



Current Affairs of the Day

In solving crime, the false promise of technology

In the eye of storm | The Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill, 2022 would allow the police and prison authorities to store and analyse physical and biological samples, including retina and iris scans of convicts

■ The Bill seeks to repeal The Identification of Prisoners Act, 1920, whose scope was limited to recording finger impressions and foot-print impressions of limited category of convicts

■ The new Bill expands the scope of "measurements" to include iris, signature, handwriting, biological samples

■ The records can be stored for 75 years

■ It also proposes to record the details of persons detained under any preventive detention law. Opposition says this can be misused against political adversaries

■ If a person with no criminal background is released without trial or acquitted by the court, all records of measurements so taken shall be destroyed



1. The central assumption underlying the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill, 2022 ("Bill") is that more technology will help solve crimes more effectively and reliably.
2. It permits the forced collection, indefinite storage, profiling, databasing and sharing of a wide range of physical, biological and behavioural "measurements" for undefined purposes.
3. The list of measurements in the Bill includes fingerprints, footprints, palmprints, photographs, iris and retina scans, signatures and handwriting.
4. Additionally, the category of "biological samples and their analysis" could potentially include any bodily substance or feature, with any testing done on it, irrespective of its forensic value.
5. Similarly, "behavioural attributes", which remain undefined, could cover any kind of psychological, neuropsychological or physiological examination connected to understanding a person's behaviour.
6. Given its scope, the debate on grave constitutional concerns must be informed by a close analysis of its technological premise.



Concerns: Lack of standardization in scientific evidence taking and analysis

1. Instead of requiring probable cause to support the collection of measurements, the Bill grants unguided discretion to police or prison officers and magistrates, which may not assist reliable and fair investigations in any way.
2. This gains significance as there are no established scientific protocols for forensic examination or clear legal standards for the examination of expert evidence.
3. Instead of directly addressing the issues with India's weak forensics infrastructure, the Bill only intrudes upon privacy behind the ruse of promoting security and aiding investigations.
4. Therefore, before embarking on a mindless expansion of collecting measurements, consider the existing scientific proof (or lack thereof) for the level of individualisation possible from using these measurements and whether it would support the "unique identification" of perpetrators.

Technology is not infallible:

1. Even the "advanced countries" that the Bill refers to are taking cognisance of these concerns to amend their own investigative and evidentiary practices.
2. For instance, the 2016 report of the US President's Council of Advisors on Science & Technology analysed existing scientific literature to examine the validity of six forensic methods, including fingerprint comparison, for which it noted the possibility of a false positive rate of one in 18 cases.
3. Similarly, the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2017 concluded that fingerprint comparison is prone to error and contextual bias, and there is no scientific proof to state that every individual's fingerprints are unique.
4. Following these developments, the US Department of Justice issued guidelines for latent print examiners, prohibiting them from making claims that two prints originated from the same source, or that latent print examination is "infallible with zero error rate".



Fortified Rice To Be Part Of Food Schemes, Midday Meals

1. The Union Cabinet approved a programme to supply fortified rice in government-run food schemes in order to tackle malnutrition and poor health outcomes of a large section of the population, a person aware of the development said, requesting anonymity.

WHAT IS FORTIFIED RICE?

Fortification is the practice of deliberately increasing the content of an essential micronutrient, i.e. vitamins and minerals (including trace elements) in food to improve its nutritional quality and provide a public health benefit with minimal risk to health

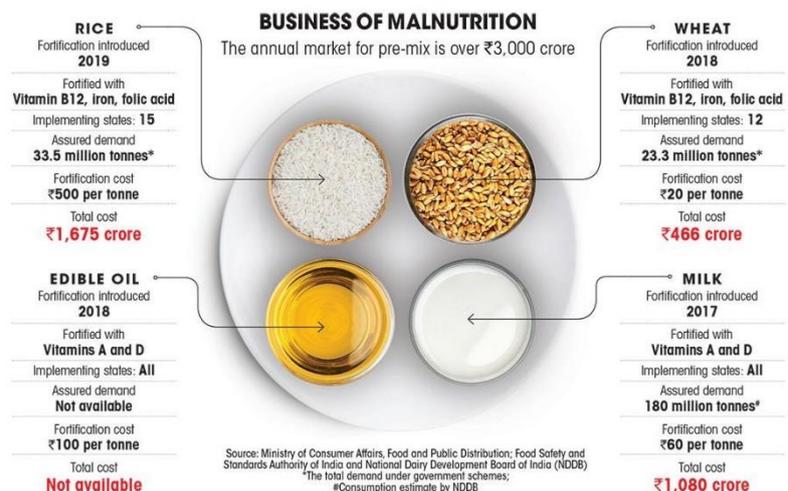


➤ The fortification factor does not last for more than **45 days**, so it isn't advisable to store fortified rice for long

➤ According to National Family Health Survey, **78.7%** children and **75%** in the district are anaemic and suffer from malnutrition

➤ In the first phase, fortified rice will be distributed in Badangi, Bobbili, Ramabhadrapuram and Terlam mandals

2. Fortified rice kernels are the basic ingredients that go into enriching of rice with vitamins and minerals. In his 2021 Independence Day speech, Prime Minister had announced that government would distribute fortified rice



to the poor via different schemes such as the public distribution systems (PDS) and midday meal programmes, in a bid to address the problem of malnutrition.

3. The fortified rice programme will especially target school children through the midday meal schemes, and women through the nationwide aanganwadi network.



56,747 women scientists engaged in research and development

1. Some 56,747 women scientists out of 0.34 million research and development (R&D) personnel are directly engaged in R&D activities at various such establishments.
2. The percentage of women in R&D is 16.6 per cent among the total number of scientists working at these organizations.

MAINS DAWP	<p>Q1. <i>For eradication of poverty, its estimation is a must.</i> Discuss various poverty estimation methods used in past in this context.</p>
MCQs	<p>Q1. Consider the following statements about the Criminal Procedure (Identification) Bill, 2022</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The draft law empowers the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) to collect, store and preserve these records for 15 years and share them with other agencies 2. Resistance or refusal to allow the collection of data is an offence 3. The bill expands the number of measurements to be taken and the category of people who are required to provide such measurements <p>Which of the above statements is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. 1 and 2 only b. 2 only c. 2 and 3 only d. 1, 2 and 3