

# CNOOC's pipelay flagship launched

Rongsheng yard unveils its first offshore unit for China work

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Singapore

CHINA National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) saw the launch of its flagship deep-water pipelay vessel, the Hai yang shi you 201, last Friday, with final delivery of the unit scheduled by the end of this year.

CNOOC will start commissioning the Hai yang shi you 201 early next year and plans to put it into operation in the second half of 2011 at one of its self-financed fields in the South China Sea.

This is part of a warm-up exercise before taking on deep-water pipelay service duties at Husky Energy's Liwan 3-1 gas field in the South China Sea, sources said.

China's Offshore Oil Engineering Corporation (COOEC), a CNOOC unit, will be operator of



Debut: CNOOC's first pipelay vessel being launched at the Jiangsu Rongsheng yard

Photo: XU YIHE

the 3 billion yuan (\$439 million) unit, which is capable of working in water depths of up to 3,000 metres.

The unit, which has dynamic positioning capability, can lay five kilometres of subsea pipelines per day and has a lifting capacity of 4,000 tonnes.

Husky is ready to start tendering for the Liwan natural gas field's deep-water engineering, procurement and construction contract in late June, four months behind the original schedule. First

commercial gas is scheduled in early 2013.

Husky has decided that it will only use equipment with a proven track record for developing Liwan.

The Hai yang shi you 201 was built at China's leading privately-owned yard, Jiangsu Rongsheng Heavy Industries, in Rugao in Jiangsu province.

Rongsheng president Chen Qiang said the launch of the unit marks Rongsheng's debut in offshore fabrication where it aims

to expand in future, targeting contracts for sixth-generation drilling rigs, floating production, storage and offloading vessels, offshore support vessels and liquefied natural gas vessels.

He said Rongsheng is now expanding into the second phase of yard construction by adding new offshore-oriented facilities such as drydocks. When completed, the yard will be able to build six FPSOs per annum with total tonnage of 900,000 deadweight tonnes.

## Chevron to spud off Bangladesh

US supermajor Chevron is planning to spud its first exploration well in Block 7 in southern Bangladesh after this year's monsoon, writes Amanda Battersby.

An exploration well is expected to be spudded in October and two more wells could be on the cards, depending on the results of this initial probe. The wildcard, with a reported price tag upwards of \$20 million, comes after 2D seismic survey work on the block south of the capital Dhaka.

"In December 2009 the company completed a seismic data acquisition programme for Block 7. Evaluation and data processing are under way, and an exploration well is planned to be completed by 2011," said Chevron of its operations.

Block 7 covers offshore and onshore acreage including parts of the environmentally-sensitive Sundarbans — the world's largest mangrove swamp.

Partners in the Block 7 production sharing contract are operator Chevron on 45%, South Korea's GS Caltex also on 45% and Petrobangla subsidiary Bapex with 10%.

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