

# One World Trade Center rules New York skyline

NEW YORK: The skyline here got a new king yesterday after the still unfinished World Trade Center tower, built to replace the destroyed Twin Towers, crept above the venerable Empire State Building.



The Brooklyn Bridge (R) and Manhattan Bridge can be seen from the 90th story of the One World Trade Center in New York, USA, 30 April 2012. The addition of iron columns to the 100th story pushed the height of the One World Trade Center above that of the Empire State Building. EPA photo.

Workers gently manoeuvred a steel column into its base atop the skyscraper's skeletal current top, bringing the total height just beyond 381m of the Empire State Building's observation deck.

Coming on the eve of the anniversary of the killing of Osama bin Laden by United States special forces, the moment was marked by a celebration of technical prowess and flag-waving patriotism.

Scott Rechler, vice-chairman at the Port Authority, which owned the site, said the "the most complex construction project in our history" had been "an act of passion and an act of patriotic duty".

One World Trade Center, already a gleaming landmark on the city's skyline, would get taller as construction winds up late next year, finally reaching 541.3m and 104 floors.

Not only would it dwarf the 1930s masterpiece of the Empire State Building, but it would

be higher than the old Twin Towers, which both collapsed during the Sept 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, in which almost 3,000 people died.

Port Authority executive director Patrick Foye joked the building was so tall, that "if you really crane your neck, you can see Alaska" and once completed, "Asia may come into view".

Although the mammoth construction work to resurrect Ground Zero was at last nearing fruition, the project had been plagued by billions of dollars in cost overruns, as well as delays, bickering over designs, and worries over whether the office space would be profitable.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg stressed the positive, underlining the city's relationship with ambitious architecture.

"The New York City skyline is, once again, stretching to new heights.

"The latest progress at the World Trade Center is a testament to New Yorkers' strength and resolve -- and to our belief in a city that is always reaching upward."

But the old Twin Towers would always haunt the shiny replacement. Deep pools commemorating the dead had been built at the exact locations of each tower's old footprint.- AFP