NATGRID: Critical Analysis
(13 September, 2021)

What is NATGRID?

- **NATGRID** is an ambitious **counter terrorism programme**.
- It will **utilise technologies like Big Data and analytics** to study and analyse the huge amounts of data from various intelligence and enforcement agencies to help track suspected terrorists and prevent terrorist attacks.

- **It will connect, in different phases, data providing organisations and users** besides developing a legal structure through which information can be accessed by the law enforcement agencies.
- NATGRID is a post Mumbai 26/11 attack measure.

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Why do we need NATGRID?

- The absence of NATGRID forces the police to rely on harsh and coercive means to extract information in a crude and degrading fashion.
- After every terrorist incident, it goes about rounding up suspects—many of who are innocent. If instead, a pattern search and recognition system were in place, these violations of human rights would be much fewer.
- Natgrid would also help the Intelligence Bureau keep a tab on persons with suspicious backgrounds.
- The police would have access to all his data and any movement by this person would also be tracked with the help of this database.

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Criticisms of NATGRID:

- NATGRID is facing opposition on charges of **possible violations of privacy** and leakage of confidential personal information.
- Its **efficacy in preventing terror has also been questioned** given that no state agency or police force has access to its database thus reducing chances of immediate, effective action.
- According to few experts, digital databases such as NATGRID can be **misused**. Over the last two decades, the very digital tools that terrorists use have also become great weapons to fight the ideologies of violence.
- Intelligence agencies have also opposed amid fears that it **would impinge on their territory and possibly result in leaks** on the leads they were working on to other agencies.