The mass evacuation of the minorities from West to East Punjab was the greatest rescue project in history. (It was owing to ceaseless planning from the highest to the lowest governmental level, a gigantic organizational effort, steady perseverance in the face of incalculable obstacles and gusts of popular passions that this task had to be completed. The distressed refugees looked up to the Government to provide them relief and rehabilitation. The extent of loss of life and property, and the vast problems of relief and rehabilitation made it apparent from the outset that the infant East Punjab Province had neither the resources nor the organization to meet the crisis. The Central government pledged assistance from the very beginning.\footnote{Nanda, J. 1948 – Punjab Uprooted. Bombay, Hind Kitab limited, p. 62.} The refugees felt that it was responsibility of the government to support them.

According to them the Government was assumed to be an insurance company with “all risks policies” for every citizen, thus carrying an obligation to reimburse the refugees for their losses to the last pie.\footnote{Ibid. p. 63.}

“Rehabilitation”, as the dictionary defines the word, is the process of reinstating or re-establishing one in the esteem of others.\footnote{Rao, U. Bhaskar, 1967. The Story of Rehabilitation. Delhi, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, p. 48.} The new Ministry of rehabilitation created by the Government of India in September 1947 was aware from the start that rehabilitation would be the coping stone of its labours, the very crown of its achievement. The organization of evacuation and the provision of temporary relief were arduous in themselves, and very important preliminaries in the slow process of healing the wounds of partition. But the task would be only half fulfilled until the rehabilitation of the hundreds of thousands of people uprooted by the cataclysm had gradually restored to them something like their former dignity.
Soon after partition, 5,500,000 people suddenly caught in a furious avalanche of hate, were forced to leave their homes in Pakistan and migrate to India. This displacement was without any plan and resulted in untold suffering to millions. There were at one time 980,000 displaced persons in 174 camps all over the country. In fact, in the second year after the freedom, there were some 800,000 displaced persons in camps and their maintenance did cost the exchequer as many rupees per day. Approximately Rs. 160,000,000 had been spent on relief and rehabilitation in the first year itself.

The movement of the non-Muslim population into the East Punjab and that of the Muslims into the West Punjab caused an upheaval in the economic life of the province. The vast disparity in the occupational pursuits of the migrants on the two sides gave a severe setback to trade and industry and greatly affected the agricultural production. The standing crops had suffered a great deal as many of the departing Muslims had set them on fire. Natural calamities like rains and floods, during the period further devastated the villages. The endless stream of refugees from one side to the other made the food position extremely difficult and no attention could be paid to the crops. The first task of the Government, therefore, was to send the people to the villages. The peasant proprietors in the canal colonies in the West Punjab, who had migrated from the districts of Jullundur Division and had long been linked with West Punjab, “bent their steps homewards” on crossing the borders.

EVACUEE PROPERTY: Rehabilitation and resettlement proved to be one of the most difficult and complicated problems that the infant state of the East Punjab had to face. It was a part of the All-India problem. The Government of India, too could not do much either towards the solution of the problem, or payment of compensation because it was entirely dependent on the Inter-Dominion agreement between India and Pakistan.

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4 The years After the Freedom. The Publication Division (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India. (April 1948 – March 1949).
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.
As early as 29 November 1947, K.C. Neogi, Indian Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation, stressed that "the magnitude of the refugee problem has been such that there has been no historical parallel to it. Nowhere in history was a transfer of population of such dimensions taken place in such a short time and under such circumstances... The problem itself is not really one problem, but literally scores of problems, each one having an importance and urgency of its own."8

Among these ‘scores of problems’ one which loomed, particularly, large was the question of property, both movable and immovable, left behind by refugees on both sides of the frontier. The property was of considerable volume. According to official Indian sources, non-Muslim refugees vacated 6,729,000 acres of land in West Punjab alone, of which 4,307,000 were canal irrigated; other land was relinquished by non-Muslims in Sind, the North-Western Frontier Province, Bahawalpur, Baluchistan and Khairpur.9 Moslem refugees from East Punjab and the states of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot and Kapurthala in India, abandoned 4,735,000 acres, 1,326,000 of them irrigated.10 In addition, houses, factories, machinery and huge stores of raw materials were left behind both in India and Pakistan.

