

# Burj reaches for the skies



### WORLD RECORD

Burj Dubai has already set a new world record for vertical concrete pumping for a building, by pumping to higher than 460 metres. The previous record was held by Taipei 101 for pumping concrete up to a height of 448 metres.

Dubai's architectural marvel in the making has reached another milestone by topping Petronas Towers in height

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With the completion of its 130th floor yesterday, the Burj Dubai became the second tallest structure in the world.

The skyscraper, situated off Sheikh Zayed Road in the Dh73 billion Downtown Dubai complex, is now 468.1 metres tall – 16 metres higher than the Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

And the building is just 40.9 metres short of the world's tallest building – the Taipei 101 Tower which stands at 509 metres.

When completed at the end of 2008, Burj Dubai will be the tallest building in the world in all four categories recognised by the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH), which compiles and ranks the world's tallest buildings.

The CTBUH, which will hold its Eighth World

Congress in Dubai in March 2008, ranks buildings on the basis of spire height, the highest occupied floor, roof height and pinnacle height.

Antony Wood, CTBUH executive director, said he comes across proposals every few weeks for the next building touted to be the world's tallest, but many of these do not even go further than the conception stage.

"It doesn't get more exciting than this. This is not just somebody saying they are going to do it; it's physically there for everybody to see," he said.

"We are basing our congress in Dubai next year and one key factor is the Burj Dubai will be more-or-less structurally topped out by then."

But Wood pointed out that for the Burj Dubai to be recognised as the world's tallest building it would have to be structurally topped out, reach its structural height, have all its cladding on and,

most important of all, be open for business. "It will have to be inhabited," he stressed.

The construction of 130 levels was completed in 1,226 days since excavation work started in January, 2004.

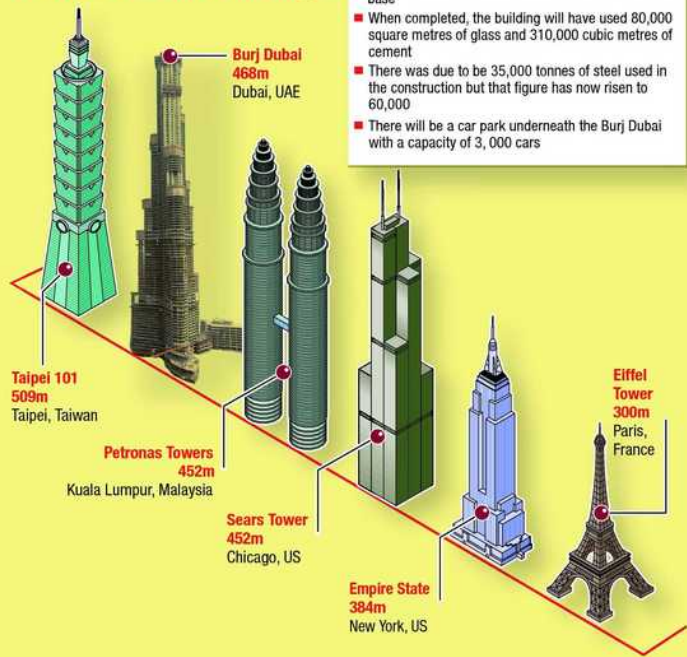
Ten cranes and the world's fastest high-capacity construction hoists – with a speed of up to 2m/sec – are used to move men and materials.

Mohamed Ali Alabbar, chairman, Emaar Properties, the company behind the tower, said: "Burj Dubai is approaching its top-out and construction work has entered a new realm in engineering technology that has no parallels anywhere in the world."

"From now on, every new level and every metre on Burj Dubai will be the culminating steps in building an architectural and engineering marvel that reiterates Dubai's global capabilities."

Burj Dubai will be a mixed-use tower with residences, offices, retail spaces and a hotel.

### World's tallest buildings



■ The Burj Dubai being constructed along Sheikh Zayed Road is expected to be complete by 2008 DENNIS MALLAR

# Rising costs not matched by salaries

Many Middle East residents feel they have not been adequately compensated for rises in the cost of living, according to a survey by a Dubai-based recruitment website.

"[Residents of] all countries did agree on one point – salaries have not been able to

match the rising cost of living," Bayt.com said.

The survey of close to 9,000 people from the Middle East and North Africa found those in Syria, Lebanon and the UAE were the least satisfied with salary increases.

"At an overall level, 58 per-

cent felt this way, with Syria (67 per cent), Lebanon (64 per cent) and UAE (62 per cent) relatively higher," the survey said.

Bayt.com said in another report the cost of living had risen 28 per cent in the UAE in the past year, and employ-

ees in the country believed they deserved a 33 per cent increase in their salaries.

In post-war Lebanon, residents were pessimistic about the future, with 38 per cent believing their country's economic situation would decline.

Private sector wage growth in the six Gulf Arab states accelerated to an average of 7.9 per cent in the year to September 2006, with banking and construction sector employees benefiting the most, another survey showed last year.

Soaring costs of living, a tight labour market and rapid economic growth in India, home to many of the Gulf's vast army of expatriate workers, were helping drive wage inflation, said the survey conducted by Dubai-based GulfTalent.com. (Reuters)