

News Details

ICGEB's Malaria Vaccine Ready for Clinical Trials

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In what promises to protect people against the world's most widespread form of malaria, a candidate vaccine developed by Indian researchers at the New Delhi-based International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) is all set to undergo human clinical trials in the middle of this year.

ICGEB has entered into an agreement with Hyderabad-based biotech firm Bharat Biotech Ltd, which would manufacture the vaccine for human clinical trials later this year. The researchers at ICGEB have fine-tuned the candidate vaccine against infection from Plasmodium vivax, the most widespread form of malaria in India, and transferred the technology to Bharat Biotech.

"The Indian malaria vaccine programme now ranks amongst the best in the world and has attracted funds for the production vaccine grade materials involving the biotechnology industry in India, clearing the way for the first-ever malaria vaccine trials in India," ICGEB director Prof VS Chauhan told FE.

ICGEB, with laboratories in New Delhi and Trieste, Italy, is dedicated to developing and promoting application of biotechnology for solving problems in health and agriculture, particularly in developing countries.

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) senior fellow and area convenor microbial biotechnology Dr Banwar Lal has hailed the development and said, "It is the coming to age of the indigenous biotechnology industry, which has made it possible to produce vaccine grade materials for clinical trials in the country. I believe much good work has been done and vaccine research in India has come to a stage where new experimental vaccines can be produced and put to clinical trials."

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