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### **New York to pay 9/11 tribute at vacant Ground Zero**

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New York will lead tributes Friday to victims of the 9/11 attacks in a ceremony at Ground Zero where work on replacements for the World Trade Center, and even a memorial, remains mostly stalled.

On the eighth anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks by Al-Qaeda militants riding hijacked airliners, mourners will remember the 2,752 people who died in the destruction of the Twin Towers in Manhattan.

They will also mourn those who died in the attacks just hours later on the Pentagon outside Washington and on a fourth plane, which crashed in Pennsylvania after the passengers overpowered the hijackers.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg and other officials will attend the now annual ritual at Ground Zero, when every name is read out and moments of silence mark key events, such as the impact of the two hijacked planes, and the collapse of the towers.

Powerful lights will send beams skyward from the site at nightfall.

Despite a deep desire to properly remember the tragedy, constant financial and legal wrangling has slowed work on replacing the enormous Twin Towers to a snail's pace. The financial crisis and downturn in the real estate market have made speedy renewal of the neighborhood even less likely and frustration is rising.

"It has become increasingly clear that New Yorkers should be embarrassed by the debacle that is represented by the failure of government officials to have successfully rebuilt Ground Zero," **Barry LePatner**, a construction attorney, said.

"Unfortunately, the only conclusion that can be drawn from a careful study of their actions at this important site is an attitude that the public be damned."

In theory, five new skyscrapers are planned, with a park and memorial in the middle, and a transport hub. But many now think that there is no market for all five towers. For now, the site strikes casual observers as merely a large hole, although work on foundations of several key elements is well underway and the frame for the future Freedom Tower is rising.

A poll last week by Quinnipiac University found that two thirds of New Yorkers think even the memorial will not be ready in time for the 10th anniversary in 2011.

"They don't expect to have any part of Ground Zero ready by the tenth anniversary," Maurice Carroll, director of the university's polling institute said.

"We're getting fed up with the continual lack of progress at Ground Zero. And we think it's important that there be some signs of movement this year," Carroll added.

According to the poll, 25 percent of New Yorkers said the slow pace made them "ashamed," the highest number to give that answer since it was first asked in 2006.