Schechtman, had pointed out that Indian sources estimated the total value of Hindu and Sikh property in Pakistan at $8 billion and that of Moslem refugee property in India at $800 million.11 Pakistan sources emphatically discounted the validity of these figures which were based on property claims filed by Hindu and Sikh refugees and stressed that these claims had been described by the Indian Minister of Rehabilitation, Mohanlal Saksena, himself as ‘not worth the paper on which the claims were written’.12 The Pakistan

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7 The Statesman, New Delhi, July 25, 1950.
8 Indian Information, 1 January, 1948.
12 The Hindustan Times, New Delhi, 10 February 1950.
Ministry of Refugees and Rehabilitation insisted that the claims were ‘based solely on guesswork and were fantastically exaggerated. Pakistan had been unable in the time available to catalogue the extent of property left behind by Hindus and Sikhs, and made no pretension of knowing the value of property abandoned in India by Moslems.\textsuperscript{13} Dr. I.H. Qureshi, Pakistan Minister for Refugees and Rehabilitation, went even farther and asserted that ‘India holds more Muslim evacuee property than the Hindus and the Sikhs have left in Pakistan.’\textsuperscript{14} Settlement of the property interests involved was of vital concern to millions of people and represented one of the most thorny problems confronting both India and Pakistan.

A number of conferences were held between India and Pakistan to come to some agreement on the issue of evacuee property and various other issues arising out of partition. Nothing was mentioned about the evacuee property in the first Inter-Dominion Conference held on 17 August, 1947.\textsuperscript{15} The evacuee property issue was, however, first discussed at a meeting of the Joint Defence Council of India and Pakistan, attended by the Prime Ministers of both countries under the Chairmanship of Viscount Mountbatten. Both the governments agreed that a custodian of evacuee property should be appointed to look after the property left over by the refugees and restore it to the rightful owners.\textsuperscript{16} Representatives of both the countries declared that ‘illegal seizure of property will not be recognized’.\textsuperscript{17} Promising steps to implement this agreed solution of the property question were quickly taken on both sides of the frontier. The Government of the East Punjab and the West Punjab issued ordinances to that effect. ‘An ‘evacuee’ was defined as person resident in West Punjab (Pakistan) who left West Punjab on or after the first day of March 1947,
without appointing any person to protect his property left in West Punjab. Evacuee property was the property of such a person."18

Simultaneously, with the issue of the Evacuee Property Ordinance, the West Punjab Government issued another ordinance on 9 September, 1947, “to provide for economic rehabilitation” in the province.19 By this ordinance, the Rehabilitation Commissioner of the West Punjab was empowered to “assume possession and control of abandoned lands, business and undertakings; grant temporary leases of abandoned agricultural holdings of the refugees for a term not exceeding one year; permit the occupation of any abandoned buildings by refugees or other person.”20 The Rehabilitation Commissioner could also assume possession or control of any property under the control of the custodian of Evacuee Property.21 By this Ordinance the Rehabilitation Commissioner could take over non-Muslim property, factories or business concern in any part of Western Pakistan, even when the owner was staying over there, if such a factory or business concern had stopped functioning temporarily or permanently, either due to non-availability of workmen, raw materials or some other reason.22 It was alleged that the non-Muslim property was openly seized under this ordinance. The Government of India was not even informed about it and they came to know only after a long time. The Government of India charged the Pakistan Government with the violation in letter and spirit of the statement made on 29 August, 1947.23

The matter was taken up at the inter Dominion Secretarial level conference held at New Delhi on 18 and 20 December, 1947. The Pakistan representatives suggested that the Indian Government should take similar

18 Ibid., Section 12(a) of the ordinance.
20 Ibid.
action with regard to evacuee property. The property left by the non-Muslims in West Pakistan was many times more than that of the Muslims in the East Punjab. The Government of Pakistan was fully aware that even if the Government of India took similar action, the net loss would be that of India. The Conference appointed a committee to investigate the matter and suggest a solution. The Joint Official Committee which met at Lahore on 22 March, took stock of the changed situation and proposed that both the Dominions could acquire agricultural property on payment of a fair value. A Joint Valuation Board was to be set up to assess the ‘fair value’. A different principle, however, was adopted with regard to the urban immovable property, including commercial and industrial undertakings, factories and workshops. The two Dominion Governments were to set up a Joint Governments Agency to arrange sale or exchange of the evacuee property. The provincial governments were empowered to requisition such property on payment of fair compensation. The Joint Urban Assessment Board was to prescribe the basis for assessing the lease money, prepare the basis for assessing of the lease money; prepare a list and give particulars of evacuee urban immovable property and assess the lease money.

