

# Soon, I-T dept to issue PAN instantly online

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**New Delhi:** The income tax department is set to launch a facility to instantly issue permanent account number (PAN) online, using details available in the Aadhaar database, helping end the wait time for applicants.

Sources told TOI the service would be launched over the next few weeks and would also help those with an existing PAN get a duplicate in

a matter of minutes. The electronic PAN (ePAN) facility would be available free of cost and “on near to real time” basis, an official said.

Those looking for an ePAN will need to quote their Aadhaar and verify the details using a one-time password (OTP). There will be no requirement to upload any document apart from some basic information.

► QR code data, P 14

## QR code data to be encrypted

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Once a PAN is generated, the applicant will be issued a digitally signed ePAN, with a QR code which will capture the demographic data besides photo of the applicant. The information in the QR code will be encrypted to prevent forgery or digital photoshopping, an official said.

While a pilot with over 62,000 ePANs issued over eight days has already been conducted, the facility is now being scaled up to make it nationwide and available to all taxpayers over the next few weeks.

“The move is part of greater digitisation of income

tax services and aimed at providing the facility without anyone having to visit any office,” an official said.

After the Supreme Court judgment on Aadhaar, which allowed use of the unique identification number for linking PAN, the government has decided to make it mandatory for several high-value transactions and those who do not have PAN will now be issued one instantly based on Aadhaar.

Over the years, the government has increased the coverage of PAN to better track transactions with close to 44.6 crore such numbers issued till the end of March, of which 43.5 crore were individuals.