2. Facial Recognition for Elections

Prelims Level: Polity and Governance – Electoral Reforms

Mains Level: GS-III Salient features of the Representation of People's Act.

Why in News?

- Telangana's State Election Commission (SEC) has decided to use facial recognition app for verification and real-time authentication of voters (pilot basis) in the upcoming local body elections.

- The use of facial recognition for election will be a first-of-its-kind in India. It will help to counter impersonation by voters during polling.

Key Points:

- The facial recognition is proposed as an additional tool to validate the identity of the voter.

- This technique will be used as an add on to the existing procedures which includes use of Photo Electoral Rolls, Photo Id Proof, Personal Scrutiny by the polling agents appointed by the contesting candidates.

Proposed Procedure for Facial Recognition:

- The polling officer-in-charge will possess the mobile phone which contains the facial recognition system. The app will display results of the verification based on the match established with the voters with an Appropriate Message.

- However, non-verification from this procedure shall not be a sufficient ground to deny voting rights to any voter.

- Further, the photographs taken will not be stored or used for any other purpose. These photographs will be erased from the memory of the mobile phone used in the polling station and also the Server.