With regard to movable property, it recommended that “the evacuee owner shall have the right to apply for the restoration of his movable property” unless it had been acquired or requisitioned by the provincial government or rehabilitation authorities. The report was accepted by the high ranking officials of both sides. The Secretariat level conference recommended that the Inter Dominion Conference should be called to discuss the question of evacuee property. The Third Inter-Dominion Conference met on 22 July, 1948 but they could not come to any agreement. The Government of India alleged that “the

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24 Ibid, p.11.
26 Concerning Evacuee Property. 1950. Delhi, Issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, p.16.
Pakistan Government wanted to dodge and not to see the issue squarely.28 No agreement could be reached regarding agricultural and urban property. Even for movable evacuee property in the West Punjab, the Government started a drive to seize all of it under one pretext or another. They also extended the confiscatory provisions of the ‘West Punjab Evacuee Property Ordinance, with the result that the non Muslim refugees from the West Punjab, who up to this time had not moved to the East Punjab, thought it better to do so because living in those unsettled conditions without being able to continue to promote their business interest was not a very attractive propositions. Such refugees as had already moved to the East Punjab, could not go back due to the fact that their properties were already confiscated and restoration would have involved a lot of time consuming and exhausting legal and personal efforts.29

To ensure that the owners of urban property continued to receive the income from property till sales and exchanges could be arranged, the official committee recommended that a Joint Urban Assessment Board be established. It was to be the duty of this board to prescribe the basis for assessing the lease money, to prepare a list for each locality giving particulars of evacuee urban immovable property situated in it, the name of the evacuee owners, and the lease money assessed in accordance with the basis prescribed by them.30 Accounts of the least money collected by each dominion were to be exchanged semi-annually so that the rents received could be paid to the evacuees. The governing principle adopted by the Official Committee was thus to ensure the receipt of rents by evacuee owners who had migrated to the other Dominion, exchange of agricultural property of governmental level, and full facilities for the liquidation of urban immovable property by private efforts at reasonable prices and with government assistance.31

29 ibid, p.115.
30 Schechman, Joseph B. Evacuee Property in India and Pakistan. India Quarterly; vol.IX; Jan-March 1953, p.11.
31 ibid, p.11.
The Government of India claimed that it was following a liberal policy. As a result, nearly one hundred thousand Muslims came back to resettle in the East Punjab, Alwar and Bharatpur. The stream of returning Muslims was gaining momentum while no non-Muslim had gone back. Realizing their duty towards the non-Muslims, the Government of India suggested that a planned return of population to their original homes, should be arranged. But when the Government of Pakistan did not even reply to this in spite of various reminders, the Government of India introduced the permit system between the two countries.32

The Fifth Inter Dominion Conference held at Karachi on 10 January, 1949 and at Delhi in April 1949 took the following decisions regarding agricultural urban and movable property.33 “They agreed to exchange copies of revenue records and existing records bearing land prices. It was decided that the evacuee owner would have the right to transfer his property by sale, exchange or otherwise subject to such right as may have been acquired by the provincial or the Dominion Government as the case might be. Both the Governments agreed to manage through a custodian such evacuee urban immovable property as had not been acquired or requisitioned by it. The evacuee owner was also given the right to apply for the restoration of his movable property, sell or dispose it off himself or through his agent; and was given facilities to inspect his movables held in charge of the Custodian.”34 The Government concerned was to be responsible for taking all steps necessary to ensure the safety of the evacuee owners and their agents engaged in managing, disposing of or removing their movables. In addition, they were to give all possible transport facilities. It was also agreed that joint committees be set up for the exchange of revenue or other records and to receive complaints and arrange for the redress of such grievances as were brought to their notice.35

