

SA plans world record 2km tall tower

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Saudi Arabia is planning to build a 2km skyscraper in Riyadh that would become the world's tallest building, according to reports by MEED.

The proposed tower will be more than double the height of the world's tallest building – Dubai's Burj Khalifa, which is 828 metres tall.

Contractors that have priced towers in the region say that depending on the final design, a 2km-tall structure could cost about \$5b to construct.

For the Burj Khalifa in Dubai, the cost of the tower was justified because it enhanced the land values of the surrounding Downtown district.

Emaar Properties, the developer of the Burj Khalifa used the strategy again when it launched The Tower at Dubai Creek Harbour in April 2016. However, that tower, planned to be at least 928 metres tall, has not progressed beyond the raft foundation.

Who will win the project?

A design competition with a participation fee of \$1m is underway for the record-breaking tower, according to multiple sources close to the contest.

A site close to King Khalid International airport has been identified and EY has conducted a feasibility study.

Eight firms are said to have been asked to come up with designs and names such as Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), Adrian Smith & Gordon Gill Architecture are linked with the project in the early phases.

Ambitious projects in the Middle East

Building a supertall tower, as Dubai has found with the Burj Khalifa, can be a catalyst for further development and act as a flagpole to attract other investment projects.

Saudi Arabia is undergoing a construction and megaproject boom with multiple projects under development.

Saudi Arabia's King Salman International Airport will soon join the world's largest airports, as it aims to become one among them. Currently, the world's largest airport by area is King Fahd International, which is also located in the kingdom.

The airport is expected to cover an area of approximately 57-kilometre square, featuring six parallel runways and the existing terminals named after King Khalid

Elsewhere in the Kingdom Saudi Arabia is developing \$500bn megacity NEOM, introducing a luxury ski resort and using AI to build a roadless 170km long city of the future known as the Line.

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