

“DIY DNA Testing kits are no more useful to US personnel”, says Pentagon chief

By Sonali Mahapatra | Updated: January 02, 2020, 24:00 IST

The curiosity of Chromosomes can risk the security.



The United States Department of Defense has denied its troop for the use of ‘inexpensive’ genetic testing apparatuses due to its inaccurate results and the risk of unethical use of the data of the military operations for corrupt means by the third parties. This denial was published in the form of a memo just before the Christmas since the nation witnessed these apparatuses trending as some sort of Christmas holiday gifts. The memo was circulated to create the best possible way to stop the exposure of personal evidences and prevent the formation of any security consequences.

However, The Pentagon, the US DoD, does not explain the details of the security consequences neither through this memo or any other way but anyhow it shows concerns about the risk of leaking and misusing of the legal information of the US government by other foreign agents or governments.

The pentagon has less to concern more about every common individual except the concern for its troop men. It cannot ban the commercial genetic testing companies but can ban its men from purchasing and using such commercial products. The memo is a sort of warning against these companies and was reportedly signed by Joseph D. Kernan, undersecretary of defense for intelligence, and James N. Stewart, assistant secretary of defense for manpower, on December, 20, 2019.

At-home genetic testing kits can be fun but it is not the same with defensemen. According to U.S. News and World Report, this memo claimed on several direct-to-customer DIY genetic testing companies for directly encouraging the defensemen to use such devices that too with a mark-down cost in the form of Christmas gifts. The sole reason for this declination is that such commercial devices can extract personal and genetic information from the personnel and

sell these legal data to third parties such as foreign governments, raw agents, terrorists, etc that can ultimately lead to blackmailing, terrorist attacks and even security threats and risks.

Genetic testing industries such as 23andme, Living DNA, AncestryDNA, etc., boast for being the true science, and producing true data and genetic insights that could positively impact people's lives but in the corner of the story, when The Pentagon tries to stand against such commercial kits, EasyDNA, another Paternity Test provides the idea of making your own sample collection DNA test in the home itself for those who cannot afford the professional kit.

Typically, genetic testing companies were accredited legally to the international markets as they proved themselves to provide results of hereditary diseases such as Diabetes, Anaemia. Anything that boasted for the betterment of health was generally embraced with a greet but only few could see the wolf in the flock of sheep.

Peter Pitts, a member of the Center for Medicine in the public interest, once in a press conference, mentioned NBC News in 2017, that DIY DNA Testing can be a sort of fun or laughs or for a conversation at the holiday table for personnel or any individual. He or she can surpass the reality easily when seen through naked eyes but only a keen eye can see how the personal information is sold off by the respective genetic companies within minutes in 100 different ways.

“Truth is various companies provide various sorts of information”, says Dr. Michele Spencer-Manzon, MD, assistant professor of genetics and of paediatrics at Yale School of Medicine along with Lauren Jeffries, DO, the clinical genetics coordinator at Yale Medicine's Paediatric Genomics Discovery Program, agreeing to it. These geneticists further agree to the fact that the field of genetics is undoubtedly an interesting sector where the research deals with the expansion of the family tree and ancestral traits and also the discovery of genetic diseases caused due to disturbed chromosomes. But neither of these geneticists agree to the results provided by any such devices that could surpass the results provided from the certified forensic laboratories.

Dr. Jeffries coins the term “Curiosity Genetics” for those portable DNA test kits that can be ordered and tested at home. She cautions people to be aware of the later side effects that can result in the misuse of any individual's personal data and suggests that if anyone is anxious about having any sort of transmitted health problems or traits, they must seek a physician, nurse practitioner or genetic counsellor at the very first interval instead of falling into the trail of the imposters.

No geneticist nor any doctor would ever suggest the use of such DIY DNA kits or another inexpensive methods.

