Rajouri reflects the diversity and differences of the region. A Muslim dominated district in a Hindu dominated region. It lies near the Line of Actual Control that divides the Indian administered Jammu and Kashmir from the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. People of the district have faced the most intensified phase of militant violence. The twin districts of Rajouri and Poonch fall in the Pir Panchal belt of Jammu province. This is an important mountainous range which separates Rajouri and Poonch districts from Anantnag and Shopian districts in the valley of Kashmir. Stein, the well-regarded commentator on Raj Tarangini described the Pir Panchal track as a region located between the rivers Jehlum and Chenab in the southern and south-western slopes of this region, which starts from Banihal Pass and comprises Rajouri, Budhal and Poonch on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LoC) and Kotli, Rawalakote and Bagh on the other side of the LoC. The 223 Kilometers long LoC touches the boundaries of Sunderbani, Nowshera, Rajouri and Manjakote blocks of Rajouri district and Balakote, Mendhar, Poonch and Mandi blocks of present Poonch district. There are no medium or large scale industrial units, no hydel power projects and limited commercial avenues are available to the people.

Rajouri gained importance during the Mughal rule. It used to be a camping site for the Royal Mughal entourage proceeding towards Kashmir valley. The remnants of fortified Mughal inns at Nadpur, Chingas, Rajouri, Fatehpur and Thannamandi are a pleasant reflection of the glorious days of the place. During the Mughal rule, the rulers of Rajouri embraced Islam. In 1819, the Sikhs occupied both Rajouri and neighbouring Poonch. Rajouri became a province of the Lahore Empire. Gulab Singh then a General in the Lahore Army captured Aggar Ullah and imprisoned him in Lahore. Rajouri was one of the states received by the Dogra Maharaja in 1846 as per the Treaty of Amritsar. They changed the name of Rajouri to Rampur. Therefore, Rajouri became a part of Jammu and Kashmir when the Dogra rule was established.

1 P.R. Chari et al., The Kashmir Dispute: Making Borders Irrelevant, Samskriti, New Delhi, 2009, p. 55.
Prior to October 26, 1846, Rajouri had been the principality of Jaral Muslim Rajas for about 700 years. These Rajas were secular and accommodative. It was reflected, for instance, in the fact that the forces of the Jaral Rajas were comprised of Hindu Rajputs apart from Muslims and the Prime Minister’s post was always retained by the Hindu Mehta family.\(^4\) After the creation of the new Jammu and Kashmir state in 1846, following the Amritsar pact signed between Raja Gulab Singh of Jammu and the British, the Rajouri principality was taken over by Maharaja Gulab Singh. Even though the Muslim population of Rajouri had been strongly opposed to the Maharaja’s rule, there was no communal tension in this area. It is a fact that a large number of minorities was killed in 1947 by the Sudan rebels under the leadership of Sakhi Daler and a deserter colonel Rehmatullah of the Maharaja’s forces but the local Muslims had not taken part in this brutal act. At that crucial stage, there were hundreds of instances when local Muslims gave shelter to Hindus in the villages, thereby, protecting their lives.\(^5\)

Hindus are dominant in tehsils Nowshera, Sunderbani and Kalakote of district Rajouri while Muslims are in majority in all the tehsils of Poonch district apart from tehsil Thanamandi, Budhal and Rajouri of Rajouri district. In Poonch district, before independence, almost all the villages had some minority population. However, due to the events of 1947, 1965, 1971 and the proxy war since 1989, the minority population gradually migrated to other parts of the state. Presently, Hindus and Sikhs are concentrated in Poonch, Surankote and Mendhar towns and surrounding villages. The traditions of a composite cultural heritage and secular outlook have traveled through history. The brotherhood of the people of Poonch and Rajouri is more robust than the mountains surrounding this belt. The ties of communal harmony, friendly relations and tolerance have survived even through the odd events of history.\(^6\)

The towns in the district are symbols of composite cultural heritage with people of various caste, creeds and religions living peacefully with each other. Rajouri presents a picture of a plural and composite society. The district is multiethnic, multicultural and multilingual in outlook. The dialects and cultural heritage of the people of the district has been influenced due to the coming of the people from different parts of the state. There are shared religious spaces which are sacred to both Hindus and Muslims, for

\(^4\) http://www.rajouri.nic.in/profile/history_files/history.htm
\(^6\) Ibid. See also http://www.rajouri.nic.in/profile/people_files/ppl.htm
instance Ziarate Shahdara Sharief. Since independence, the people of all communities have lived in an amiable manner. There are villages where one community is in majority and other is in minority, yet the minority community has never been made to feel that they are outsiders or different rather they have been given more affection and respect by the majority population which has always protected the minority population due to this the latter have always had complete faith and confidence in the former.

The population of Poonch and Rajouri also exhibits ethnic and linguistic differences from the rest of the state. The largest ethnic group of the area is the Gujjar tribals, a traditionally nomadic people who rear livestock and cultivate farmland in the highland areas. Gujjars make up 48% of the population in Poonch and 50% in Rajouri.\(^7\) In addition to the Gujjar ethnic group, there are also sizable concentrations of Bakerwals and Rajputs with a scattering of Pathans.

The district has a strong minority population of Hindus residing in the tehsils of Sunderbani, Nowshera and in pockets in Rajouri and Kalakote tehsils. The Hindu population of the district is internally differentiated on the caste basis. Among the upper castes, the Brahmins and Rajputs are the most visible classes. Kalakote areas and some villages of Budhal are dominated by Rajputs, while Brahmins dominate Nowshera and Sunderbani areas. Due to the presence of different ethnic groups, a number of languages are spoken for instance Gojri, Pahari, Dogri, Poonchi and Kashmiri. However, Pahari remains the most commonly spoken language which is a dialect of Punjabi and it is also spoken across the border in several regions of PoK. Both Rajouri and Poonch district border PoK (Azad Jammu and Kashmir) which includes Mirpur, Kotli and Rawalakot. These districts have a large number of divided families distributed on both sides of the LoC.

After the independence, the habitants of Rajouri have witnessed three battles taking place between India and Pakistan in 1947, 1965 and 1971. No doubt the people of Rajouri suffered a lot during these conflicts but there has not been any effect on the responses of the people of the district towards the Indian state. Throughout this period district maintained communal harmony.

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The vast majority of the Poonch-Rajouri inhabitants earn their living through subsistence agriculture and livestock products. The issue of land ownership also has particular importance in these areas since vast quantities of land have changed hands during the various waves of migration and resettlement. Those living in the towns typically possess very little land and often have government jobs or work as small shopkeepers. There is a considerable lack of industry and economic opportunities in both of the districts which has led to much frustration and discontent among the working age group persons including youth. Rajouri district is having agricultural dependent economy. The cities/towns are gradually emerging as a centre of economic activities. Rajauri because of its hilly terrain area is economically quite backward. Its backwardness is also due to its strategic location. The communication and transport systems are poor. It is situated in such a place that has remained quite close to conflict between India and Pakistan. The length of Line of Actual Control touching boundary of Rajauri district is 120 Kilometers. During the last twenty years of militancy, the LoC has been a further problem because it has become the route for the infiltration of the militants trained in Pakistan. Therefore, militancy was intensified in this area and created disturbed conditions.

