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COUNCIL NAMES TOP 10 TALL BUILDING PROJECTS FOR 2005

Shimao International Plaza in Shanghai, at 333 meters (1,093 ft) high, leads the list of the ten tallest buildings completed in 2005, the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat has reported. The Q1 Tower (Gold Coast, Australia) at 321 meters (1,058 ft), and Chongqing (China) World Trade Center, at 283 meters (929 ft), were second and third, respectively. To be eligible for consideration, buildings must have been completed in 2005, be fully clad and either be "open for business" or at least partially occupied. As with the Council's official ranking of *100 Tallest Buildings in the World*, the criteria include any structure with discrete floors that is designed for residential, business, or manufacturing purposes. Height is measured from sidewalk level of the main entrance to the structural top of the building including spire, but not including communications antennae or flag pole. A complete listing is attached.....

<http://www.ctbuh.org>

THE RISE AND RISE OF CHONGQING

This Chinese city is already the fastest-growing urban centre on the planet. 'Its population is already bigger than that of Peru or Iraq, with half a million more arriving every year in search of a better life...' The population in its metropolitan areas will double from 10 million to 20 million in the next 13 years. an account of 24 hours in the city. 'If today is typical, builders will lay 137,000 square metres of new floor space for residential blocks, shopping centres and factories. The economy will grow by 99 million yuan (£7m). There will be 568 deaths, 813 births and the arrival of 1,370 people from the countryside...' More new floor space is being completed than in Shanghai. 'As well as eight new railways, eight highways and eight bridges, the port is in the midst of a £1.15bn redevelopment and the airport's capacity is planned to quintuple by 2010...'

http://www.guardian.co.uk/china/story/0,,1731061_00.html

<http://www.warriortours.com/china-photos/chongqing/0011222.htm>

NEW VINOLY TOWER FOR LONDON?:

Rafael Vinoly Architects' design for a new 630ft tower at Fenchurch Street, London. Designed by New York and London based Rafael Viñoly Architects, the proposed building will replace an existing tower on the site. The visually stunning design will provide a large, unique space for public functions in the form of a 'Skyroom' at the 40th level. This will feature a four-storey high window and an outside roof terrace providing 360 degree panoramic views of London. The building appears to lean toward the river.....

<http://tinyurl.com/p528w>

DUBAI – CENTRE OF THE WORLD?

Adam Nicolson on the world's fastest-growing conundrum. 'Is Dubai, in fact, the fulcrum of the future global trading and financial system? Is it, in embryo, what London was to the 19th Century and Manhattan to the 20th? Not the modern centre of the Arab world but, more than that, the Arab centre of the modern world...' It is said that a fifth of the world's cranes are now at work here. 'An army of some 250,000 men, largely from India and Pakistan, are labouring to create the new glimmer fantasy, earning on average £150 a month, and living in camps, four to a room, 12ft by 12ft, hidden away in the industrial quarters of al Quoz. One night in one of the luxury hotels would cost six months' wages of one of the men who built it...the traffic is already as bad as Los Angeles...' 'There is no hint of democracy in Dubai. There is a consultative council whose members are nominated by the ruling family. A group of five old Arab families control the entire emirate...The property laws are explicitly racist: no non-UAE national can own land outside the designated free zones...And yet it is not Saudi Arabia...

http://www.guardian.co.uk/g2/story/0,,1708287_00.html

SKYSCRAPER ESCAPE PODS?

The post-9/11 debate on tall buildings has been dominated by the twin issues of structural vulnerability and evacuation procedures. While engineers argue over construction features, a possible escape solution has been trialled by a team of Israeli inventors. Their skyscraper escape pods use expandable cabins 'that could be lowered like lifeboats outside a high-rise in distress. The system is lowered with cables from a rooftop crane. Once on the street, it expands to form five cabins that, like an external elevator, lift firefighters up the side of the building, where they help people evacuate through windows...' Each cabin can hold up to 30 people, allowing 150 people to be evacuated during eight-minute deployment cycles. Despite praise for a prototype tested in Tel Aviv, New York's Office of Emergency Management has so far refused the necessary building permits, citing safety concerns...

<http://tinyurl.com/hdqqu>

<http://www.escaperescue.com/work/>

INTERNATIONAL SNIPPETS.....

