

Total keen to participate in bid for entering North Field East (NFE) project with QP: Bouyer



French broad energy company Total, which has been present in Qatar since 1936, looks forward to participate in the bid for entering the multi-billion dollar North Field East (NFE) project with QP, said Matthieu Bouyer, managing director, Total E&P Qatar and Total country chair in Qatar.

In February, Qatar Petroleum (QP) took the final investment decision for developing the \$28.75bn North Field East Project (NFE), the world's largest LNG project, which will raise Qatar's LNG production capacity from 77mn tonnes per year (mmtpy) to 110 mmtpy by 2025.

"HE the Minister of State for Energy Affairs Saad bin Sherida al-Kaabi mentioned in February that the results should be known by the year end. We are mobilised and would definitely like to be associated with this giant expansion," Bouyer said in an interview with Gulf Times in Doha.

Total, which has been active in all areas of Qatar's energy sector, from exploration and production to refining, petrochemicals and marketing of lubricants, is a founding partner of Qatargas and a founding member and leading partner of Dolphin Energy.

Speaking about Total's short and mid-term strategy, Bouyer said, "In our current joint ventures, we are on the verge of launching large scale projects... so we are putting a lot of efforts to support them as much as possible in the project definition and execution phases in order to secure future energy production for the State of Qatar.

"Our short and mid-term strategy involves diversification of our business and implementing the group strategy in Qatar through renewables in particular."

Bouyer was quick to emphasise the importance Total attaches to safety of its staff and operations.

"Although Qatar has been managing Covid-19 remarkably well, our clear daily priority is to keep our staff and operations safe amid the pandemic crisis. Beyond the Covid risk management, we expect the highest level of safety in a context of fatigue and weariness."

Bouyer sees a "bright" future for liquefied natural gas and Qatar's LNG industry as a whole.

"Economists and market analysts believe LNG holds significant growth prospects in the long run. Natural gas stands out as a transition fuel, to replace coal in particular, thereby reducing emissions.

"Two major economies in Asia – China and India have been witnessing increasing demand for LNG... even in 2020 in the middle of the most unprecedented crisis the world has faced."

"At Total, our goal is clear – more energy and less emissions. Our ambition is to be Net Zero by 2050 together with society", Bouyer said and noted "to achieve this, we base our strategy in particular on two growth pillars – LNG and renewables. We are one of the top leading players in LNG. That said, as a broad energy company, our portfolio comprises not only oil and gas, but also power, mainly from renewables."

To anchor this strategy, Total will propose to its shareholders in May this year to change its name to become 'TotalEnergies', Bouyer said.

Praising Qatar's efforts at developing its LNG industry, Bouyer said, "In the last 25 years, Qatar has become the largest LNG exporting country with more than 77mn tonnes per annum (Mtpa) of high quality LNG capacity.

In February, Qatar launched the biggest LNG project worldwide – North Field Expansion, with an additional 33 mtpy with high environmental standards. And they are working to further increase this with a future phase – North Field South that is planned to be put online right after.

"So definitely, LNG has a role and will be the main contributor to Qatar energy development, looking forward."

Total is the shareholder and sole operator of Al Khalij offshore oilfield. In 2016, Total won the bid for Al Shaheen offshore oilfield, resulting in North Oil Company, established as a partnership between Total and QP.

Total is present in five downstream joint ventures (JVs) in Qatar, three in petrochemicals (Qapco, Qatofin, RLQC) and two in refining (Laffan Refineries 1 and 2).

Total supported Qatar to build the first ethane cracker in the Middle East at Qapco.

"Since then, Total has been involved in many upgrades or expansions of the downstream sector in Qatar, supporting its JVs and their projects with secondees and specialised technical services," Bouyer said.

Total Marketing Qatar has a prominent market share for lubricants in Qatar for automotive, construction, industrial and marine customers.

The Total Research Center Qatar at QSTP has leading edge and innovative research projects related to sustainable development, marine biodiversity, biofuels, and solar energy. Total said its commitment to sharing its expertise is fuelled by its aim is to develop home-grown solutions to its local operational challenges, thus supporting and contribution to Qatar's vision of developing a knowledge-based economy.

TRC-Q also acts as a bridge between industry and academia to bring innovative solutions to our operations, he said.