Between the two roads from Jammu and Muzaffarabad that led to Kashmir during pre-partition day lie the areas of Nowshera, Janghar, Rajouri and Poonch. Being a backward and remote area, it was not well known. The travelers like Hieun Tsang had made notes of their travelogues of this route towards Srinagar. Mohmud Ghazni and Maharaja Ranjit Singh also followed this route. Jehangir patronized this area by visiting it regularly.\(^8\)

People of Poonch and Rajouri have acute grievances which have largely remained unaddressed, especially since the leadership of Jammu has never represented the aspirations of the people of these districts with their visits restricted to elections alone to seek the support and votes of the people. They have failed to establish any links with the population of this area, so there is a complete vacuum of relations and understanding between the leadership of Jammu and Poonch-Rajouri. Therefore, they are ignorant about the problems, miseries and suffering of the people of this belt. It is this political callousness which has given birth to the idea of a separate region for

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8 [www.nawang.com/history.htm](http://www.nawang.com/history.htm)
Rajouri and Poonch so that development can take place. In spite of the above-mentioned facts, the majority of the population of Poonch and Rajouri is not in favour of being separated from Jammu province because of their social, cultural and linguistic affinity with the people of Jammu vis-à-vis the other regions of the state.

The tribal invasion of Jammu and Kashmir that occurred in 1947 bifurcated Poonch district and Pakistan occupied areas of Muzaffarabad, Mirpur and Poonch districts leading to mass migrations and large displaced persons populations. Many of the Hindus and Sikhs currently residing in Rajouri trace their origins to Mirpur, Bagh, sudhnoti and Kotli and those of Poonch District often migrated mainly from Bagh and Rawalkot.

Profile of Rajouri District:

District Rajouri was handed over to the Dogra Maharaja in 1846 as part of the Treaty of Amritsar. Around 1856, the status of Rajouri was reduced to that of a tehsil of Bhimber district. In 1904, it was brought under Reasi district. In 1947, Pakistan’s forces invaded and occupied some portion of Rajouri. After 1947, it became a part of the newly constituted Poonch-Rajouri district. On September 22, 1967 government bifurcated district Poonch into two districts, namely Rajouri and Poonch, to facilitate the process of development and better supervision of economic activities in the areas. On January 1, 1968, it became a separate district. Therefore, Rajouri emerged as a new district on the map of Jammu and Kashmir state. District Rajouri belongs to the middle Himalayas and is located in the foothills of Peer-Panchal range. Its boundary starts from Sunderbani, at a distance of eighty kilometers from winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir state i.e. Jammu. The district is located in between 4.05 degree to 4.40 degree latitude and 35.58 degree to 33.35 degree longitude. The details of Rajouri district in terms of location and topography, administrative set up, climate and rainfall, population and density, area and utilization, irrigation and electorates and panchayats is as under.

10 Parvez Dewan, n. 3, p. 60.
Map of District Rajouri
a) **Location and Topography:**

The district is bounded in the east by Reasi district whereas the boundary in the south-east as well as south is touched by Jammu district. Poonch district is located on its west while Pulwama falls on the north side of the district across the Peer-Panchal range. The Line of Actual Control (LAC) passes through south-west and southern side of the district. The LAC starts from Sunderbani tehsil and goes up to Peer-Badreshwar range of mountain, measuring one hundred twenty kilometers.

The terrain of Rajouri comprises of sub-tropic and temperate zones as the upper areas of Kalakote, Budhal, Darhal and Thanamandi are touching the Peer-Panchal belt and the terrain resembles with the Kashmir valley, while Sunderbani and lower belt of Rajouri block are falling under the semi-tropical belt. The snow capped mountains in the north and thick forests belt in the southern side adds to its beauty.

b) **Administrative Set-up:**

In order to give relief to the inhabitants, the whole district is divided into seven tehsils namely Darhal, Kalakote, Koteranka, Nowshera, Rajouri, Sunderbani and Thannamandi. With the objective to solve the problems of the people near their locality eight Niabats have been constituted. In addition to this, there are nine blocks i.e. Budhal, Darhal, Doonji, Kalakote, Manjakote, Nowshera, Rajouri, Sunderbani and Thaanamandi. Beside this, there are four assembly constituencies namely Nowshera, Darhal, Rajaouri and Kalakote and part of Jammu-Poonch parliamentary constituency. It has 160 Panchayat Halqas and four Notified Area Committees namely Nowshera, Rajouri, Sunderbani and Thaanamandi. There are 380 villages in the district and out of which four villages are uninhabited because these are in the firing/shelling range of the enemies.

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13 Ibid.
14 Niabat is the administrative unit that falls immediately below the tehsils level i.e sub-tehsil level.
c) **Climate and Rainfall:**

Being a hilly, snow capped and forest terrain, the climatic condition of Rajouri district varies as the district has been divided into temperate zones and sub-tropic zone. The area of Nowshera, Sunderbani and lower part of Kalakote fall under the sub-tropic zone, where the climate remains very hot in summer\(^{15}\) and the mercury rises up to 46 degree centigrade whereas Budhal, Thanamandi and upper parts of Rajouri falls under temperate zone. The climatic conditions of this area resembles with valley. Budhal and Thanamandi are the beautiful hill stations and have very charming climate. This area has more rainfall than the lower belt of the district. The average rainfall is about 62 cms. During the month of June and July, the district remains under the influence of monsoon which provides green cover to the hills as well as enclaves. But the months of December to February are the coldest months in the district\(^{16}\). The climatic conditions of the district are favourable for horticulture development and agriculture.

d) **Population and Density:**

According to census 2011, the population of Rajouri district is Six lakhs, nineteen thousand, two hundred and sixty six (6,19,266). Its population growth rate over the decade 2001-2011 was 28.14%. Male population of Rajouri is three lakhs, thirty two thousand, four hundred and twenty four (3,32,424) whereas female population of Rajouri is two lakhs eighty six thousand, eight hundred and forty two (2,86,842).\(^{17}\) As per the census of 2001, the district has total population of 4.786 lakhs, out of which 2.531 lakhs are male whereas 2.255 lakhs are females comprising 52.88% and 47.12% respectively. The average density of the district population is 181 persons per square kilometer\(^{18}\). The rural population is 4.451 lakhs which comprises 93% of the total population whereas urban population is 0.335 lakhs which constitutes 7% of the total population. The population of schedule caste and the schedule tribe is

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\(^{15}\) K.D. Maini, n. 12, p. 16.

\(^{16}\) Ibid.


