

Current Affairs 4th December 2023 by Saurabh Pandey

Gender neutrality and adultery

- Last month, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs, examining the three new criminal law Bills set to replace the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), and the Indian Evidence Act, recommended the criminalization of adultery on gender neutral lines.
 - This comes after a five judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court unanimously decriminalized adultery in 2018 on several grounds including discrimination.
 - The Committee reasoned that adultery be criminalized in a gender neutral manner on the ground that it is crucial to safeguard the sanctity of the institution of marriage
 - In his dissent note to the three Bills, Congress MP and former Home Minister P. Chidambaram emphasized that interference by the State in the private lives of consenting adults must be avoided.
 - “Adultery should not be a crime.
 - It is an offence against marriage which is a compact between two persons; if the compact is broken, the aggrieved spouse may sue for divorce or civil damages.
- To raise marriage to the level of a sacrament is outdated. In any event, a marriage concerns only two persons and not society at large.
 - The State has no business to enter into their lives and punish the alleged wrongdoer,” the note reads.
 - A five judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court led by then Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dipak Misra, and comprising current CJI D. Y. Chandrachud, and Justices A. M. Khanwilkar, R. F. Nariman, and Indu Malhotra, in Joseph Shine versus Union of India (2018), held that adultery is not a crime and struck it off the IPC.
 - According to senior Advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, the problem with adultery being in the IPC was two-fold.
 - The first is criminalizing it on the basis of the institution of marriage and the second is treating women as property.
 - Making it gender neutral would do away with the second, but still leave the first.

Meta vs FTC

- usually competition regulators investigate trade practices, sue

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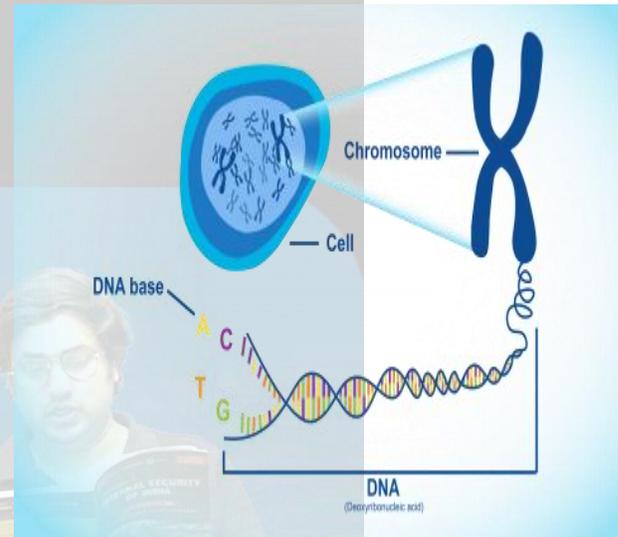
corporations, and levy penalties on them.

- The U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) probes antitrust practices and files lawsuits against tech companies it sees as violating consumer laws.
- But in a shock move, Facebook - parent Meta in late November sued the FTC, claiming the regulator was making an “obvious power grab” and that its action caused the social media giant “immediate and irreparable” harm
- The FTC, in May, proposed changes to the three year old agreement, noting that Meta had not fully complied with the previous terms.
- The FTC alleged that Meta misled parents about the Messenger Kids app and misrepresented how some app developers could access private user data.
- As part of the latest changes proposed by the FTC, Meta would be barred from profiting off the data it collected from children (users below 18) as well as the data from its virtual reality products.
- Meta would also be restricted in its use of facial recognition technology, its launch of new products and features, and would have to provide

even more user protections, as per the regulator.

The Hindu

Genome sequencing of population



- An early effort to use large scale population genetic studies was initiated in Iceland by deCODE genomics in 1996, with most of the Icelandic population enrolling.
- The initiative provided the initial impetus for programmes that wished to use population scale genomic data for precision medicine and public health
- A recent initiative by the pharmaceutical companies Regeneron Genetics Center, AstraZeneca, Novo Nordisk, and Roche, along with the Meharry Medical College, Tennessee, plans to sequence five lakh individuals of

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African ancestry through the Diversity Human Genome Initiative

