Indian Economy · GS - II

“How can India balance pharmaceutical innovation with affordable access to medicines while negotiating international trade agreements?”

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
DAILY PRACTICE 23/10/2026	GS - II	Indian Economy

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Data Exclusivity, TRIPS Agreement, Generic Medicines, Public Health, Intellectual Property Rights, Pharmaceutical Innovation, Affordable Healthcare, India–US Trade Relations.

Model Answer

Introduction:

India’s pharmaceutical policy must balance incentives for medical innovation with the public interest in affordable medicines.

Key Issues:

1. Data exclusivity: It may restrict generic manufacturers’ reliance on originator clinical-trial data, potentially delaying generic entry.
2. Affordable healthcare: Generic competition can reduce medicine prices and improve access, particularly for low-income households.
3. Innovation incentives: Pharmaceutical companies argue that stronger data protection can encourage investment in research and development.
4. International obligations: India must honour its applicable international commitments while preserving legitimate public-health policy space.

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Way Forward:

1. Ensure trade agreements do not unnecessarily delay access to affordable generics.
2. Strengthen domestic pharmaceutical research through public funding and industry–academia partnerships.
3. Use transparent, evidence-based negotiations and protect legitimate trade secrets.
4. Maintain effective quality regulation and explore appropriate safeguards under applicable law.

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Conclusion:

India’s approach should encourage innovation without creating avoidable barriers to affordable medicines, keeping public health central to trade policy.

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