Prevention of Torture Bill, 2017

Why in news?

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The Law Commission of India in its 273rd report has proposed Prevention of Torture Bill, 2017.

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What is the bill about?

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- The proposed standalone anti-torture law directly makes the state responsible for any injury inflicted by its agents on citizens.
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- It provides a wide definition to torture including inflicting physical, mental or psychological injury.
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- Punishment for torture, ranging from fine to life imprisonment has also been recommended.
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- It provides for a presumption that injuries of any person in police custody is inflicted by the police action, unless proven otherwise.
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- Courts have been envisioned to provide a justiciable compensation for victims of torture.
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What are the implications?

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- Human rights advocates would now be better equipped to pressurise the government to recognize torture as a separate crime.
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- So far, neither the ‘Indian Penal Code - IPC’ nor the ‘Code of Criminal Procedure - CrPC’ addresses custodial torture.

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- The Law Commission has also recommended the ratification of the UN Convention Against Torture.
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- While India had signed the 1997 convention, it hasn’t ratified it yet.
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- Ratification would help overcoming the difficulties in extraditing criminals from abroad.
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Source: The Hindu

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