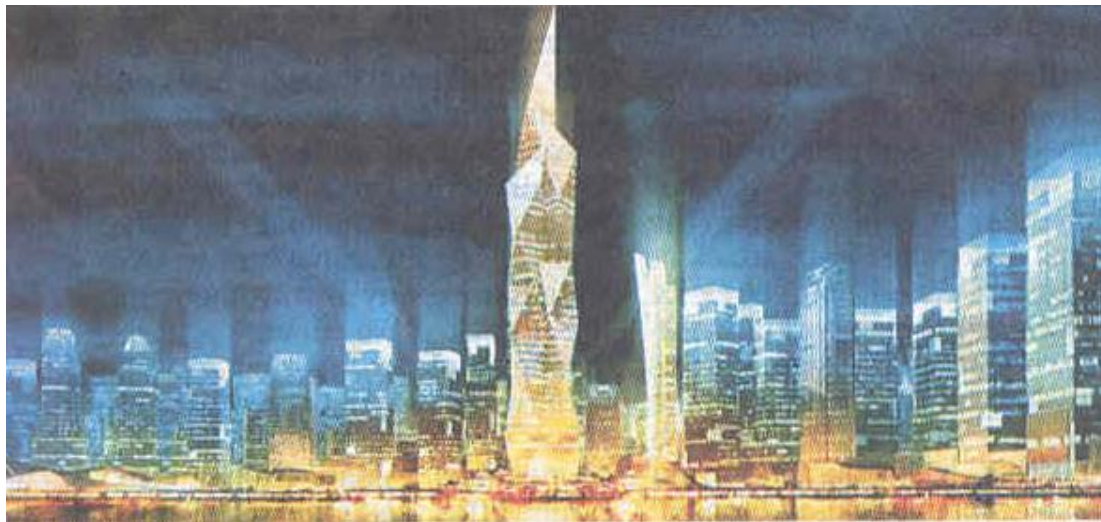


Shanghai



Sim City

Gujarat
International
Finance & Tech City
- Ahmedabad



May 7, 2009