

TAKE FIVE

Brazil has 37 companies exhibiting over a 480-sq-m pavilion in the main halls at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre

THE Brazil pavilion, organised by the Brazilian Export and Investment Promotion Agency (Apex-Brasil) in partnership with the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, brings together companies in the ceramic cladding, ornamental stones and metal hardware and bathroom accessories sector.

Designed by award-winning Brazilian architect and designer Ivan Resende, the pavilion is split into sections, with the displayed products offered innovatively within the pavilion.

It is Brazil's fifth participation at The Big 5 and this year the organisers and participants aim to showcase the huge variety of construction materials manufactured in Brazil, which also offer scope for customisation, says a spokesperson for the pavilion.

In fact, the might of Brazil's production capacity in the civil construction sector is on display at the show, he adds.

The civil construction production sector is one of the engines for growth in Brazil, which recorded a GDP of \$1.314 trillion last year. Whereas the country grew 3.8 per cent when comparing figures for 2005 and 2006 and 5.4 per cent between 2006 and 2007, the construction sector recorded even more expressive figures: 4.7 per cent and 7.9 per cent, respectively.

Between 2005 and 2007, the Brazilian civil construction industry added value rose by 11 per cent, and investment in construction increased by 22.5 per cent.

The country's construction industry alone exported \$8.27 billion worth of products last year, representing an 8.95 per cent increase on

the figures for 2006, according to another survey conducted by the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce. The main destinations of Brazilian exports in this sector were the US (\$1.78 billion), Argentina (\$872 million), the Arab countries (\$379.91 million), Venezuela (\$368.13 million) and Chile (\$366.90 million).

When considered as a single export destination, the Arab countries ranked third in the list of destinations for Brazilian exports of construction materials. Although this accounts for just 4.59 per cent of the sector's total exports, this figure showed a growth of 21.92 per cent on that of 2006.

Among the Arab countries, the leading destinations were the UAE (\$116.12 million), Saudi Arabia (\$109.64 million), Morocco (\$41.85 million), Oman (\$21.94 million) and Algeria (\$21.36 million).

Meanwhile, Brazil's stone and ceramics manufacturers are also out in force at the event. Brazil is a major player in the global stone industry and already ranks among the leading exporter countries in the world, with an output of over 8 million tonnes a year of granite, slate, quartzite, marble and other natural materials.

Commercial transactions by the Brazilian stone industry in the domestic and foreign markets, generate a turnover of around \$4 billion a year. Exports of stones from Brazil reached \$1.093 billion last year, with sales to more than 120 countries in all continents.

"In the global ranking for these products, Brazil leapt from the 12th position in 1999 to the fifth position in 2006, with its market share increasing from 1.4 per cent to 5.1 per cent. In



The Brazilians will be seeking to further boost their presence

2007, the country became the leading supplier of stones to the US market, known for its strict quality requirements."

Last year, 42.3 per cent of the sector's production went to the foreign market. Also, over the last 10 years, exports of higher added value processed stones have been rising continually.

Sales of ornamental stones to the GCC grew 95.6 per cent last year to a total value of \$4.8 million compared with 2006.

In the ceramics sector, Brazil regularly achieves impressive results as well, he says.

According to the Brazilian Association of Ceramic Tile Manufacturers (Anfacer), production of ceramic facings in Brazil reached 637 million sq m last year, distributed among flooring (432 million sq m), walls (155 million sq m), facades (12 million sq m) and porcelain items (39 million sq m). The country's total production capacity is 698 million sq m.

In the Arab market too, Brazilian ceramics performed well with exports to the region growing 12.4 per cent in the first quarter of this year, in comparison with the same period last year.

American dream

US companies are looking to strengthen their ties with the Gulf

THE US marks its biggest-ever presence at The Big 5 this year, with as many as 30 companies showcasing new building systems and unique solutions for the first time in the region.

These include a construction system that incorporates the efficiency of an assembly line into the building process, and an advanced piece of form-filling equipment for the pre-stressed concrete industry.

"With the slowdown in the American construction market, we are seeing more US companies looking to strengthen their links and trade in the Arabian Gulf," says Simon Mellor, vice president construction at dmg world media, the organiser of the show.

Among the products on show is Florida-based Efficient Building Systems' (EBS) innovative structural concrete forms, whose manufacturing process incorporates the efficiency of an assembly line. These forms are shipped to building sites, erected, and filled with concrete.

Commenting on their efficiency in delivering building solutions, a company spokesperson says: "Construction using the forms is faster, stronger and usually at a lower cost than precast concrete. Upper floors can also be built without waiting for the concrete to cure in lower levels, meaning projects can be completed much

faster. The surfaces of the forms developed by the company are ready to be painted while insulation, electrical boxes and conduits can be included within them so that finishing can start the day following the pour."

Another Florida company, Tucker's Machine and Steel Service is presenting its advanced form-filling equipment, the T-630, which is designed to quickly and efficiently move concrete from a batching plant to nearby forms and rapidly fill them with pinpoint accuracy. Dubai's House of Equipment is the exclusive distributor in the UAE, Qatar, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Pakistan and Oman for the T-630.

The Big 5 PMV also features a dedicated US pavilion with participation from many high-end companies from across the country, including New York-based Technology Trading Group, a supplier of concrete paving equipment, and California-based FrameMax, a manufacturer of panelised light-gauge steel and concrete composite wall panels.

Also, straight from the manufacturing Midwest, many Iowan companies have joined the US pavilion at The Big 5 PMV, including glass manufacturing company, Cemen Tech, Mechdyne Corporation (a supplier of automated systems for parking and

storage) and Heavy Equipment Manufacturing, which is displaying its mobile conveyors.

The Big 5 PMV also features a dedicated US pavilion with participation from many high-end companies from across the country.



EBS is showcasing its systems at The Big 5