Polity & Governance · GS - II

The WHO Pandemic Agreement seeks to strengthen international cooperation while addressing concerns relating to national sovereignty and equitable access to health products. Examine the challenges India faces in balancing global health governance with strategic autonomy and equity. (250 words)

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
Daily Practice 08/10/2026	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Consider sovereignty, pathogen sharing, vaccines, technology transfer, intellectual property, health security, equity and India's negotiating interests.

Model Answer

The WHO Pandemic Agreement seeks to strengthen collective preparedness after the weaknesses exposed by COVID-19. A central component is the **Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing (PABS)** system, intended to facilitate rapid pathogen sharing while ensuring equitable access to benefits such as vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics. World Health Organization

For India, balancing global cooperation with strategic autonomy presents several challenges. First, rapid sharing of pathogen samples and genomic information must be accompanied by predictable benefit-sharing. Otherwise, developing countries may contribute biological resources without receiving timely medical products.

Second, intellectual-property arrangements and technology transfer remain crucial because equitable access requires manufacturing capabilities, not merely donations. Third, excessive centralisation of pandemic governance could raise concerns regarding national policy space and domestic decision-making.

India should therefore support **multilateralism based on equity, transparency and reciprocity**. It can advocate geographically diversified manufacturing, technology transfer, resilient supply chains and financing mechanisms for developing countries.

At the same time, India should strengthen domestic surveillance, biotechnology, vaccine manufacturing and health infrastructure.

Thus, strategic autonomy should complement—not contradict—effective global health cooperation.

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