\(^{18}\) S.A Qazi, n. 11, p. 145.
0.38 lakhs and 1.67 lakhs which becomes 7.94% and 34.89% of the total population of the district respectively. The overall literacy rate of the district as per census 2001 is 57.65%. Though 93% population is living in rural areas yet their literacy rate is better.

Table 3.1: Literacy Rate of District Rajouri

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literacy Rate</th>
<th>Rajouri District(%)</th>
<th>Jammu and Kashmir (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Census 2001</td>
<td>Census 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>69.76</td>
<td>78.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>44.51</td>
<td>57.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57.99</td>
<td>68.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As per the District Information System of National Informatics Centre (DISNIC) Survey\textsuperscript{19} conducted during 1995, the total population of the district was 3.96 lakh out of which 30,098 were schedule castes which represents 8% of the population while 1, 39,845 were Gujjars and Bakerwals, which represents 35% of the population and 2.27 lakh population were Dogras, Kashmiris, Paharis and others, which represents 57% of the population. As per the survey conducted by the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) during 1998-99, out of 69760 families residing in rural areas, 44673 families were living below poverty line which represents 64% population of the district\textsuperscript{20}. However, in the recent past, lots of infrastructure and houses have been built in the rural areas under the rural development schemes.

e) Area and its Utilisation:

The total area of the district is 2639 square kilometers or 2.47 lakh hectare out of which net area sown is 0.50 lakh hectare while gross area sown is 0.99 lakh hectare, 0.44 lakh hectare areas is sown more than once. The gross irrigated area is 0.08 lakh

\textsuperscript{19} K.D. Maini, n. 12, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p. 18.
hectare. During 1999-2000, the area under paddy was 0.08 lakh hectares, 0.35 lakh hectares under wheat and 0.36 lakh hectares under maize. 91% cultivable area is rain fed and the average size of land holding is 1.48 hectares.\textsuperscript{21} The forest area of the district is 1267 square kilometers but most of this area is being used by the seasonal migrant’s i.e. Bakerwal community. These migrants usually come from upper reaches of Peer-Panchal and Kashmir valley.

f) Irrigation:

Irrigation system in the field of agriculture has great importance but Rajouri district being a hilly one, minor irrigation facility has been provided. Very nominal irrigation network is available except Rajal canal which too was completed in the nineties (1993-94) at the cost of rupees eighty lakh. The total length of the canal is 19.50 kilometers. This canal has potential to irrigate 2417 hectare but only 660 hectare areas are being irrigated since most agricultural fields are located on the slopes of hills. The areas located on the banks of nallahs (small rivulets) are being irrigated through canals (Khuls) in Thannamandi, Behrote, Palma, Manjakote etc. Apart from Rajal canal, 12436 acres area is being irrigated. In Sunderbani area, the vegetable fields are irrigated through tube wells.

The district is drained by small rivers. These include Sukh Tawi, Darhal Tawi, Khandli, the Ans, Jamola etc. The mountainous and undulating terrain makes it very difficult to tap and utilise the available water potential for irrigation. The total numbers of canals (Khuls) in the district are 109 out of which four are lift irrigation schemes\textsuperscript{22}. A survey for the lift irrigation from Baripatan to Bhajwal (Sunderbani) has been conducted but it has yet to be made reality. It will add to the irrigated area of the district. There is need to construct some big irrigation schemes so that more irrigation potential could be created.

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., p. 12.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., p. 22.
g) Electrotates and Panchayats:

The district consists of four assembly constituencies namely Darhal, Kalakote, Nowshera and Rajouri having 3, 79,423 voters out of which 1, 96,285 are males whereas 1, 83,138 are female. These voters are living in 376 villages. The developmental works in these villages are looked after by panchayats and local disputes are also settled in the halqa panchayats. There are 160 Panchayat Halqas in the district.

Sunderbani

Sunderbani remained a part of Bhimber tehsil before 1947 and thereafter headquarter of tehsil Nowshera for some time. In 1980, Sunderbani emerged as new tehsil. It is combination of the two words ‘sunder’ and ‘bani’. ‘Sunder’ has its origin in Hindi which means beautiful whereas ‘bani’ originated from a Persian word ‘von’ which means water. A story goes that there was a source of water (spring) just on the north side of the present Rajouri-Poonch National Highway adjoining the main chowk near tehsil office, which is under the control of Military Engineering Services (MES) wing. A legend also goes that once ‘Rani Sundara’ visited this place and ordered for the preparation of the particular spring and named this spring on her name as ‘sundervon’ which with the passage of time was called as Sunderbani. It is said that outburst of water was so charming and in such a quantity that whole of the present helipad field including tehsil office area was irrigated by this water, producing very rich output of rice. Later on and till date, this water was used to and is being supplied to army cantonment, MES and also caters to the emergency needs of the area through Public Health Engineering (PHE) vehicles.

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23 Interview with old age persons at Sunderbani.
Table 3.2: Rural/Urban Population in Tehsil Sunderbani

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Schedule caste</th>
<th>Schedule Tribe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>25993</td>
<td>21896</td>
<td>47889</td>
<td>2507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2894</td>
<td>2806</td>
<td>5700</td>
<td>1012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Block Development Office Records, Sunderbani

Tehsil Sunderbani is extended over an area of 3296.40 hectare and comprises of 42 villages. It had total population of 47889 persons as per 2001 census including 5700 persons of schedule caste and 1900 persons of schedule tribe. It does not include the urban population which is 4188 persons residing in the Sunderbani town. Village Bhajwal was a jagir of Raja Ghulam Hussain before 1947. Most of the area was covered with bushes and wild grasses (kai) as three small nallhas used to pass through this place. Raja Ghulam Hussain was a very popular person and had direct link with the then Maharaja of the state, Hari Singh. He used to organise the sports events. Wrestling was the popular one. The people of this area were well built - physically healthy, brave, secular minded and very cooperative to each other as both the communities hindu and muslim inhabited in Bhajwal. In 1947, most of the muslims left for Pakistan except two-third families who were employees under the state government. This area at present is utilised for agricultural purposes by the displaced people (refugees) belonging to Kotli, Mirpur, Palandri, RawalaKot and Poonch.

The main crops grown in the block area are paddy, maize, wheat, moong, linseed, mustard seed, potatoes and chillies. The total area in the block is 82401 hectares out of which net area sown is 17389 hectares. The forest cover is 22142 hectares. The land used for non agricultural uses comprises 3316 hectares while 30827 hectares is barren and uncultivable land.24

Village Bhajwal is the gateway of Rajouri and Poonch district as it is the first village in which the Rajouri-Poonch National Highway enters and passes through. It is touched by village Reh-salyiote of Jammu district on the east, Thandapani on the north, Talla Tanda on the north-west, Kangri in the west, Kuldabi in the south-west, Peli, Phall

24 Tehsil Office Records, Sunderbani, District Rajouri, Near Main Chowk, Sunderbani.
and Kalidhar in the south. Moreover, it is a small and beautiful valley. It is covered by Himalayan hills on the north and Kalidhar in the south. A tawi passes just touching the northern side of the village. There are sixteen Panchayats in block Sunderbani.

