

DNA Technology Regulation Bill, 2018

Why in news?

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Cabinet has approved the DNA Technology (Use and Application) Regulation Bill, 2018.

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What are the key provisions?

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- The Bill provides for the mandatory accreditation and regulation of DNA laboratories.

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- It seeks to ensure that the DNA test results are reliable.

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- It also ensures that the data remain protected from misuse or abuse in terms of the privacy rights of citizens.

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- The Bill's provisions will enable the cross-matching between\n

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- i. persons who have been reported missing

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- ii. unidentified dead bodies

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- iii. victims in mass disasters

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- The government will set up DNA data banks across India to store profiles.

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- It imposes jail term of up to 3 years and a fine of up to Rs 1 lakh on those who leak the information stored in such facilities.

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- These banks will maintain a national database for identification of victims, accused, suspects, undertrials, missing persons and unidentified human remains.

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- The Bill creates a DNA Profiling Board that would be the final authority to -

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- i. authorise the creation of State-level DNA databanks
- ii. approve the methods of collection
- iii. analyse DNA-technologies

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What is the objective?

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- Forensic DNA profiling helps in offences categorized as affecting the human body and those against property.
- It includes murder, rape, human trafficking, or grievous hurt and theft, burglary, dacoity.
- National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) put the number of such crimes in excess of 3 lakhs per year.
- Of these, only a very small proportion is being subjected to DNA testing at present.

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- The primary purpose of the Bill is thus to expand the application of DNA-based forensic technologies.

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- The expanded use of DNA technology in these cases would result in speedier justice delivery.
- It could also help in increased conviction rates, which at present is only around 30%.

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Source: PIB, Economic Times

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