

EU NAVAL FORCE



The Golden Blessing

coast of Somalia. A European Union Naval Force helicopter, which was deployed when the German warship *Schleswig-Holstein* received a distress call from the *Golden Blessing's* officers, spotted pirates aboard the tanker. The ship was carrying ethylene glycol from Saudi Arabia to India. Its last known destination after the hijacking was the Somali coast.—AHT

### ASTRAZENECA COMPOUNDS GET MALARIA SCREENING

AstraZeneca will open its compound library to Medicines for Malaria Venture, a non-profit group working to speed the development of new malaria treatments. MMV has enlisted Vicky Avery of Australia's Griffith University to screen the library's 500,000 compounds against *Plasmodium falciparum*, the most lethal of the malaria parasites. Any promising compounds will be funneled to AstraZeneca's R&D facility in Bangalore, India, for further exploration. AstraZeneca appears to be upping its commitment to neglected diseases: This spring, the firm teamed with the Global Alliance for TB Drug Development to create a joint portfolio of compounds active against tuberculosis.—LJ

### GILEAD TO ACQUIRE CGI PHARMACEUTICALS ...

Gilead Sciences will acquire CGI Pharmaceuticals, located in Branford, Conn., for up to \$120 million in cash, most of which will be paid up front. The rest will come in recognition of clinical development milestones. CGI focuses on small-molecule protein kinase inhibitors. "The acquisition of CGI represents a unique opportunity to expand our research efforts in an interesting and promising area of drug discovery," Gilead Chief Scientific Officer Norbert W. Bischofberger says. The companies expect to complete the deal in the third quarter, after which CGI will operate as a Gilead subsidiary.—AMT

### ... AND CLOSE R&D LABS IN DURHAM, N.C.

To consolidate its antiviral R&D efforts at its Foster City, Calif., headquarters, Gilead Sciences will close its Durham, N.C., research site by the end of 2010. The move will affect 150 jobs; about 20% of the employees have been offered relocation packages. The company acquired the site when it purchased Triangle Pharmaceuticals in 2003. The acquisition led to the development of the HIV/AIDS drug Emtriva, which is sold combined with another Gilead drug, Viread. Sales of the combination, called Truvada, were \$658 million in the first quarter.—AMT

### SANOFI WILL ACQUIRE BIOTECH FIRM TARPEGEN

Sanofi-Aventis is buying TargeGen, a San Diego-based biotech firm developing small-molecule kinase inhibitors for the treatment of leukemia, lymphoma, and other hematological malignancies. The French company will pay \$75 million upon closing the deal. Total payments to TargeGen's owners could reach \$560 million depending on the development of TG 101348, TargeGen's lead product. TG 101348 inhibits Janus kinase 2, which is associated with blood diseases such as myelofibrosis.—MM

### CELGENE WILL ACQUIRE ONCOLOGY FIRM ABRAXIS

Celgene has agreed to acquire Abraxis BioScience, a Los Angeles-based firm that markets the breast cancer drug Abraxane, in a stock deal valued at \$2.9 billion. An injectable suspension of paclitaxel bound to albumin, Abraxane can be delivered at higher doses than traditional solvent-based paclitaxel, according to Abraxis. "The acquisition of Abraxis BioScience is an exceptional strategic fit that will accelerate our strategy of becoming a global leader in oncology," says Bob Hugin, Celgene's CEO. He notes that Abraxane has shown potential for the treatment of solid tumors such as those caused by non-small-cell lung and pancreatic cancers.—RM

### BUSINESS ROUNDUP

**DSM** and Roquette have formed an equally owned joint venture, called Reverdia, to develop biobased succinic acid. The two companies started cooperating on succinic acid in early 2008 and now make it at a demonstration facility in Lestrem, France.

**DUPONT** and the sanitation firm Ecolab are joining to commercialize new antimicrobial coating technologies for the food and beverage processing industry. The companies are targeting the control

of mold and pathogenic bacteria, especially *Salmonella* and *Listeria monocytogenes*, in food facilities.

**KEMIRA** has launched an R&D cooperation with the Singapore Membrane Technology Centre at Singapore's Nanyang Technological University. The goal of the two-year project is to design a more efficient process for producing drinking water from wastewater.

**LANXESS** will expand capacity in Krefeld-Uerdingen, Germany, for its Mesamoll brand plasticizers. The project, costing close to \$10 million,

will raise capacity by 40% by the end of the year, the firm says. Marketed as alternatives to phthalates, Mesamoll products are alkylsulfonic acid esters.

**BASF** is canceling plans to build an antioxidant-blend plant in the Middle East with the Saudi Arabian firm Astra Polymer Compounding. The joint venture was launched by Ciba, which BASF acquired last year. BASF says it now has other options to build such a plant.

**APTUIT** has acquired GlaxoSmithKline's Medicines Research Centre, in Verona, Italy, effective July

1. Under the agreement, the facility's approximately 500 staffers will transfer to Aptuit from GSK. Aptuit, a pharmaceutical services company, will supply GSK with R&D services from the facility.

**SV LIFE SCIENCES** has closed its fifth venture capital fund with commitments of \$523 million. SVLS Fund V, for which the group had targeted \$400 million, brings the total funds under management to more than \$2 billion.

**THOMAS SWAN & CO.**, a U.K. specialty chemical firm, will sell carbon

nanotubes to U.S.-based Vendum Batteries under a long-term exclusive supply agreement. In late May, Swan began producing single-walled nanotubes at a new plant that can make 50 kg per month. It is building a second, identical plant.

**MERCK & CO.** will collaborate with Adcock Ingram, a South African drug distribution firm, to copromote and distribute Merck products, including over-the-counter and prescription drugs, in South Africa. Merck expects emerging markets to account for 25% of its drug and vaccine sales by 2013.