**Nowshera**

Nowshera is one of the prominent tehsil in Rajouri district. Nowshera tehsil was constituted in 1860. In 1904, it was affiliated with district Bhimber as a tehsil and remained part of Bhimber upto 1947. Thereafter, it became part of Poonch-Rajouri and since 1968; Nowshera is the tehsil of district Rajouri. Nowshera is situated on the north side of a Seri valley about 300 feet above the right bank of Tawi river. The town is 113 kilometers away from Jammu and 46 Kms from district headquarter Rajouri. It is a tehsil headquarter comprising of 58 villages. There are thirty nine panchayats in block Nowshera. It is located on the Line of Actual Control. Nowshera is mostly known for a religious shrine Mangla Mata, which has become the centre of religious attraction for the tourists.

**Table 3.3: Population in Tehsil Nowshera**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census</th>
<th>General</th>
<th>SCs</th>
<th>STs</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>30,354</td>
<td>19,788</td>
<td>7,603</td>
<td>57,745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Block Development Office Records, Nowshera*

**Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK)**

Pakistan Occupied Kashmir is the total area of erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir that is under Pakistan’s occupation. Pakistan named it Azad (independent) Kashmir to legitimise the territory occupied by force. It is now administratively divided into five districts of Bagh, Kotli, Mirpur, Muzzaffarabad and Rawlakot. Northern areas were delinked from Azad Kashmir. The northern areas have been regrouped by Pakistan into

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25 The sixteen panchayats are Upper Bhajwal, Lower Bhajwal, Chengi Kangrial, Kangri, Nah, Talla Tanda, Siot, Balshama, Channi, Prat, Hathal, Patrara, Thandapani, Nalla, Devak and Thangrote.
five districts of Gilgit, Skardu, Diamir, Ghizer and Ghanche. Azad Kashmir is a legal anomaly. According to United Nations resolutions dating back to 1948, Azad Kashmir is neither a sovereign state nor a province of Pakistan, but rather a “local authority” with responsibility over the area assigned to it under a 1949 ceasefire agreement with India. It has remained in this state of legal limbo since that time. In practice, the Pakistani government in Islamabad, the Pakistani army and the Pakistani intelligence services (Inter-Services Intelligence, ISI) control all aspects of political life in Azad Kashmir.

Azad Kashmir is divided into Muzaffarabad and Mirpur divisions. Muzaffarabad division comprises of five districts viz. Bagh, Neelum, Muzaffarabad, Poonch and Sudhnutti; while Mirpur division comprises of Bhimber, Kotli and Mirpur districts. Muzaffarabad city is the territory’s capital. Jammu province, just prior to partition, contained the five districts, namely Jammu, Kathua, Mirpur, Reasi, Udhampur and the two jagirs (autonomous municipalities) Chenani and Poonch. Kashmir province contained three districts namely Baramulla, Anantnag and Muzaffarabad. Pre-1947, tehsil-wise breakup of the districts was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>Poonch Jagir</th>
<th>Mirpur</th>
<th>Reasi</th>
<th>Muzaffarabad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tehsil</td>
<td>Poonch (Haveli)</td>
<td>Mirpur</td>
<td>Rampur (now Rajouri)</td>
<td>Muzaffarabad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudhnoti</td>
<td>Kotli</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagh</td>
<td>Bhimber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mendhar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These districts composed the entire southwestern part of the Jammu and Kashmir before 1947 and were culturally, linguistically, ethnically and socio-economically

28 Ibid., p. 12.
similar. Prior to 1947, the Poonch jagir was ruled by its own Raja and enjoyed relative autonomy from the state of Jammu and Kashmir with its capital in the present-day village of Loren. The local leadership consisted mainly of pahadi (usually Rajput) Muslim rulers. During World War II, an unusually large number of pahadi men from the Poonch area were serving as soldiers in the British Indian Army. A total of 71,667 men from Jammu and Kashmir served under British command in World War II and of this number 60,402 were pahadi Muslims of Poonch.29 When these soldiers returned home, they discovered that Maharaja Hari Singh had deposed the local Raja of Poonch and had installed his own governing representative. The system of taxation imposed on the local Muslims under the Maharaja was extremely severe and the local people began to revolt in the spring of 1947. In response to this revolt, Sikh and Dogra troops embarked on a campaign of violent suppression, which had great and lasting consequences in the area. By September 13, approximately 60,000 Hindus had passed from the Poonch-Mirpur area towards Jammu and about half of the total Hindu and Sikh population had fled the areas of disturbance.30

Kabailees had attacked the people and lands of Bhimber, Kotli, Deva Batala, Gilgit, Baltistan, Mirpur, Poonch and Rajouri. It was a holocaust. The raiders advanced into Jammu region on October 20, 1947 and tried to capture several important towns in the area like Muzaffarabad, Bagh, Rawalkot, Poonch, Kotli, Mirpur, Bhimber, Jhangar, Nowshera, Rajouri and Bhimber Gali. As a result, the entire Hindu and Sikh populations of the Muslim-majority districts in western Jammu province such as Muzaffarabad, Bagh, Rawalkot, Kotli, Mirpur and Bhimber were killed or forced to flee the area. Mass murder and expulsion of Muslims occurred in the Hindu majority districts of eastern Jammu.

After landing at the airport in Srinagar in late October 1947, the Indian Army began its campaign to retake the occupied areas of the former princely state. The Indian Army was engaged in clearing the invaders from the Srinagar. The raiders continued their advance in the Poonch and Mirpur areas in Jammu province. The Muslim personnel of the second Jammu and Kashmir Infantry which had been posted in this sector deserted to the enemy. The Dogra troops hard pressed from all sides could not stand the strain. They realised that it was impossible to defend the whole area against

29 Figure as cited in Sumantra Bose, n. 7, p. 32.
Pakistani invaders and local rebels. So they concentrated themselves in the few towns to which the Hindu population from the surrounding areas had gone for safety. Very soon all these towns were cut off from one another as also from Jammu. The history of the war in this region after the 22\textsuperscript{nd} of October, therefore, is the history of the defense of these besieged towns by the civil population with the help of the state troops who had managed to reach them. Their only hope of safety was reinforcements of Indian troops from Jammu or Srinagar. Unfortunately this expected relief failed to reach them in time, except in the case of Kotli and Poonch. They fell to the enemy one by one. By the beginning of November, they had occupied Bhimber, Rajouri and Rawalakote and were threatening the state forces garrisons in Mirpur, Kotli, Poonch, Nowshera and Bari Pattan. Thousands of displaced persons were fleeing from the raiders sought shelter in the Poonch garrison.\footnote{C.Das Gupta, \textit{War and Diplomacy in Kashmir 1947-48}, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 2002, p. 63.}

The Indian army entered the Poonch-Rajouri area in April, 1948 through the village of Nowshera and began battling their way north. At this point, the Pakistani regular army entered the scene and began fighting with the Indian forces. By July-August of 1948, the Indian army had retaken much of Reasi district and parts of Poonch jagir. As the Indian forces began to penetrate the Poonch-Rajouri area, many of the local Muslims of Indian Jammu and Kashmir started to migrate towards the areas that were under Pakistani control, mainly Mirpur, Kotli, Rawalkot and Bagh. Survivors recall the state of panic that had gripped many of the local Muslims, as they feared revenge at the hands of the Hindu and Sikh majority Indian army for not rising up to resist the invading forces in a more substantial manner and revenge against the killings of Hindus being done in the Punjab, in a case of spillover communalism.

