

**Guiding Drug Policy for *P. falciparum* malaria by ICMR's National Institute of Malaria
Research (NIMR) in North Eastern States:-**

NIMR has played a pivotal role in guiding the national drug policy for treatment of malaria in India. It has been carrying out operational research by monitoring the therapeutic efficacy of antimalarials used in the national programme. The findings of the research carried out by NIMR were instrumental in providing evidence based data for phasing out the use of oral artemisinin monotherapy in the country in 2008. Further the studies carried out during 2005-07 on efficacy of chloroquine showed high resistance in *P. falciparum* malaria which led to introduction of artemisinin based combination therapy i.e artesunate + sulfadoxine pyrimethamine (AS-SP) in 2007 and its complete coverage for treatment of *P. falciparum* malaria all over the country in the year 2010. Recent study conducted by NIMR has shown evidence of treatment failures to the current combination AS-SP in *P. falciparum* malaria in the North-Eastern states.

Recommendation:-

In view of the recent evidence of treatment failures to the current combination AS-SP in *P. falciparum* in the North-Eastern states, this combination therapy has been replaced with ACT-AL co-formulated tablet of ARTEMETHER(20 mg) - LUMEFANTRINE (120 mg) by National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme and has been included in the “National drug policy on malaria- 2013”. This combination therapy is not recommended during the first trimester of pregnancy and for children weighing < 5 kg.