Earthwatch: Generic Meds

How cheap drugs are faring amid global challenges

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In January, the **U.S.** approved its first primary-treatment generic AIDS med for the President's $15 billion global AIDS initiative, PEPFAR.

Two **Guatemalan** demonstrators died March 15 when nationwide protests over the ratification of a trade treaty that will restrict generic meds,including HIV meds, turned violent.

On March 16, **Brazil** threatened to break U.S. drug patents unless American drug companies shared drugmaking technology with local pharma factories.

In **Kenya**, where 77 percent of medicated HIVers take generics, hundreds of protesters rallied unsuccessfully March 18 against Indian anti-generic legislation at Nairobi's Indian High Commission.

Belgian generics company Propharex is sending a turnkey generics factory piecemeal to the African nation of Gabon, aiming to boost production of affordable HIV meds.

On March 23, **India** tightened its anti-generics legislation, possibly restricting generic production of future AIDS meds but ensuring continued membership in the World Trade Organization.

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