



I-Familia: Global Database to Identify Missing Persons

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Why in News

Recently, the **Interpol** has launched a new global database named “**I-Familia**” to identify missing persons through family DNA and help the police solve cold cases in member countries.

Key Points

- **About I-Familia:**
 - The first of its kind, I-Familia is a global database for identifying missing persons based on international DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) kinship matching.
 - The database seeks to identify missing persons or unidentified human remains when direct comparison is not possible, by using DNA samples from family members instead.
Family members must give their consent for their data to be used for international searching.
 - It builds on Interpol's long-standing success in direct DNA matching.
- **Working:**
 - I-Familia has three components:
 - A dedicated global database to host the DNA profiles provided by relatives, held separately from any criminal data.
 - DNA matching software called Bonaparte.
 - Interpretation guidelines, produced by Interpol, to efficiently identify and report potential matches.
 - In the event of a match, notifications are sent to the countries that supplied the DNA profile from the unidentified body and from the family respectively.

- **Significance:**
 - There is growing international concern about the number of missing persons and unidentified victims around the world due to increased international travel, the prevalence of organized crime and human trafficking, the rise in global migration, conflicts and natural disasters.
 - All countries have unsolved missing persons investigations as well as human remains that cannot be identified using their national systems alone.
- **Direct DNA Matching vs Kinship DNA Matching:**
 - A direct DNA sample from the missing person, for example a prior medical sample or a personal item such as a toothbrush, can be compared to the DNA from an unidentified body or human remains to see if a match can be found. This type of identification has been carried out via the Interpol DNA Database since 2004.
 - Biological relatives share a percentage of their DNA, depending on their relationship. In the event that a DNA sample from the missing person cannot be obtained for direct matching, DNA from close family members (parents, children, siblings) can also be compared. This is where I-Familia is set to make a difference.

Interpol

- The International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) is an intergovernmental organization that helps coordinate the police force of 194 member countries.
 - Each of the member countries hosts an Interpol National Central Bureau (NCB). This connects their national law enforcement with other countries and with the General Secretariat.
- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is designated as the **National Central Bureau of India**.
- It is headquartered in Lyon, France.
 - **Interpol Notices** are international requests for cooperation or alerts allowing police in member countries to share critical crime-related information.



Source: TH