

## Gilead to buy YM BioSciences, use its cancer drug

13 December 2012 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau



**Singapore:** Gilead Sciences and YM BioSciences have signed a definitive agreement under which Gilead will acquire YM for \$2.95 per share in cash. The transaction has received the unanimous approval of YM's board of directors, and values YM at approximately \$510 million. Gilead plans to fund the acquisition with cash on hand and the transaction is expected to close in the first quarter of 2013.

YM's lead drug candidate, CYT387, is an orally-administered, once-daily, selective inhibitor of the Janus kinase (JAK) family, specifically JAK1 and JAK2. The JAK enzymes have been implicated in a number of disorders including myeloproliferative diseases, inflammatory disorders and certain cancers. YM has reported positive results from a phase I/II clinical trial of CYT387 in 166 patients with myelofibrosis, a life-threatening myeloproliferative disease. Pending completion of the acquisition, Gilead intends to initiate a pivotal phase III clinical trial of CYT387 in myelofibrosis in the second half of 2013.

"This acquisition represents an opportunity to add a complementary clinical program in the area of hematologic cancers to our growing oncology portfolio," said Dr Norbert W Bischofberger, Gilead's executive vice president, R&D and chief scientific officer. "Based on promising phase II data, we believe CYT387 could provide important clinical benefit for patients with myelofibrosis, including potential improvements with regard to anemia and decreased dependence on blood transfusions. We look forward to advancing CYT387 into a phase III study as quickly as possible and to exploring its potential in other myeloproliferative diseases with significant unmet medical need."

"Since our acquisition of CYT387 nearly three years ago, YM has made great progress in advancing CYT387 through the clinical, regulatory, manufacturing and business development processes. While Gilead's acquisition will end a long, varied and interesting journey for YM, we are pleased to have this transaction crystallize the present value of this important therapeutic candidate," said Mr David Allan, chairman, YM.

In recent years, Gilead has sought to expand its R&D expertise in the area of oncology through the appointment of leading cancer researchers and clinicians, the establishment of external scientific partnerships and through strategic acquisitions. Gilead's lead compound in oncology, idelalisib (formerly referred to as GS-1101), is an investigational, first-in-class specific inhibitor of the phosphoinositide-3 kinase (PI3K) delta isoform. Five phase III studies of idelalisib in chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL) and indolent non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (iNHL) are progressing.