

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTION

UPSC 2023 · 15 marks

How does NITI Aayog as a 'policy think tank with shared vision' visualize the reorganization of planning in India? Justify your answer.

FLOW SNAPSHOT — how the answer moves

Intro routes

R1 2015: NITI Aayog replaces Planning Commission → not a renaming but a re-imagining of planning's purpose

R2 "policy think tank with shared vision" → planning built with states, not handed down

Body flow

change of role (**Maira**: allocation of money → persuasion of change) → change of method (shared vision of priorities with states/UTs → village plans aggregated upward → flexible, outcome- & evidence-based, data/indices/monitoring) → change of paradigm (**Chimhowu**: classical top-down → negotiation-based; NITI moves to second) → **Mathew**: name change → mind change

Counter-view

Balveer Arora: "imperfect clone" → federal bargaining reform incomplete → reorganisation real in design, partial in practice

Conclusion routes

R1 reorganisation = shift of role + method: allocator → persuader, command → shared vision

R2 paradigm genuinely reorganised, though fully cooperative planning still unfinished

NITI Aayog replaced the Planning Commission on 1 January 2015. It re-imagined what planning in India is meant to do.

As a policy think tank with a shared vision, NITI Aayog visualises planning that is built with the states rather than handed down to them. Arun Maira described the old Commission as "a force for allocation of money, not for persuasion of change". NITI Aayog steps away from fund allocation and works as an advisory and knowledge body that persuades reform.

Planning is now a shared vision of national priorities, evolved jointly with states and UTs. It aggregates credible village plans upward and stays flexible, outcome-oriented and evidence-based, using data, indices and monitoring.

Chimhowu and others separate classical top-down, science-led planning from communication and negotiation-based planning; NITI Aayog moves towards the second. George Mathew therefore calls it "not just a name change but also a mind change."

However, Balveer Aroxa treats NITI Aayog as an "imperfect clone", since federal bargaining reform is incomplete. The shift from command to shared vision is real in design, even if cooperative planning in practice stays unfinished.