33 ibid, p.30.
committees were to pay particular attention to facilities regarding the disposal, recovery, restoration and movements of goods lying pledged with banks, and goods lying at railway stations and docks, parcels, and money orders lying undelivered or un-remitted at the post offices.\textsuperscript{36} Reasonable exchange facilities were to be given for remittances representing sale proceeds of the evacuee property sold, while customs and export and import controls were to be relaxed.\textsuperscript{37} An inter-Dominion commission consisting of the Secretaries of the Government of the two Dominions was to be set up to review and supervise the working of the agreed arrangements and an inter-Dominion Refugees and Evacuees Council was to be established at ministerial level to resolve matters on which the inter-Dominion Commission could not reach an agreement.\textsuperscript{38}

There was a vast difference between the agreements and their implementation in practice. Almost immediately after the Karachi Agreement, the Government of Pakistan issued an ordinance that every man coming out of Pakistan had to obtain an income for clearance certificate, unless he went there for less than 15 days. The Government of India had not been consulted about it. The ordinance, according to the Indian sources, “amounted to a virtual confiscation of all agricultural evacuees’ property as owners could neither receive rents nor exchange or sell their property. With regard to the urban evacuee property too, the Pakistan Government slashed down the rents by 80 percent.”\textsuperscript{39} Similar was the case with the movable property. The Act was severely criticized.\textsuperscript{40} In spite of long correspondence by the Government of India, the ordinance was not withdrawn. They were now convinced that “the only possible solution was for both Governments to acquire at a fair valuation, carried out by a Joint Agency of both Governments, all the evacuee immovable

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid, p.116.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
property situated within its territories, the debtor Dominion paying to the creditors the difference in value, according to agreed agreements.\textsuperscript{41}

The Sixth Inter-Dominion Conference held on 25-29 June, 1949, also met with failure as the Government of Pakistan was not agreeable to an exchange of urban evacuee immovable property on a governmental basis. The repudiation of the Karachi Agreement and failure of the Sixth Inter-Dominion Conference sealed the fate of the evacuee property problem. The Government of India issued an ordinance on 13 June, 1949, which prohibited transfer of ownership of some urban immovable evacuee property. This was followed by a Pakistan ordinance on 26 July, 1949, on similar lines which was issued by the Pakistan Government on 15 October, 1949.\textsuperscript{42} By this the provisions of the ordinance were made stricter – “any person could become evacuee from Pakistan, even though he continued to live there and had never left the country, so long as any distant relative of his had gone to India. No provision for appeal to any authorized court existed. It was no longer obligatory on the Custodian to notify the property he had taken over.”\textsuperscript{43}

The Government of India, too, issued a Central Evacuee Property Ordinance on 18 July, 1949. It claimed that it made efforts in the various Inter-Dominion Conferences to come to an agreement with Pakistan with regard to the disposal of evacuee property by different means (a) individual sale or exchange of property or (b) valuation of the property on a fair basis in both the countries and payments of the difference.\textsuperscript{44} But the Government of Pakistan did not accept any of the proposals. Although the problem of immovable property could not be solved, agreements regarding movable property were more or less implemented. A fresh agreement was, therefore, negotiated at a meeting held in New Delhi in June 1950 at India’s insistence. Some of the provisions were:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{41} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{42} Ibid, p.117.
  \item \textsuperscript{43} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{44} Rehabilitation Division (1948-65). File No. 1/4/LSD/61, p. 3, National Archives, New Delhi.
\end{itemize}
(a) In respect of articles in safe custody with banks, depositors were to apply to the Custodians of Evacuee Properties for permission to take away the contents of lockers or safe deposit vaults. The contents would also be handed over to Governmental agencies legally empowered by the evacuee depositors to receive them. Parties with claims by a prescribed date, and the depositors would not be allowed to remove his assets until the case had been settled.45

(b) With regard to savings bank accounts, National Savings Certificates, Defence Savings Certificates, Five-Year Cash Certificates and other postal securities, claims could be made at any post office in either Dominion. Consolidated statements of such claims would then be sent to the Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in the other Dominion, who, after the necessary verification, would issue orders for the transfer of the relevant accounts. Production of passbooks and verification of signatures would be dispensed with. Where passbooks had been lost or mislaid, consolidate lists of claims were to be exchanged between the two Dominions and the accounts were transferred after the necessary investigations.46

