

2. DNA regulation Bill referred to House panel

Prelims: Polity & Governance

Mains: GS-II Statutory, regulatory and various Quasi – Judicial bodies

Why in News?

- ▶▶ The Bill seeks to control the use and application of the deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) technology for establishing the identity of certain categories of persons, including offenders, victims, suspects and under-trials.
- ▶▶ The DNA Technology (Use and Application) Bill of 2019 was introduced in and passed by the Lok Sabha in January this year, but lapsed before it could be taken up by the Rajya Sabha.
- ▶▶ It was reintroduced in July 2019 and is now pending in the Lok Sabha. It has been referred to a parliamentary standing committee for examination.

Importance of the Bill:

- ▶▶ The Bill seeks to regulate use and application of DNA technology for the purposes of only establishing identity of certain categories of persons, including victims, offenders, suspects, under trials, missing persons and unknown deceased persons and related matters.
- ▶▶ The Bill's Statement of Objects and Reasons explains that DNA technology has the potential of wide application in the justice delivery systems – both criminal and civil.
- ▶▶ In criminal cases, it helps in investigation of crimes through biological evidence, including semen evidence in rape cases, blood evidence in murder cases, saliva evidence in identification of source of anonymous threat letters etc. In civil cases, it helps in investigation relating to victims of disasters like cyclone, air crash etc.

Concerns:

- ▶▶ Regulation is also required to check misuse or improper use of DNA analysis which can harm individuals or society.
- ▶▶ It seeks to regulate laboratories for DNA testing and analysis by providing for their accreditation, establish national and regional DNA Data Banks to store and maintain DNA profiles and a DNA Regulatory Board for their governance.