

India needs a strong local system for the comprehensive development of domestic medical industry. Examine.

Ans Focussing on the importance of local manufacturing local markets, and local supply chains, Honorable Prime Minister gave a mantra; "Get Local" under the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan

Considering the changed definition of self-reliance in the globalised world and the capacity of local supplies to meet the demand amid the crisis, it is the time to be 'local about local' products and help them become global.

Healthcare being the most critical, India has to evolve imaginative policies and usher in reforms that will accelerate its economic revival. Developing our own domestic medical industry is the best way forward.

Major Challenges

- ① Disabilities in manufacturing of medical devices :- The Department of pharmaceutical has recognised that indigenous manufacturers have a disability of 12-15% on account of :
 - Lack of adequate infrastructure, supply chain, logistics
 - High cost of finance
 - Inadequate availability and cost of quality power
 - Limited design capabilities
 - Low focus on R&D and skill development.

- ② Empowering Make-in India :- Covid-19 crisis

has shown that Indian manufacturers can scale up medical device manufacturing to tackle spiked demand. Therefore, focus needs to shift from chasing investment value by foreign brands and onto creating an ecosystem for making in India.

③ Import Substitution :- Imports of medical devices are a negative demand as domestic purchasing power is diverted to foreign goods.

④ Artificial Inflation :- Labelled MRP of medical devices, instead of protecting consumers, has become a license to charge full MRP, which may lead to profiteering at retail/hospital end.

⑤ Drugs Act :- The act is not appropriate for innovative engineering products like medical electronics.

Way forward

- World class quality product need to be manufactured to enhance export, such that firms can utilise existing capacity avoiding NPA post-investment.
- Converting negative demand caused by imports into positive demand is the key.
- Robust Regulation for ensuring patient safety as well as perform calibration by restricting imports.
- Rationalisation of trade margin over import landed price.
- Appropriate legal framework to decriminalise most oversight and regulatory lapses.

Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic has taught us to be self-reliant & self-sufficient first and not seek solution outside the country. Atmanubhas Bhaerai will strengthen domestic medical devices industry globally and will also make India powerful to cope up with challenges to its healthcare security emanating from China.