(c) In the case of insurance companies which had had head offices in Pakistan and which had moved to India, it was agreed that they should apply to the Custodian of Evacuee Property at Lahore for the removal of their head office records, equipment, furniture, etc. They were, however, obliged to keep 15 percent of their statutory deposits with the Reserve Bank in trust, for policy-holders residents in Pakistan.47

(d) It was agreed to adopt measures to facilitate quick transfer of pension papers to the Dominion concerned. Pensioners' complaints were to be cleared between the Auditors-General of the two Dominions. Pending

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45 Rao, U. Bhaskar, 1967. The Story of Rehabilitation. Delhi, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, p.87. 46 Ibid. 47
the transfer of pension papers provisional payment would be made on
the production of satisfactory evidence.\footnote{Ibid.}

(c) Licensed arms and ammunition confiscated by the authorities were to be
restored to their lawful owners on the production of proper receipts.\footnote{Ibid.}

(f) Banks were to be allowed to transfer clean Government securities, share
certificates and bonds from one Dominion to the other. It was agreed
also that arrangements should be made to enable banks, which has
suspended business in either Dominion owing to the disturbances to
resume operations. Such facilities would include adequate housing and
protection for members of staff belonging to the minority
communities.\footnote{Ibid., p. 88.}

As for holy books and scriptures, both Dominions undertook to provide
every facility for their transfer. They agreed further to take steps to protect and
safeguard all properties belonging to religious, charitable and cultural
institutions, and to restore them as quickly as may be.\footnote{Ibid., p. 88.}

The government of India was keen to arrive at same settlement with the
Pakistan Government on the issue because the property left by non-Muslims in
the past Punjab was greater in value. The Pakistan Government, on the other
hand, applied delaying tactics because it knew that only settlement of the issue
would mean additional burden of ready payments that would be required in lieu
of the excess property in its possession. The prolonged negotiations,
undoubtedly, made the process of rehabilitation difficult. Thirty-eight lakh of
non-Muslims had crossed the border as against forty-four lakh of Muslims who
had gone over to West Pakistan.\footnote{Rai, Satya M., 1986, \textit{Punjab Since Partition}. Delhi, Durga Publications, p. 117.} In the resettlement process 14,67,632
persons moved out of the East Punjab. According to the 1951 census, the total population of the East Punjab was 1,23,37,965 and the total refugee population, according to Refugee Census, October-November, 1948 was 24,65,243 which in other words meant that every fifth person who migrated to the East Punjab was displaced and belonged to the rich peasantry and industrial and trading classes. There was a vast difference in fertility between the agricultural land left in the West Punjab by them and the land abandoned by the Muslims in the East Punjab. The partition, thus, confronted the State with the boggling problem of supporting 44 percent of the total population of the Punjab with only 38 percent of total land.

RURAL REHABILITATION

The permanent distribution of land could not take place till the Government of India had come to some agreement with Pakistan on evacuee property besides, no facts or statistics were available on which a scheme of resettlement could be based. Accordingly, "a rough and ready scheme of distribution of land for the first harvest was drawn and land was allotted in groups to owners as well as tenants." The agricultural refugees were asked to proceed to the tehsils where they wanted to settle. A fixed area of land and a pair of bullocks were allotted to every adult in the family. "The scheme of group allotment was designed to ensure quick distribution of land to enable the refugees from particular villages and areas to remain together as far as possible and to enable cultivators to pool their resources for the saving of the rabi crop and to share amongst themselves equitably the standing kharif crops. These objects were largely secured and within two months, two million acres of land were occupied."

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56 Ibid., pp. 17-19.
58 Ibid.
The idea of group allotment or equal distribution "frightened many people". Same thought it to be a "collectivist experiment". The rich peasants and landlords felt that they were being deprived of their legitimate rights. There could be no agreement between the small and big refugee landholders on the pattern of land allotment on account of the clash of interests of the two groups. The temporary land allotment policy was glaringly against the interests of big landholders and consequently they were extremely critical of this step of the government. Yielding to the pressure, the East Punjab Government evolved a policy of graded cuts which was combatively more beneficial to the big landholders. But this alone was not the deciding factor, which influenced the resettlement policies. There were other important factors, which influenced and shaped the decision of the Government.

