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

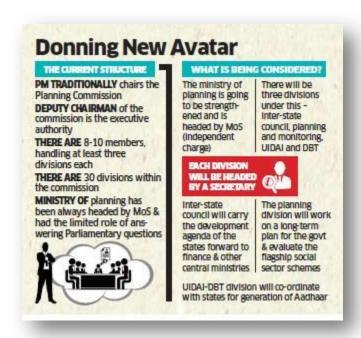
NEW DELHI: The new institution that will replace the Planning Commission is likely to be a combination of three key divisions; each headed by a secretary and placed under the umbrella of a more powerful planning ministry. These divisions include the inter-state council, planning and monitoring division 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 interstate 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.



"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.