- A programme for population genomes in India named IndiGen provided an early view of more than a thousand genomes from cosmopolitan areas.
- It yielded clues to the landscape of many treatable genetic diseases and variants of clinical significance, including the efficacy and toxicity of drugs and prevalence of rare disorders
- The Genome Asia project, led by multiple partners across the continent, plans to sequence a lakh whole genomes from diverse populations.
- A pilot programme for population genomes in India named IndiGen provided an early view of more than a thousand genomes of individuals from cosmopolitan areas in India.
- It also yielded some clues to the landscape of many treatable genetic diseases and variants of clinical significance, including the efficacy and toxicity of drugs and the prevalence of rare disorders.
- Looking to the horizon, the long term impact of population scale genomics extends beyond individual health,

shaping our comprehension of human evolution,

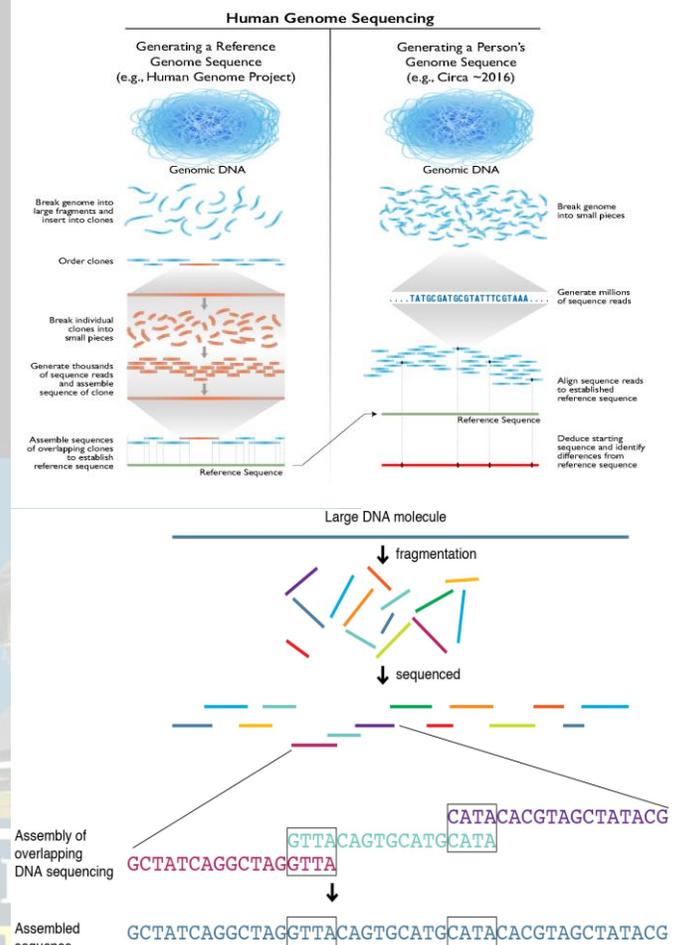
- Migration patterns, and adaptation to diverse environments.
- It will also contribute significantly to our knowledge of human biology.
- In essence, population scale genomics stands at the forefront of a genomic revolution, poised to revolutionise healthcare, illuminate our evolutionary history, and propel us towards a future in which precise, personalised approaches will influence the landscape of medical and biological understanding
- Methane is an organic compound. Its molecule consists of carbon and four hydrogen atoms (CH₄).
- It's in the news of late because of its character as a potent climate pollutant.
- While climate talks have by and large focused on carbon and carbon dioxide emissions, there is increasing acknowledgement among the world's leaders as well as philanthropists of methane's effects on global warming.
- At the ongoing COP28 climate talks in the United Arab Emirates, for example, a group of well endowed philanthropic bodies, including the Sequoia Climate Foundation and the

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Bezos Earth Fund, announced that they would collectively invest \$450 million in solutions to tackle methane emissions.

- Methane has a greater global warming potential (GWP) than carbon dioxide.
- The GWP is a measure of the warming caused by a substance relative to that due to the same mass of carbon dioxide; the GWP100 measures this over a century at a time.
- If carbon dioxide has a GWP100 of 1, methane is 28, nitrous oxide is 265, and sulphur hexafluoride is 23,500.
- However, while carbon dioxide lasts for several decades at a time in the atmosphere before breaking down, methane breaks down in a matter of years. That is, it's a short lived climate pollutant

The Hindu



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Technology in news- VoIP

What is a VoIP phone?

- A VoIP phone is a hardware- or software-based telephone designed to use voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology to send and receive phone calls over an IP network.
- The phone converts analog telephony audio into a digital format that can be transmitted over the

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internet and converts incoming digital phone signals from the internet to standard telephone audio.

- VoIP phones, also known as *IP phones*, include features and capabilities not found in traditional analog phones.
- They also have additional performance requirements because phone calls are placed over the internet instead of the legacy public switched telephone network.

Methane and climate change.

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CSE
(CIVIL SERVICES EXAMINATION)
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