In chronological order, the part to fall was Bhimber.

**Bhimber:**

Bhimber is one of the districts of Pakistan occupied Kashmir (Azad Kashmir). It lies on the route that was followed by the Mughal emperors for their frequent visits to the Kashmir Valley. Until 1995, Bhimber was a sub-division (tehsil headquarter) of Mirpur district. In 1996, the tehsil of Bhimber was removed from Mirpur and made into a separate district. This town was having normal population of three thousand in
1947 which had swelled to about five thousand because of coming of some refugees from Pakistan and Hindus from border. It fell to the armed Pakistani raiders who began shelling the town with heavy guns. Just at that time, the Indian dakotas were carrying the first consignment of airborne, the fort-like tehsil building found all their roads of escape blocked. Still some of them rushed out with the few state troops. But most of them could not. Finding that no hope was left, hundreds of Hindu ladies took poison which they had taken with them as a precaution and thus revived the practice of ‘Jauhar’. Many others were kidnapped along with their children. The male population was put to the sword. Perhaps the fall of this town, though it was very tragic, could not be avoided because there were no troops in Jammu which could have been rushed to save it. But that was not the case with the other towns which fell soon after one by one. Therefore, raiders captured Bhimber and it remained under the control of Pakistan, thereby forming part of Pakistan occupied Kashmir.

**Jhangar and Nowshera:**

The raiders captured Jhangar in early October, 1947. It was strategically important as it lay on their route from Mirpur to Kotli and Panderi. Success at Jhangar encouraged the raiders to capture Nowshera. The Kalsian village was their headquarter, from where they conducted their operations. The Jhangar was lost on December 24, 1947 which proved the contention of military authorities that the line of communication Jammu-Naushahra-Jhangar was vulnerable to the enemy attacks. The attack on Nowshera was repulsed on 26th December. Indian efforts were largely concentrated on consolidating the position at Uri, warding off enemy attacks on Poonch and guarding the vulnerable line of communication. The enemy launched on February 6, 1948 the expected all out attack on Nowshera. The attackers estimated to be 3000 pathans of Swat and Dir and 3000 Sudans surrounded Tain Dhar and Kot picquets respectively and attacked fiercely with light machine guns, grenades and swords. The Indian troops captured Jhangar and had cut off the enemy’s line of communication from Mirpur to

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35 Ibid., p. 86.
36 Ibid., p. 118.
Kotli and Poonch. The operation to recapture Jhangar was named ‘Vijay’ and it was recaptured on March 18, 1948. Thus operation ‘Vijay’ ended in Vijay i.e. victory.\textsuperscript{37}

**Rajouri:**

Rajouri at that time was having normal population of about six thousand. It had swelled to about eleven thousand at the time of its fall because of the arrival of Hindus from the surrounding villages. It lies in the interior of Jammu province on the old Mughal road to Kashmir. It was a tehsil headquarter within the Reasi district before its fall. This town was considered to be comparatively safe because of its being out of the district reach of the Pakistan raiders. But the local Muslims, aided by the deserters from state troops did not wait for the raiders. The urgent calls of the besieged population for help were in vain because the gravity of the situation in these areas was not appreciated by Sheikh Abdullah who was continued to divert all available Indian troops to Kashmir. The result was that the town fell on the 10\textsuperscript{th} of November before the local Muslims who proved to be more cruel and barbarous than the tribal raiders and then to the tribal raiders. The story of Bhimber was repeated with the difference that the number of persons who could escape to Jammu safely from here did not exceed a hundred. Most of the ladies performed ‘jauhar’ by taking poison while many of the youth died fighting. Many of those who were managed to escape were killed on the way by local Muslims. The number of ladies abducted from this town ran into several hundreds.\textsuperscript{38} The number of non-Muslims killed, wounded and abducted was reported to be 30, 000. About 1500 hundred displaced persons at Chingas were also reported to have been slaughtered.\textsuperscript{39}

Rajauri had been captured by the enemy. The operation for the capture of Rajauri was given code name of ‘Ranjit’ (earlier called Mumtaz). The 48 kilometer stretch of country which the Indian troops had to traverse to capture Rajouri was thickly wooded and well defended with enemy machine guns and mortars. Major-General Kalwant Singh detailed 19 Brigade for the task of capturing and holding Rajauri.\textsuperscript{40} 50 Para Brigade and 80 Brigade carried out diversionary operations in areas of Jhangar and

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., p. 136.
\textsuperscript{38} Bal Raj Madhok, n. 32, pp. 706-07.
\textsuperscript{39} S.N. Prasad and Dharam Pal (eds.), n. 34, pp. 49-50.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., pp. 216-17.
Beri Pattan respectively, to distract the attention of the enemy from the main operation Ranjit for the capture of Rajauri.41

Major-General Kalwant Singh, General Officer Commanding Jammu and Kashmir division, issued orders on 16th November for the rapid relief of Nowshera, Jhangar, Kotli, Mirpur and Poonch. The dates planned for relieving areas upto Mirpur was latest by 20th November. The dates laid down for the relief of the various places appeared unrealistic to Brigade Commander since no exact information was available regarding the raiders strength, destruction of bridges (especially Beripattan bridge), number of enemy roadblocks on the road and availability of insufficient number of troops.42

**Kotli:**

The town with a normal population of three to four thousand was a tehsil headquarter within the Mirpur district. It lies on the Jehlum-Mirpur-Poonch road. Colonel Baldev Singh Pathania, the Revenue Minister of the state, who had been sent to guide the operations of the state troops in this area. It was surrounded on all sides by the well armed local rebels and Pakistani raiders. Therefore, no contact could be made with Jammu or Mirpur. The ammunition with the troops in Kotli ran out early in November. It would have, therefore, fallen to the enemy and suffered the same fate as Bhimber but for the heroic gallantry of a few local young men defended Kotli for few days. An Indian army plane dropped about 20 chests of ammunition in the town. But per chance instead of falling at a safe place, they fell on a deep slope outside the town within the range of the enemy fire from the adjoining hill. They succeeded in salvaging about 17 chests of ammunition. Their heroism and sacrifice enabled the town to defend itself. It was relieved a few days later by an advance party of the Parachute Brigade of the Indian army stationed at Jhangar.43 On 26th November, Indian troops entered Kotli and found two companies of Kashmir state troops and one company of Kashmir state Muslim troops who had been disarmed. Their morale as well as garrisons stock of ammunition was low. There was a demoralised civil population of 9,000. The troops fall back to Jhangar after evacuating the displaced persons and the state forces garrison at Kotli.44

