**Syllabus subtopic**: Government Policies and Interventions for Development in various sectors and Issues arising out of their Design and Implementation.

**Prelims and Mains focus**: about the key features of the bill and its significance

**News**: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister approved the Assisted Reproductive Technology Regulation Bill, 2020 to monitor medical procedures used to assist people to achieve pregnancy.

**Background**

India has one of the highest growths in the number ART centres and ART cycles performed every year. India has become one of the major centres of this global fertility industry, with reproductive medical tourism becoming a significant activity. This has also introduced a plethora of legal, ethical and social issues; yet, there is no standardisation of protocols and reporting is still very inadequate.

**Key features of the Bill**

- The Bill provides for a national Board which will lay down a code of conduct to be observed by those operating clinics.

- It will also formulate minimum standards for laboratory and diagnostic equipment and practices to be followed by human resources employed by clinics and banks.

- The States and Union Territories will also have to form State Boards and State authorities within three months of the notification of the proposed legislation.

- Under the proposed law, a national registry and registration authority will maintain a database to assist the national Board to perform its functions.

- The Bill also proposes stringent punishment for those who practise sex
selection, indulge in sale of human embryos or gametes and those who operate rackets.

- The Bill will also ensure confidentiality of intending couples and protect the rights of the child.

**Note:** In the Surrogacy Regulation Bill 2020, the government is planning to restrict the maximum age of surrogates from “above the marriageable age” to 50 years.