

**HD Deals of the day- Mergers and acquisitions****WC** 1,489 words**PD** 1 May 2014**ET** 06:07**SN** Reuters News**SC** LBA**LA** English**CY** (c) 2014 Reuters Limited**LP**

(Adds Shell, Vale, Etihad Etisalat, America Movil and others; updates Exelon Corp)

April 30 (Reuters) - The following bids, mergers, acquisitions and disposals were reported by 2000 GMT on Wednesday:

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\*\* Bayer AG is offering to swap its animal health assets for Merck & Co Inc's consumer healthcare business, people familiar with the matter said on Tuesday, in a move that could give the German drugmaker a leg-up in the \$14 **billion** auction of the Merck business.

\*\* Exelon Corp said it would buy Pepco Holdings Inc for \$6.83 **billion**, helping it overtake Duke **Energy** Corp as the biggest power distribution **company** in the United States.

\*\* Sanofi SA is looking to sell a portfolio of older drugs that could fetch \$7 **billion**-\$8 **billion**, according to people familiar with the matter, yet another example of drugmakers trying to shed non-core assets and focus on high-growth areas.

\*\* Australian **mining firm** Padbury **Mining** Ltd's \$6.5 **billion** deal to fund a new **iron ore** port and rail development on the resource-rich western coast has fallen through, the **company** said on Wednesday.

\*\* French Economy Minister Arnaud Montebourg said on Wednesday that his government would examine a request from Alstom SA unions to raise the state's shareholding in the **company**, which is the subject of takeover talks.

Separately, the head of General Electric said that talks with the French government on its offer for Alstom's **energy** assets had been "productive" and he expressed confidence that the deal would go through despite a potential rival offer from Germany's Siemens.

\*\* Swiss private bank J. Safra Sarasin has agreed to buy Morgan Stanley's Swiss private banking unit, beefing up its business with the wealthy in the Middle East and Latin America.

\*\* **China** Petrochemical Corp (Sinopec Group) said on Wednesday that it and state-owned power group **China** Huadian Corp have agreed to take a combined 15 percent **stake** in a liquefied natural gas project controlled by Malaysian state **oil firm** Petronas in Canada.

\*\* Iran has terminated **China** National Petroleum Corp's contract to develop the Azadegan oilfield after the **Chinese energy** giant ignored repeated appeals to work on it, Iranian news agency Shana said on Wednesday.

\*\* India's Jindal Steel and Power Ltd and JSW Steel Ltd are in competing talks to buy parts of insolvent Italian steelmaker Lucchini, sources with direct knowledge of the matter said.

\*\* German auto parts and tire maker Continental AG plans to buy the remainder of Emitec, a supplier of emissions technology, from GKN Plc.

\*\* Linux operating system vendor Red Hat Inc said it would buy privately held storage systems provider Inktank Ceph Enterprise for \$175 **million** to expand in the fast growing market for software-defined storage.

\*\* An Indian court has temporarily halted generic drugmaker Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd's \$3.2 **billion** takeover of rival Ranbaxy Laboratories Ltd until it decides on a petition for a probe into alleged insider trading.

\*\* Mapletree Group, owned by Singapore's state investor Temasek Holdings Pte Ltd, plans to partner with U.S.-based Oakwood Worldwide in forming a joint venture in the serviced apartment business.

\*\* Etihad Airways has signaled that it was ready to continue talks on a potential investment in Italy's troubled Alitalia but it refuses to budge on tough conditions on debt restructuring and job cuts, a source close to the talks said on Wednesday.

\*\* Israeli geothermal **energy** producer Ormat Industries said its U.S. subsidiary is examining the possibility of raising money by bringing in **equity** partners for a small number of assets in the United States.

\*\* The banking foundation that is top shareholder in Banca Carige is awaiting clearance from Italy's Treasury to cut its **stake** to 19 percent from 43.4 percent at present, the chairman of the not-for-profit entity said on Wednesday.

\*\* Volkswagen AG is edging closer toward taking full control of its Swedish truck division Scania, after its buyout offer won broad support from shareholders and fell just short of an acceptance threshold.

\*\* Hastings Funds Management and **China** Merchants Group have won a state government auction for a 98-year lease on Australia's Port of Newcastle, the world's biggest **coal** export terminal, paying a higher-than-expected A\$1.75 **billion** (\$1.62 **billion**).

\*\* Indonesia's PT Perusahaan Gas Negara Tbk said it will buy liquefied natural gas from BP Plc's Tangguh plant for its two floating storage facilities to meet rising demand in Southeast Asia's biggest economy.