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41 Ibid., p. 221.
42 Ibid., pp. 52-54.
43 Bal Raj Madhok, n. 32, pp. 707-08.
44 S.N. Prasad and Dharam Pal (eds.), n. 34, p. 56.
The troops withdrew from Kotli to Jhangar after evacuating all the civil population and the troops who had been defending it for over a month. This proved to be a military blunder. It also relieved many hundreds of raiders besieging this town that had joined hands with besiegers of Mirpur. That ill-fated town was next to fall. Indian troops did not try to recapture Kotli. While rescuing the Poonch, the Indian troops led the enemy to believe that Kotli was their objective. It was only after the operation of recapturing Poonch had been completed that the real intention, which was to link-up with Poonch and not to capture Kotli, became known to the enemy. Thus, Kotli also remained under Pakistan control when the Ceasefire agreement was signed.

Mirpur:

Mirpur had been cut off from Jammu after the fall of Bhimber and Kotli. It had a garrison of state troops. But it had run out of ammunition. Mirpur fell on the November 25, 1947 when the enemy broke open the back gate of the walled town by heavy gunfire. The state troops and local officers then lost heart and retreated even before the town could be evacuated by the civilians. The people, therefore, began to run in terror. The fight soon became a rout and the rout a massacre. Hardly two thousand people out of about twenty five thousand living at that time in the ill-fated town managed to reach Jhangar in safety. The rest were ruthlessly butchered. The number of women abducted from there ran into thousands. Most of them were paraded naked and then sold in the bazaars of Jhelum, Rawalpindi and Peshawar. The barbarities of the Pakistan troops and civilians on these hapless women who were kept for sometime in Alibeg camp before their dispersal to different towns put to shame the worst orgies of rape and violence associated with the hordes of Ghengiz Khan and Nadir Shah. On 26th and 27th November, Indian patrols based on Jhangar brought in a number of displaced persons, who had escaped from Mirpur. After the fall of Mirpur, it was decided not to hold Kotli but to fall back on Jhangar after evacuating displaced persons and state force garrison at

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45 Bal Raj Madhok, n. 32, p. 708.
46 S.N. Prasad and Dharam Pal (eds.), n. 34, p. 264.
47 A Ceasefire became effective at 23:59 hours, before the midnight of 1-2 January 1949. An agreement on the cease-fire line was signed and ceasefire line continued to exist till it was supplanted by the Line of Actual Control after the Indo-Pak conflict of 1971.
Kotli. Thus the relief column from Jammu succeeded in relieving the state force garrisons at Nowshera, Jhangar and Kotli.49

**Dev Vatala:**

Next to fall along the Jammu - Pakistan border in Bhimber tehsil was the cluster of Hindu villages inhabited by chib rajputs and known by the name of Deva - Vatala. The warlike people of these villages kept the Pakistanis at bay for two months with their crude weapons. But no need was paid to their requests. Toward the end of December 1947, thousands of chibs of the area retreated to Jammu with what little they could bring on their heads as displaced persons and refugees.

**Poonch:**

Poonch was a jagir of Jammu and Kashmir ruled by its own Rajas, subject to the overall sovereignty of the state government.50 Troubles flared up at tehsil Bagh of Poonch jagir in mid October 1947. The army pickets around Bagh soon came under attack from local armed bands. On 22nd October, Domel and Muzzafarabad were attacked by the tribal raiders. However, on November 10, 1947 the garrison at Bagh along with displaced persons managed to withdraw to Poonch. The state troops evacuated Rawalkote and arrived at Poonch with 6,000 displaced persons.51 The situation changed suddenly when the outposts of the state forces at Plandri, Bagh, Rawalakote, Sadhnoti, Hajira and Madarpur and other places fell one by one. The result was that the refugee (displaced persons) population swelled to 40,000. There was the problem of their shelter and food.52 The dakotas were employed carrying food and ammunition supplies from Jammu and Poonch. The supplies were landed at Poonch with the completion of airstrip which was completed with the help of displaced persons.53 The only town of this area which did not succumb to the enemy pressure was Poonch. The small garrison of the state troops supported by the Indian troops who managed to reach there from Uri kept the enemy at bay for one long year. This town was later relieved by the Indian forces advancing from Rajauri.

49 S.N. Prasad and Dharam Pal (eds.), n. 34, p. 56.
50 S.P. Vaid, n. 33, p. 46.
51 S.N. Prasad and Dharam Pal (eds.), n. 34, p. 50.
52 Ibid., p. 48.
53 Ibid., p. 89.
Map of District Poonch
Refugees (displaced persons), both Hindus and Sikhs, numbering about 40,000 had poured into Poonch to escape being annihilated by the raiders. Due to Poonch being surrounded, land communication with the outside world was cut off and the need for an air strip was greatly felt. The strip was built and later extended by the middle of December 1947 to enable dakota aircraft to land. Consequently evacuation of the civilians was commenced and a supply link was established.\textsuperscript{54} Brigadier Pritam Singh organised volunteers from among the 40,000 refugees (displaced persons) into militia battalions to fight side by side with the troops.\textsuperscript{55} Bhimber Gali had been secured by 12 Punjab without opposition and two columns: one from Rajauri and the second from Poonch had carried out the important task of establishing a link-up with Poonch. The link up was finally established but soon after the passage of the columns, the hostiles reasserted their sway and spread all over the area between Rajauri and Poonch once again. Even important centers like Thannamandi and Mendhar had not been garrisoned due to paucity of troops and so had to recapture again when the final link up with Poonch took place in November 1948.\textsuperscript{56}

While the long siege of Poonch was finally broken in November 1948, significant areas of the state of Jammu and Kashmir in the south-west still remained in enemy occupation. The task of the Indian army could not be considered completed until the areas of Mirpur, Kotli and Muzaffarabad were also liberated, apart from the large and more difficult areas of Gilgit. Plans were indeed considered in early November for recapturing Mirpur and Muzzafarabad. But the tentative plans were not pursued. The plans required heavy reinforcement of the troops and uninhibited air support for assured success. This would have meant weakening the Indian forces along the East Punjab frontier with Pakistan, which could not be accepted, apart from the logistic problems of maintaining the additional troops on the Jhangar front. The requisite force build-up and the logistic problems made it impossible in any case to mount a major offensive till the next spring or early summer. Ceasefire came much before that. Moreover, Pakistan agreed to the ceasefire only at the last minute, making it impossible for the government of India to give more time to her commanders. The Mirpur-Muzzafarabad areas, therefore, continued to remain in the illegal occupation of Pakistan.\textsuperscript{57} With the marking

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., p. 238.  
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., p. 239.  
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., p. 251.  
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., pp. 276-77, 372.
of the ceasefire line on January 1, 1949, the area of Jammu and Kashmir under India’s control was effectively reduced to 1,38,992 square kilometers; leaving 79,788 square kilometers of its area in Pakistan’s illegal occupation.