The Government of India agreed that all displaced landholders from the West Punjab and those of Punjabi origin from other parts of the West Punjab should be resettled on the evacuee lands in the East Punjab and Pepsu.59

The West Punjab and the East Punjab Governments came to an agreement to prepare copies of revenue records in their possession for the use of the other province. Exchange of records was started by the end of November, 1948 and was completed during winters.60

The government of East Punjab and PEPSU placed the whole of the revenue staff at the disposal of the rehabilitation authorities. Eight thousand officials worked for nearly fifteen months to accomplish the task.

**Quasi – Permanent Settlement:** The new scheme of distribution involving over 50 lakh acres of land on the basis of individual rights, entailed a number of complicated processes. Elaborate rules and methods had to be evolved for the valuation of different classes of land and rights of different applicants for allotment. The choice of villages for the rehabilitation of these

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59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
people was also a difficult task. Unlike the urban areas, where a considerable degree of impersonalizing, was possible, the settlers in rural areas had to become a part of the village community, which made the resettlement of complete strangers a rather complicated proposition. It was, therefore, decided by the government to send groups of settlers together as far as possible or send them to such village where they might have had relations.\textsuperscript{61}

The evacuee land could not be allotted permanently until issues relating to the evacuee property were settled between India and Pakistan because legally the evacuees still continued to be the owners of the abandoned property. The new land allotment scheme was announced on February 7, 1948 and it was known as the “Quasi – Permanent Settlement Scheme”. The allotments were to be made only to such refugees as were owners, occupancy tenants under the Punjab tenancy act, or tenants under the Colonization of Government Lands Act.\textsuperscript{62}

There was a marked difference in relative settling of land in the East and the West Punjab. It was, therefore, necessary to evaluate the different classes of land on the basis of a comparable unit of value. The unit devised for land resettlement operations in the East Punjab and PEPSU was given the name of “standard acre”.\textsuperscript{63} The Quasi-permanent Land Allotment Scheme could be implemented in full only after careful scouting and verification of individual claims, many of which it was discovered, were glossy exaggerated. This verification depended largely on the availability of the elegant documents from the Pakistani authorities, on a reciprocal basis. The arrangements for the exchange of records worked satisfactorily only in respect of West Punjab. The other States of Pakistan were either reluctant or unable to produce the necessary documents. The Government of India had to be content, for the time being, to allot lands in East Punjab and PEPSU on a quasi-permanent basis to

rural refugees from West Punjab with verified claims. The allocations could not be permanent so long as ownership of such lands vested theoretically with the émigré Muslim landlords. 64

The displaced persons in the East Punjab could receive in quasi-permanent allotment 24,48,830 standard acres of land against 39,35,131 standard of 14,86,301 standard acres. 65 In order to adjust, it was necessary to apply some cut on the land to be allotted to them. A cut of 25 percent was enforced on holdings upto 10 standard acres; the highest out of the order of 95 percent was enforced on claims to over 1,000 standard acres. It not only secured the largest measure of benefit for small landholders, but it also ensured that no holding was uneconomic or incapable of providing its owner with an adequate source of livelihood. Though the title to the lands still rested with the evacuee Muslims, allotters were at liberty to lease them for a period upto three years. All that they were required to pay was the land revenue and not rent or cess.

Evacuee houses in rural areas in the Punjab were regarded as appurtenant to the land and were also allotted on a quasi-permanent basis along with the land. Village allotment committees were constituted for the purpose of allocating houses on certain fixed principles. The best house in the village went with the largest block of allotted land, on condition that the allotted owned a comparable house in Pakistan. 66 Houses belonging to evacuee kamins (Village artisans) were given to displaced kamins. 67 In this manner, there had been resettlement of 17,273 harridan families on agricultural lands. 68 Loans amounting to Rs. 827 lakhs had also been granted to 4,112 families of Harijan

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67 Ibid.
68 *The Sixth Year After the Freedom (April 1952 – March 1953)*. Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
craftsmen and artisans. Under the Compensation Rules, they could be permanently transferred to allotters only on payment of the reserve price.