\*\* A consortium of RRJ Capital and Temasek Holdings have agreed to invest 1.3 **billion** euros (\$1.80 **billion**) in ING Groep's European and Japanese insurance and investment management unit ahead of its planned IPO, the Dutch financial services **firm** said in a statement on Wednesday.

\*\* Africa-focused **oil** and gas explorer Tullow **Oil** has sold majority stakes in two UK North Sea gas assets to Faroe Petroleum Plc for \$75.6 **million** and said it was looking for buyers of other North Sea assets.

\*\* The biggest investor in Salini Impregilo will reduce its **stake** in the Italian builder to around 75 percent from 90 percent by the end of the summer, Chief Financial Officer Massimo Ferrari said on Wednesday.

\*\* Israeli mobile operator Pelephone signed a deal with Sweden's Ericsson to supply equipment and build a fourth-generation (4G) network, its parent **company** said on Wednesday.

\*\* Croatia's state power board Hrvatska Elektroprivreda (HEP) said on Wednesday that it had received qualified bids for the construction of a 500-megawatt thermal power plant on the northern Adriatic, but declined to offer details until the bids were assessed.

\*\* Royal Dutch Shell Plc's proposed LNG Canada liquefied natural gas export plant in British Columbia tiptoed closer to reality on Wednesday, with the **company** signing a formalized partnership agreement with its three Asian partners, nudging the project into the next stage of development. Shell also boosted its **stake** in the project to 50 percent from 40 percent.

\*\* Guinea's President Alpha Conde said on Wednesday he hoped Brazilian miner Vale would bid to reclaim two **iron ore** permits, because the **company** had not been involved in the alleged corruption that led to their cancellation.

\*\* Saudi Arabia's Etihad Etisalat (Mobily) is in talks to acquire 20 percent of Etihad Atheeb Telecommunications through a rights issue by the loss-making telecom operator, according to a bourse statement on Wednesday.

\*\* India's Piramal Enterprises Ltd has agreed to buy a 9.99 percent **stake** in Shriram City Union Finance Ltd valued at about \$130 **million**, its latest investment in a **firm** linked to the Chennai-based Shriram group.

\*\* Latin America's biggest phone **company** America Movil expects regulators to approve its deal to take control of Telekom Austria within two months, it said on Wednesday.

\*\* Charter Communications, which lost out to Comcast Corp in a bid to acquire Time Warner Cable Inc , has withdrawn its slate of nominees to Time Warner Cable's board. As part of a deal with Comcast announced on Monday to swap customers, Charter had withdrawn its slate, a Charter spokesman said on Wednesday.

\*\* Grupo Argos, a Colombian holding **company**, is looking to invest in the **energy** sector elsewhere in Latin America later this year, its chief executive said on Wednesday.

\*\* Lithuanian state-owned companies said they had asked the competition authority for approval to buy stakes in the Baltic state's gas and power utilities from Germany's E.ON .

\*\* Reckitt Benckiser Group said on Wednesday it was no longer in active talks with Merck & Co about buying its consumer health business, leaving Germany's Bayer as the leading contender for the \$14 **billion** business.

\*\* Lloyds Banking Group has reached an agreement to sell \$500 **million** of shipping loans from its remaining ship finance portfolio as the British bank cuts sector exposure, finance and banking sources familiar with the matter said on Wednesday.

\*\* **China's** commerce ministry has approved with conditions German liquid crystal maker Merck KGaA's planned \$2.6 **billion** takeover of UK-listed AZ Electronic Materials.

\*\* Energizer Holdings Inc said it planned to separate into two publicly traded companies, one for batteries and other household products and the other for personal care brands such as Schick razors and Stayfree female hygiene products.

\*\* The three brothers who own Fratelli Rossetti would consider selling part of the Italian luxury shoemaker to fund future expansion, while keeping the business founded by their father firmly under family control.

\*\* ArcelorMittal SA, the world's largest steelmaker, and Bekaert Group on Wednesday agreed to swap their stakes in their Brazil, Costa Rica and Ecuador ventures, part of a broader plan to extend a four-decade partnership in fast-growing markets, an executive said. (\$1 = 0.59 British pounds) (\$1 = 1.08 Australian dollars) (\$1 = 0.72 euros) (Compiled by Avik Das and Ankit Ajmera in Bangalore)

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**CO** amemvl : America Movil S.A.B de C.V. | byer : Bayer AG | dukpow : Duke Energy Corp | itteti : Ettihad Etisalat Company | phelc : Exelon Corp | poto : Pepco Holdings Inc | sansyn : Sanofi SA | schplo : Merck & Co. Inc. | rnlp : Royal Dutch Shell PLC

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