The story of the war in the Jammu sector is thus a continuous tragedy occasionally relieved by episodes of glory provided by the heroes of Kotli or the defenders of Poonch. But the most unfortunate part of it is that little is known to the people in India and outside about this side of the Kashmir story. The sense of tragedy about happenings in Jammu area is heightened by the fact that most of this area fell in the enemy hands and massacres took place. There after the state acceded to India and the Indian troops had taken charge of the defense of the state. The Indian troops could have at least relieved the beleaguered towns of Rajauri and Mirpur and prevented the worst massacre from taking place at Mirpur. The men responsible for these massacres were Jawaharlal Nehru and Sheikh Abdullah. Nehru would not have allowed anybody else in India to advise him in his handling of the Kashmir situation. He was solely guided by Shiekh Abdullah, who had no interest in any other part of the state except the Kashmir valley. His critics even go to the length of charging him with deliberate indifference toward the fate of beleaguered Hindus. That may or may not be correct, but the fact remains that he refused to send troops for the relief of Mirpur even when they were not so urgently needed in the Kashmir valley.

From the original pre-1947 administrative demarcations, the entire district of Mirpur and part of Muzaffarabad came under Pakistani control, along with the two and half tehsils of Poonch jagir (Bagh, Sudhnoti and half tehsil of Haveli). In 1947, most individuals fled out of panic and chaos with the intention to return at a later date when hostilities ceased. Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs all fled enmasse to areas that they believed would provide them with temporary and immediate safety. Hindu and Sikh displacement of 1947 occurred most substantially from Muzaffarabad, Mirpur and erstwhile Poonch districts to Jammu City and its surrounding environments, with a sizable amount of individuals choosing to settle in the Poonch and Rajouri towns. Most of the Hindus and Sikhs of Poonch hail from Bagh and Rawalkote, while most of the Hindus and Sikhs of Rajouri are from Kotli, Bagh, Sudhnoti and Mirpur. These displaced persons were settled and rehabilitated in parts of tehsils Rajouri (Thanamandi, Kote, Chingus), Sunderbani (Prat, Balshama, Rayslote) and Nowshera (Saleri, siot,
Bagnosti). The Joint Rehabilitation Board agreed to send only the willing ones from tehsil Sudhnoti to Rajouri, while allowing others to go to Samba, Hiranagar and Kathua. On May 3, 1951 displaced persons of Bagh, Haveli and Sadnoti tehsils were allowed to remain in camps at Simbal and Badial Brahmana in tehsil R.S. Pura, and in Bhour and Bhagatpur in tehsil Jammu. One hundred twenty families from Poonch went to Basholi and Rajouri and twelve families to Sunderbani. The data collected from the SOS International, an organisation working for the displaced persons of 1947 reflects that nearly 77,600 rehabilitated displaced people resides in the Nowshera constituency. However, the records of tehsils offices of Sunderbani and Nowshera put the number of families rehabilitated in the respective tehsils as 1,036 and 1639. Therefore as per the state government tehsil records, 2,675 PoK displaced families are rehabilitated in the Nowshera constituency.\textsuperscript{58} It was due to the availability of land, absence of demographic confrontation and all those people who were residing in the area being muslims crossed towards the Pakistan. So the displaced persons were mainly rehabilitated in the Nowshera constituency area of the district.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{Showing the Number of PoK Displaced Persons in Nowshera Constituency}
\begin{tabular}{llr}
\hline
Tehsil & Area & Settled Displaced Persons Population \\
\hline
Sunderbani & Bhajwal & 7,000 \\
 & Kangri & 5,000 \\
 & Thichka & 5,200 \\
 & Prat & 6,500 \\
 & Bakher & 3,200 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{58} See Appendix VIII for details.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marchola</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langer</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nowshera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saleri</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siot</td>
<td>6,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamberi</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brevi</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagnosti</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dandesar</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajal</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonial</td>
<td>6,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dabber Potha</td>
<td>3,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>77,600</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Information obtained from SOS International, an organisation working for the 1947 PoK Displaced Persons.
The Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile of the 1947 Displaced Persons

When we look at the displaced persons who arrived in 1947 in this part of Jammu and Kashmir after partition and subsequent tribal invasion, it has been found that the government tried differently to sort out the problem of resettlement in case of PoK displaced persons from the Punjabi refugees, who arrived from West Pakistan or Bengali refugees. The 1947 PoK refugees were called ‘displaced persons’. By displaced, the government meant all those who had to leave PoK due to communal violence and tribal invasion and came in present Jammu and Kashmir in 1947 and 1948. These were the persons who did not leave their homes voluntarily but were forced to do so because of threat of persecution by the Muslims there.

The displaced persons in question had left their territory of residence because of political developments there and tribal invasion and not because of economic conditions. The political events that had taken place and fear of persecution led to their departure from their place of original residence. Most of the families became homeless and set out wandering from one place to other until they reached to the safer Indian side. They were frightened, frustrated, dislocated and confused with no idea of the future. These men, women and children lost traditional community relationships and family ties. They had lost all they had. Everything has been organised anew and built up again from the bottom after their resettlement at new places, other than their original habitats. Therefore, they were resettled by the government after their relocation. Relocation involves the movement of communities from one place and environment to another. So the relocation of displaced persons has brought modification of the physical and social environment in which people find themselves and to which they have adapted after relocation. The nature of modification of the physio-cultural environment determines oustees new demographic, economic and social circumstances. This in turn has influenced the behavior pattern that develop in the new setting, as the relocates, having gone through the more stressful phase of relocation.

It is not difficult to imagine how seriously the Hindus and other non-Muslims of present PoK areas faced inordinate disorganisations in the established set up of their families and other inter related kin units. They have to adopt new attitudes and values but also new mode of familial living in their post migrational habitats. The uprooting,
suffering and disorganisations were common experience of the displaced families. They were not only displaced geographically but also socially and economically.

According to the Census of 1941, the state of Jammu and Kashmir had a population of 4,021,616; of which 77.11 percent were Muslims, 20.12 percent Hindus, 1.6 percent Sikh, the rest comprising Buddhist and other religious faiths. 59 The distribution of the population community-wise was as follows: Muslims 31,01,247; Hindus 8,09,165; Sikhs 65,603; Buddhists 40,696 and others 4,605. The region wise population was as follows: Jammu province 19,81,433; Kashmir province 17,28,705 Frontier regions 3, 11,478. 60 In the Jammu province, the centre of dogra domination, according to the 1941 census, out of a population of 15, 60,000, there were 8, 30,000 Muslims and 7, 30,000 Hindus. In fact, one could divide the Jammu province by the Chenab river and say that to the south and east of the river the population was mainly Hindu and to the north and west mainly Muslim. In both the Kashmir province and the Poonch jagir, the Muslim majorities were overwhelming. The figures of the 1941 census have got considerably modified, both in the Kashmir and Jammu provinces in favour of non-Muslim elements as a result of events since 1947. 61

The demographic characteristic of a society invariably influences the politics of that society. It has been argued that many problems which are viewed as strictly political have in fact demographic roots. The partition of India, for instance, turned the Hindus into a minority in Pakistan overnight. Similarly the invasion and occupation of some parts of Jammu and Kashmir changed the demographic structure of the state and especially district Rajouri after the resettlement of displaced persons in that particular area. It has led to the development of the political and general competition among the members of the two communities i.e. the hosting population residing in the area and those displaced persons who were settled in the particular areas.

