

QP signs butadiene extraction deal

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Qatar Petroleum (QP) and Zeon Corporation and Mitsui & Company, both Japan-based, have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the development of an integrated butadiene extraction and elastomer complex in Ras Laffan. The MoU was signed by HE the Minister for Energy and Industry Dr Mohamed bin Saleh al-Sada; Yoshimasa Fushimi, Zeon Corporation director and executive corporate officer and Seiichi Tanaka, Mitsui & Company representative director and executive vice president, in Doha yesterday.

Under the agreement, the partners will be undertaking a detailed feasibility study to evaluate the technical, commercial and economic aspects of the integrated world-scale butadiene and synthetic rubber/elastomer project.

The feedstock will come from the planned Al-Sejeel Petrochemicals Complex and the Al-Karaana Petrochemicals Complex, both of which are currently under development, as well as from the existing plant of Ras Laffan Olefins Company (RLOC).

Butadiene will be extracted from feedstock and then converted into high-value elastomers like styrene-butadiene rubber (SBR) and polybutadiene rubber (PBR) using Zeon's state-of-the-art technology.

Al-Sada expressed his pleasure at the signing of the MoU, describing it as "an important step that adds value to Qatar's natural resources, and creates future value chain opportunities."

He said: "The elastomers from this project will create new opportunities to develop small and medium scale enterprises and private industries in the downstream sector, as well as other automobile related industries."

"I am confident that, together with our Japanese partners, we would be able to meet the highest industrial standards, enhance value for feedstock streams, and successfully complete the study for developing the project."

Fushimi said, "Zeon hopes and believes that the introduction of a synthetic rubber industry using our technology will contribute to Qatar's development of related downstream industry and lead to the further strengthening of the great partnership between Qatar and Japan. After this ceremony, Zeon will make our maximum effort jointly with Mohamed Nasser al-Hajri, director, QP Downstream Ventures and his team for the feasibility study toward the success of the project."

Tanaka said, "Ever since our equity participation in the Qatargas 1 LNG project back in 1989, Mitsui has been enjoying an excellent relationship with QP as partners in the Qatargas 3 LNG project in 2005, the Laffan Refinery and its latest expansion, as well as the Ras Laffan C IWPP project. Mitsui will continue to contribute further to the strong relationship with the State of Qatar and undertake its best performance in its contribution to the study. This butadiene and synthetic rubber project has the strong potential to be the first business opportunity in Qatar's petrochemical sector and will enhance the value of your esteemed country's natural gas resources."

Al-Hajri said, "We at Qatar Petroleum look forward to closely working with our Japanese partners to further evaluate this business opportunity and develop the project as part of our sustained efforts to optimally enhance Qatar's downstream business and product portfolio."

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