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MoU between NATGRID and NCRB

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Why in News

Recently, the **National Intelligence Grid (NATGRID)** has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** to **access the centralised online database** on FIRs and stolen vehicles.

NATGRID which seeks to become the **one-stop destination for security and intelligence agencies** will be operational byst **December 2020**.

Key Points

- **Access to CCTNS:** The MoU will give NATGRID access to the **Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS)** database, a platform that links around 14,000 police stations.
 - All State police are mandated to file First Information Reports (FIR) in the CCTNS.
 - The MoU enables the NATGRID to get information about **details of a suspect as mentioned in the FIR** such as his/her father's name, telephone number and other details.

- **Concerns:**
 - **Infringe on the Federal System of the Constitution:** The NCRB under the Union government is **only a repository** and **the data pertaining to FIRs** of a particular police station are a **State subject**.
 - However, it does not seem to violate any legal provisions as data pertaining to FIRs is shared with all the police stations.
 - The **State police will not be** a part of NATGRID and they could directly contact the airlines or railways for information.
 - **Providing Information to Multiple Agencies:** Earlier the Civil Aviation Ministry and airline companies had raised concerns in providing information to yet another agency – NATGRID as they already provide information to the **Bureau of Immigration** and the **customs authorities**.
 - **Privacy Issues:** Many agencies raised their concern regarding the accessibility of Data and privacy.

However, the information accessed by one agency through the grid **will not be accessible to any other agency** as it will be an **automated system** and the request will land directly with the concerned department.
 - **Expenditure:** The major amount of funds would be required for the expenditure towards the **NATGRID software solution** and for **building infrastructural works** of offices, Data Centre etc. at Delhi and Bengaluru.
- **National Intelligence Grid**
 - As a **counter-terrorism measure** it was proposed after the **terrorist attacks on Mumbai in 2008** and functions under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.
 - It is the integrated **intelligence grid connecting databases of core security agencies** of the Government of India.
 - It is intending to set up an **Entity Extraction, Visualization, and Analytics (EVA)** system.

- **Significance:**

- **Secure Centralised Database:** It will become a **secure centralised database to stream sensitive information** from sets of data sources such as **banks, credit cards, visa, immigration and train and air travel details**, as well as from various intelligence agencies.

Presently, the security agencies directly contact an airline or a telephone company if they are on a suspect's trail through international servers such as Google etc.

- **Acts as a Link:** It will act as a link between intelligence and investigation agencies.

It will be a medium for at least 10 Central agencies such as the **Intelligence Bureau (IB) and the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW)** to access data on a secured platform.

- **Technology Intensive Solutions:** The solutions provided by the NATGRID would be technology-intensive (e.g. use of Big Data and analytics) involving multiple stakeholders.

National Crime Records Bureau

- It was set-up in **1986 under the Ministry of Home Affairs** based on the recommendations of the National Police Commission (1977-1981) and the MHA's Task Force (1985).
- It functions as a **repository of information on crime and criminals** so as to assist the investigators in linking crime to the perpetrators.
- It releases the **Crime in India report** which serves as a **statistical tool in understanding** the law and order situation across the country.
- It developed **CCTNS in 2009** which aims at creating a comprehensive and integrated system for effective policing at all levels through **adoption of principles of e-Governance.**

It digitises data related to **FIR registration, investigation and charge sheets in all police stations** leading to the development of a national database of crimes and criminals.

- **Headquarters:** New Delhi

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