Shelter and Housing

The displaced persons after reaching in Jammu were accommodated at camps established at Nagrota etc. Presently almost all the displaced persons who were resettled in district Rajouri are residing in their own houses constructed on lands allotted to them for rehabilitation. 23% have also purchased private lands and built their houses on them. The houses are either built of earthen material or bricks. They have built their own houses and government had not provided any kind of assistance in standing their houses. Only a few quarter and plots were allotted to the urban displaced persons in Nowshera. However, the government has constructed and attributed two-room apartments at Purkhoo, Muthi and Nagrota in Jammu and in Kashmir valley (in Sheikhpora in Budgam district) for displaced Kashmiri pandits staying in one-room shelters in camps. The construction of these apartments has been part of the Prime Minister’s reconstruction plan for Jammu and Kashmir. The 1947 displaced person highlights this kind of discrimination meted out to them.

Occupation

The PoK displaced persons were forced to start new lives with new occupations in new surroundings after their rehabilitation in parts of the district Rajouri. They had few choices and were prepared to do or accept anything to make a living. The caste based occupational divisions got blurred and they were able to survive with their efforts. Soon the challenges of life and the opportunities that changed the attitudes and thinking of displaced people, let them realised the value of new skills and education and began to think in terms of improving their place in society. With the passage of time they are able to get the services in government sector due to availability and availing of education. Still, most of them are engaged in agricultural activities.

On April 25, 2008, the Indian Prime Minister announced a package of rupees 16.18 billion to provide incentives for displaced Kashmiri pandits to return to the Kashmir Valley. The package includes the creation of employment opportunities for 15,000 unemployed displaced Kashmiri pandit youth, of which 6,000 were to be employed with the Jammu and Kashmir state government. The remaining 9,000 positions (self-employment and start-ups in the private sector) were each to receive a grant of rupees 250,000 and a loan of the same amount. Farmers were to receive
assistance in the amount of rupees 100,000 and horticulturalists were to receive rupees 5,000 ($107) per 500 month up to a maximum of rupees 150,000. The 1947 PoK displaced persons have strongly condemned the decision for launching a special recruitment drive for 3,000 jobs for Kashmiri pandits. Rajiv Chuni, Chairman S.O.S. International, said that PoK refugees have suffered the worst holocaust in 1947 and sacrificed more than 50,000 lives but have not been paid any package. Further, he asserts that the government is trying to create a class within a class and category within a category by treating the displaced population of the state in different manners.\textsuperscript{62} 3,000 posts had been created in 2011 for the Kashmiri pandits youth whose parents had migrated from the Kashmir valley in 1990 fearing persecution by islamic militants. They were recruited through special drive by the Jammu and Kashmir Service Selection Board. However, the other displaced persons in the state were neglected. No attention is being paid by the government on the demands raised by the 1947 PoK displaced persons. It is the government’s prime responsibility to treat the population equally and not create a wedge among different sections of the society. But indifferent and discriminatory attitude is held by both state and central governments.

Table 3.6: Occupation of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service/Government Employee</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.7: Household income per month of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000-5000</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000-10000</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000-25,000</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,000 &amp; above</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Land, Property and other Economic Rights

Displacement aggravates economic insecurity, alienation from community and rights of belonging to land and other forms of private and common property. The displaced persons reveal that such movement is fraught with questions about identity, personal insecurity and the lack of rights that usually accompany citizenship. The sense of belonging or rootedness in a place that provides the security of membership, resources and facilities is often replaced by a sense of isolation and alienation in the new location.63 These displaced people too were fraught with economic insecurity and loss of land and property that they were holding in their place of residence in PoK areas. After resettlement, they got land as compensation package which was announced by the government. There is variability in the allotment of land.

Table 3.8: Land holdings of the families of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Land holding (in kanals)</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Landless</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-50</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>78.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 50</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 1947 PoK displaced persons have all the socio-economic rights. The resettled displaced persons are engaged in agricultural, wage-earning and income-generating opportunities. They are enjoying all the similar rights which the other permanent residents of the state possess. They have access to land, taking loans and getting employed in the government services.

**Education**

The displaced persons were mostly illiterate; their displacement from the areas of PoK has impacted positively especially in the education sector among the newer generations. Many availed the opportunities available to make their children educated. As a result, literacy rates among displaced persons have improved. Immediately after their displacement, the government did not respond to their educational needs. No schools were established at camp cites as well as schools were at distance in places where they were resettled. Now there is not any problem in accessibility of schools as under Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan, schools are established within approachable distance. In this regard, there is no complaint from the displaced persons but they raise the point that similar benefits should be provided to them which are being given to the displaced
Kashmiri pandits such as scholarships, reservation of seats and assistance for professional studies in professional institutions.

Table 3.9: Educational qualification of the Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Qualification</th>
<th>Number of Persons</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>16.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>9.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>24.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>22.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate and above</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age and gender

The large number of young people among displaced populations has important implications for protection. Displaced children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable to threats to their safety and wellbeing. These include separation from families, sexual exploitation, HIV/AIDS infection, forced labour or slavery, abuse and violence, forcible recruitment into armed groups, trafficking, lack of access to education and basic assistance, detention and denial of access to asylum or family-reunification procedures. Unaccompanied children are at greatest risk, since they lack the protection, physical care and emotional support provided by the family.64 Those accompanied by only one parent may also be at higher risk than other children.65

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Table 3.10: Age wise distribution of Selected Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-35</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-50</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-75</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 +</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Camps and settlements**

The highly varied conditions of exile for different displaced populations have equally diverse implications for their access to protection and assistance and for their prospects for local integration, return or resettlement. In protracted refugee situations, many of the displaced have remained confined to refugee camps, sometimes for decades. They are marginalised in the country of asylum, unable to return home in safety and cannot look forward to resettlement elsewhere. In some situations, those located in camps lack many fundamental rights - such as freedom of movement and the right to work - due to their forced exclusion from mainstream society. They are often exposed to high levels of violence and human rights abuse because of poor security within or around the camps. The 1947 PoK displaced persons had taken shelter in the relief camps established at Nagrota, Chatha, Company Bagh, Frashkhaana at Jammu city and outside state at Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur. Majority of the displaced persons who were resettled in Rajouri district stayed at Nagrota camp, while others at Poonch quilla.

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66 Ibid., p. 22.