US: The rush for post-9/11 urban solutions has created a brutal planning response, as scepticism grows. 'American society has been so deeply enculturated by the horror of September 11th and its subsequent politicisation that it has put the future viability of the American city in doubt...'

<http://www.planetizen.com/node/18931/>

NEW JERSEY: With 'starchitects' in demand for high density housing, Fred Bernstein returns to apartments designed by Mies van der Rohe in 1960. 'Façades are made of glass and under-window grilles that read as solid surfaces; I-beams, doubling as mullions, extend a couple of inches beyond the building envelopes. The approach is vintage Mies...'

<http://www.archnewsnow.com/features/Feature189.htm>

KENTUCKY: OMA's proposed skyscraper has caused a stir. A local journalist was 'granted access to the creative process by Museum Plaza's investors. Here is the story of how this unique design came to be...'

<http://tinyurl.com/cg388>

PHILADELPHIA: Pelli Clarke Pelli Architect's Circa Centre. 'It is meant to be read as a single, crystalline, sculptural object...'

<http://tinyurl.com/ppk5d>

TORONTO: Shortlisted schemes for the city's design competition for a 60-storey residential tower. The online gallery includes a design by Boyarsky Murphy Architects.

<http://www.yourabsolute.com/finalists.htm>

NETHERLANDS: Looking remarkably like a trailer for the original War of the Worlds, the D-Tower in Doetinchem, designed by NOX. 'Where the intensive (feelings, qualia) and the extensive (space, quantities) start exchanging roles, where human action, colour, money, value, feelings all become networked entities...'

http://www.arcspace.com/architects/nox/d_tower2/d_tower2.html

COPENHAGEN: MVRDV's conversion of World War 2 soybean silos into apartments. 'Hallways and asymmetrically stacked stairwells are clad in ribbons of white corrugated metal...'

<http://www.metropolismag.com/cda/story.php?artid=1795>

AUSTRALIA: Death of the country's most famous architect, Harry Seidler.

<http://www.seidler.net.au/>

BRISBANE: Denton Corker Marshall's Brisbane Square, anchored by a 37-storey office tower accommodating council offices and a library.

<http://tinyurl.com/qzse>

MELBOURNE: Conservation group Docomomo Australia is lobbying for the protection of Modernist city landmarks, including SOM's AMP tower.

<http://tinyurl.com/rosdc>

<http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/pictures/0/0/1/doc/pi001895.shtml>

ASIA: Francis Bulbulian, veteran of architectural commissions for Asian clients, offers his top 10 tips for winning work. 'Asian clients demand more design ideas and options than clients in the US. Layers of decision-making hierarchy can cause project delay and indecision. Try to work at the highest level. Symbolism in Asia plays a greater role in building design...'

http://www.aia.org/aiarchitect/thisweek06/0310/0310bp_china.cfm

JAPAN: Real estate magnate Minoru Mori's luxury buildings have helped redefine Tokyo's economic bounce back. But amid warnings that 'the middle class is collapsing', low-cost housing demand is rising...

<http://tinyurl.com/obhtn>

Meanwhile, a second architect is being investigated in the scandal over 'falsified quake-resistance data in building construction'.

<http://www.asahi.com/english/Herald-asahi/TKY200602080517.html>

SINGAPORE: Kohn Pedersen Fox have been appointed principal architect for the new Marina Bay 'integrated resort'.

<http://tinyurl.com/zsxke>

SHANGHAI: The city is talked of as the most exciting city in East Asia, usurping Tokyo. Shanghai architect Teng Kun Yen says, however, that the city still lags far behind architecturally...

<http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/02/22/opinion/reast.php>

Meanwhile, Shanghai's housing boom goes from major to minor: 'For the first time, homeowners here are learning what it means to have an upside-down mortgage. Recent buyers are suing to get their money back. Banks are fretting about a

wave of default loans. Ominously, there are predictions that the slump 'is only going to worsen and imperil a significant part of the Chinese economy'. Yet the city still has a million homes under construction...
<http://tinyurl.com/lpj2>

TAIPEI: Images of Taipei 101:
<http://tinyurl.com/ho4bg>

BIG THINKING: Shortlisted entries, some decidedly bizarre, for a skyscraper design competition...
<http://www.evolo-arch.com/>

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