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[1]

International

Oilfield services duo Baker Hughes and Norway's Akastor have agreed to form a 50:50 joint venture offshore drilling solutions company [2] in a move to boost earnings and cut costs in what has become a challenging business environment for the industry.

Commodity trader Vitol has launched a Green LNG product [3], under which its customers will be given the opportunity to convert cargoes to "green LNG" through carbon offsets, the firm announced last week, adding that it expects carbon-mitigating solutions to grow as countries look to achieve net-zero targets.

Global carbon dioxide emissions from the energy sector [4] dropped by 6% in 2020 amid a slowdown due to the coronavirus pandemic, but by the end of last year CO2 pollution was already back at 2019 levels in many parts of the world, according to the International Energy Agency.

Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) governor Maeda Tadashi has said the bank will end lending to overseas coal projects [5], according to reports that come months after organisations from more than 39 countries called on JBIC to reverse its decision to fund a coal-fired plant in Vietnam.

Hyundai Heavy Industries Holdings and Saudi Aramco have reportedly signed an MOU, under which Hyundai Oilbank will import LPG to produce blue hydrogen [6], then CO₂ captured during the hydrogen production process will be shipped back to Saudi Arabia for Enhanced Oil Recovery.

Oil prices surged by over USD 2.5/barrel [7] last Thursday after OPEC and its allies, with the exception of Russia and Kazakhstan, agreed to maintain production cuts in April, countering expectations that OPEC+ would agree to increase production at their latest meeting.

?Africa

Nigeria – Infrastructure firm UTM Offshore has won a licence to establish the country's first FLNG production plant [8], which will process gas from the Yoho field as the government moves to boost LNG production and tackle gas flaring, according to law firm Templars.

?Asia Pacific

China – The country has set out interim targets to curb greenhouse gas emissions [9] and energy consumption by 2025, but at the same time explicitly stated that it will support the expansion of fossil fuel production in a bid to reduce its dependency on energy imports.

Japan – Mitsubishi Power has begun developing the “world's first” 40 MW 100%-ammonia-fired gas turbine [10], with a view to bringing a commercially-viable product to market by 2025 as the Japanese government pushes to boost NH₃ demand 150-fold by 2050.

Japanese firms Mitsui and Hokkaido Gas have signed an agreement on the supply of carbon-neutral LNG [11], marking the first time that Hokkaido Gas will receive carbon neutral LNG, and first time Mitsui will supply carbon neutral LNG.

Myanmar – Woodside is reducing its presence in Myanmar [12] and is keeping “all business decisions” in the country “under review”, the Australian firm has said amid a deteriorating security situation in the country following last month's coup by the military.

Philippines – The race for Shell's stake in largest gas field in the Philippines has heated up after a consortium led by First Pacific lodged a non-binding offer for the Anglo-Dutch firm's 45% stake in service contract 38 [13] – which contains the offshore Malampaya field.

Singapore – Total has been awarded an LNG bunkering supplier licence by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, becoming the third firm to receive an LNG bunkering licence [14] from the city-state that aims to become Asia's leading LNG bunkering hub.

Taiwan – State-owned CPC Corporation may be forced to entirely overhaul its multi-billion dollar plans for a third LNG import terminal [15] off the north-west coast, after environmental campaigners said a petition to relocate the project is set to trigger a national referendum.

?Central & South America

Argentina – The country's latest gas supply auction attracted just two bidders, adding to concerns of gas shortages this coming winter [16] as energy demand is expected to gradually recover as the country lifts Covid-19 lockdown measures.

Brazil – The world's largest green hydrogen production facility [17] is to be built in Ceara state, project developer Australia's Enegix Energy announced during an online presentation last Thursday, adding that the project requires an investment of USD 5.4 billion.

?Europe

Germany – Hanseatic Energy Hub received a boost in its quest to launch the proposed Stade LNG terminal [18] in Germany, after Fluxys agreed to join the project as an "industrial partner" and operate the terminal on a long-term basis, the pair confirmed.

UK – Power generators are eagerly awaiting the next capacity auction for 2024/25 delivery after last Tuesday's 2021/22 auction cleared 2.25 GW of capacity for subsidies [19], including ESB's 350 MW Corby CCGT and Uniper's 435 MW Ratcliffe coal-fired unit at a record high of USD 63/Kw/year.

?Middle East

Qatar – Samsung C&T has become the latest firm to bag a major contract from Qatar Petroleum, which on Monday awarded the South Korean firm the EPC contract for the LNG storage and loading facilities [20] related to its North Field East project.

Qatar Petroleum will announce by the end of 2021 or Q1'22 detailed plans for "implementation" of its proposed North Field South expansion project [21], CEO Saad al-Kaabi told IHS Markit's CERWeek conference last week.

?North America

US – ExxonMobil has "conceded the need for board change" [22], activist investor Engine No.1 said last Monday after Exxon announced that it has appointed two new directors to its board, including ESG proponent Jeff Ubben. Separately, a shareholder call for Exxon to reveal whether its lobbying activities align with the Paris agreement [23] will be voted on at the supermajor's next AGM.

Days later, Exxon outlined plans to remain viable in a "lower carbon future" [24] by becoming a leader in CCS and blue hydrogen made from gas, while cutting upstream capex, flattening production until 2025, investing in low-carbon technologies and reducing its multi-billion-dollar debt.

Activist investor Kimmeridge Energy Management has settled its proxy fight with Ovintiv [25] after the US shale firm appointed a candidate nominated by the fund to serve on its board of directors some two months after Kimmeridge alleged that Ovintiv's board had allowed the firm to become an "environmental laggard".



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