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In its thrust to pursue value-added opportunities for the citizenry, The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC) signed an Engineering, Procurement, and Commissioning (EPC) contract for gas infrastructure for e TecK's Phoenix Park Industrial Estate (PPIE), with the Beijing Construction Engineering Group Company Limited (BCEG). BCEG, a Chinese construction and engineering firm, is the design-build contractor for PPIE.

NGC's involvement in this initiative augurs well for Trinidad and Tobago as it increases local content in the overall project. Conservative estimates by GORTT revealed that some 1,000 persons are expected to be employed during the construction phase. Once operational, the park will directly employ over 4,500 persons.

"As landlord of PPIE, e TecK is proud to have been the catalyst for the discussions leading to the signing of the EPC contract between NGC and BCEG. We see this as a significant alliance to meet the demand and supply of natural gas to businesses that will be occupying 45 of the 78 leasable land lots in the areas of light and advanced manufacturing, assembly, logistics and distribution and information and communication technology (ICT) industries," said Steve De Las, President, e TecK.

Caribbean Regional General Manager of BCEG, Mr. Ma Shulong, cemented the commitment of the company to the project by stating "... We are proud to be a part of this project to help stimulate the economic development within Trinidad and Tobago. Our employees, both local and Chinese, are fully dedicated to having this project completed on time. The alliances between the two countries have grown stronger and we look forward to working with our partners in the future."

NGC President Mark Loquan re-emphasised that "...NGC continues to play an important role in revolutionising the local economy. Strategic alliances of this nature further position us to successfully fulfil our commitments not only to GORTT, but so too the people of Trinidad and Tobago."

On 26th November 2024, Shell, Mc Dermott and Trinidad Offshore Fabricators Unlimited (TOFCO) hosted a ceremonial simulation of steel cutting to signal the commencement of the local fabrication phase for the Manatee Project, at the TOFCO Yard, La Brea Industrial Estate.

The local fabrication of jackets and piles (legs and supporting frame) for the Manatee Platform will kick-off in December 2024, and the Manatee jacket is notably the largest jacket to be built locally at TOFCO's yard. This comes after the Manatee Project commemorated the first steel cutting ceremony for its topside in July 2024, at Mc Dermott's Altamira Fabrication Yard in Mexico, one week after the "Final Investment Decision" (FID) was made by Shell; demonstrating the fast pace at which the project is moving.

In delivering the keynote address at the inauguration ceremony, The Honourable Stuart R. Young S.C. M.P. Minister of Energy and Energy Industries and Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister stated, "This has been my third visit to the TOFCO yard in the last month to view fabrication projects that were a direct outcome of government policy and strategy coming together and The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago will continue delivering world-class opportunities to La Brea, Point Fortin and other communities in Trinidad and Tobago."

Commenting on the local fabrication milestone event, Mr. Adam Lowmass, Senior Vice President and Country Chair, Shell stated, "At Shell, we are proud to partner with professional organizations like Mc Dermott and TOFCO. We are confident that the Manatee Jacket will be completed on time and with high quality of craftsmanship and look forward to bringing this project online for Trinidad and Tobago."

General Manager at TOFCO, Javed Mohammed acknowledged the work ahead and the positive relationship between the government and the project's stakeholders by stating that, "The journey ahead will be filled with challenges, but it is through our collaboration and perseverance that we will turn these challenges into opportunities for growth and success as we set new standards in offshore construction. We extend our deepest gratitude to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Thank you for your continuing support."

The ceremonial simulation of steel cutting to signal the commencement of the local fabrication phase for the Manatee Project, at the TOFCO Yard, La Brea Industrial Estate.

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