

Key departments like inter-state council, planning and monitoring division & UIDAI to replace plan panel

NEW DELHI: The new institution that will replace the Planning Commission is likely to be a combination of three key divisions; each headed by a secretary and placed under the umbrella of a more powerful planning ministry. These divisions include the inter-state council, planning and monitoring division and Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), which, along with direct benefit transfer or DBT will have a critical role in implementing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision.

Senior government officials told ET that the government is considering consolidation of these divisions under the ministry of planning, presently headed by a minister of state with independent charge Rao Inderjit Singh, and a decision to this effect could be taken before the end of this year.

"The PM is of the view that the states should play a greater role in planning and hence the proposal is to move the inter-state council from home ministry to Yojana Bhawan to oversee development works of the state," an official said.



Besides, the new government is keen on eventually linking Aadhaar with DBT platform, which will require greater synergy between the two, the official said, adding, "Hence, it has been decided to shift out DBT from finance ministry to the new institution." According to the official, who did not wish to be named, the third vertical or division will be a new one that will be responsible for long-term planning for the country as well as evaluation of flagship social sector schemes through an existing but much stronger programme evaluation organisation existing within the commission.

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THE CURRENT STRUCTURE

PM TRADITIONALLY chairs the Planning Commission

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN of the commission is the executive authority

THERE ARE 8-10 members, handling at least three divisions each

THERE ARE 30 divisions within the commission

MINISTRY OF planning has been always headed by MoS & had the limited role of answering Parliamentary questions



WHAT IS BEING CONSIDERED?

The ministry of planning is going to be strengthened and is headed by MoS (Independent charge)

There will be three divisions under this - Inter-state council, planning and monitoring, UIDAI and DBT

EACH DIVISION WILL BE HEADED BY A SECRETARY



Inter-state council will carry the development agenda of the states forward to finance & other central ministries

The planning division will work on a long-term plan for the govt & evaluate the flagship social sector schemes

UIDAI-DBT division will co-ordinate with states for generation of Aadhaar

"While all the three divisions will be headed by a secretary, the government may rope in experts at the advisor level to strengthen the planning and monitoring division," the official added.

As per the proposal, the interstate council, which is headed by the prime minister, will be responsible for routing the state plans to finance ministry besides coordinating with central ministries on all developmental schemes of the states. However, the security issues that were being handled by the council will continue to be vested with the home ministry.

The UIDAI, which is an attached office of the Planning Commission, is responsible for generating Aadhaar or a unique identity for all by March 2015. Once the target is achieved, the government is thinking of making Aadhaar mandatory for doling out benefits under its social security schemes through a DBT platform and hence it has decided to move DBT out of finance ministry to the commission for better synergy and coordination between the two.