Aadhaar platform for govt welfare expenses
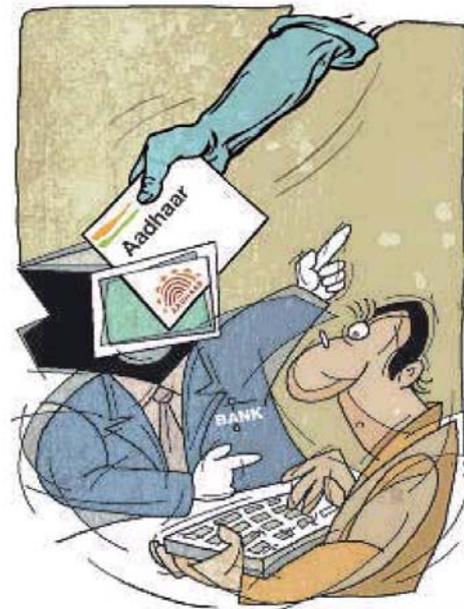
LIGHTENING LOAD Direct benefit transfer plan under UID can reduce paperwork for bureaucrats in government schemes

NEW DELHI: Not just common people but even bureaucrats will heave a sigh of relief once the government spends money through Unique Identification (UID) or Aadhaar payment bridge.

Babus will not have to keep track of every penny the government spends. That job will be done by Aadhaar platform which would monitor every paisa the government provides through the direct benefit transfer (DBT) regime.

Illustration: ABHIMANYU SINHA

In the existing system, babus are required to generate utilisation certificate for the money they spent under different government schemes. The certificates are indicative that the money has been spent for the purpose for which it was provided.

And, generating the certificate means file work from babus working in the field and those in the secretariats. The file moves from the lowest level in the government office to the money disbursing offices.

All that would be history once Aadhaar enabled DBT becomes applicable to all government schemes. Online Aadhaar would authenticate that the money has been deposited into the bank account of the beneficiary. This would replace the paper utilisation certificate.

The realisation that Aadhaar can reduce huge paperwork has finally dawned on the government. The Prime Minister's Office has asked the Planning Commission to bring a Cabinet note to amend the rules for transaction of government business to replace the requirement of utilisation certificate with online Aadhaar authentication in schemes where direct benefit transfer is made applicable.

From January 1, 2013, the government implemented the direct transfer to seven fully centrally funded government schemes and targets to put all government expenditure for welfare on Aadhaar platform.

At a recent meeting, principal secretary to PM, Pulok Chatterji said Aadhaar would help the central government to transfer money directly into bank accounts of beneficiaries and therefore continuing the system of generating utilisation certificates would be of use now.

In Aadhaar, before transfer of a single paisa a certificate is generated giving details about the beneficiary making the system theoretically fool-proof from misuse of government funds.