A garden colony scheme was also introduced. Certain compact areas in every district were earmarked for this particular kind of development. Units ranging from 10 to 20 acres were allotted to educated persons with gardening experience who undertook to plant gardens in conformity with official regulations. The Government, on its part provided all the necessary irrigational and horticultural facilities.

By the end of 1950, enormous progress had been made in the matter of allotting land to displaced persons on a quasi permanent basis in the Punjab and PEPSU regions. The figures speak for themselves. About 4.25 lakh of refugee families from the West Punjab had been given some 20 lakh standard acres of land and 1.53 lakh mortgagees had been allotted land on the basis of their mortgage claim. In addition to allotment of land, loans had been advanced to deserving cases for the purchase of bullocks, seeds, implements, livestock, etc. the amount of loan normally sanctioned was about Rs. 1,150 per family. The total amount advanced upto 1952-53 had been Rs. 9.28 crore. The quantum of loans advanced to these settlers had risen to Rs. 4.53 cores by the year 1954. In the Punjab (including PEPSU) 4.77 lakh families were allotted evacuee lands on quasi-permanent basis and another 33,000 families were settled as tenants at will. In addition, 58,000 families were given land on temporary basis in other states. Upto 1955-56, Rs. 886.48 lakh were given as rural loans and the provision made for 1956-57 was Rs. 6.00 lakh. Upto January 31, 1957, 2.39 lakh families of over 17.87 lakh standard acres worth about Rs. 80.44 crore. Punjabi land claimants had been allotted 33,703 standard acres upto December

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69 Ibid.
71 The Sixth Year After the Freedom (April 1952 – March 1953). Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
72 Ibid.
73 The Tenth Year After the Freedom (April 1957 – March 1958). Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
By December 31, 1956, 17,235 non-Punjabi claimants had been allotted 30,012 standard acres and 219,461 ordinary acres and groves worth Rs.36.50 lakh in the states of Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, UP, Mysore, Madras, Andhra Pradesh and Bombay.

After the passing of the Displaced Persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Act of 1954, all evacuee land became the property of the central Government, which could now use it freely for the rehabilitation of displaced persons. Operations for the transfer of proprietary rights in such lands were started in earnest thereafter. The grant of such transfers was taken in hand in September, 1955. It involved the most careful secreting of every allotment, which in itself absorbed a great deal of time and labour. By the end of 1958, such grants had been conferred on 2,60,091 allotters, who thus became full owners of 19,11,718 standard acres of land. The total number of houses thus transferred was 82,424. Land worth Rs.85.22 crores was transferred to displaced agriculturists from Pakistan. Out of 4.77 lakh families who were allotted evacuee land in the Punjab on a quasi – permanent basis, permanent rights were transferred to 2,63,804 allotters upto December 31, 1959, covering an area of 19,32,408 standard acres valued at about Rs.87 crores. Proprietary rights in 84,459 houses allotted along with the lands were also transferred. Under the rules, land claimants of Punjabi origins were to be allotted land only in Punjab. Some of them had, however, been allotted land in other states. In order to avoid dislocation and consequential hardship to such allotters, it was decided to allow them to retain the land in other states by cancelling their allotment in the Punjab.

In addition to allotment of land, loans had been advanced to deserving cases for the purchase of bullocks, seeds, implements etc. The amount of loan

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74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
77 Ibid., p. 155.
78 *The Thirteenth Year After the Freedom (April 1959 – March 1960).* Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
normally sanctioned was about Rs. 1,150 per family. The total amount advanced upto 1952-53 had been Rs.9.28 crore.80 A sum of Rs.25 lakh had been provided for 1953-54. Loans were advanced also to rural artisans, agricultural labourers and shopkeepers. By the end of 1958, the total of loans to all classes of rural refugees was of the order of Rs.918 crores.81

Apart from those who had claims against land abandoned in Pakistan, there were many thousands of landless displaced agriculturists, Harijans who had settled on land in India. The Ministry had to protect their interest by taking care that they were not uprooted once again. Rules were framed to enable them to become eventual owners of the land in their possession. They were permitted to pay the price of such land in installments conveniently spread over 15 years after an initial deposit of just 10 percent of the price.82

The claims of such persons in respect of houses left behind in Pakistan were, however, rejected, on the grants that with almost every gift of land went a small rural house.

Partition awarded the more fertile part of the Punjab to Pakistan. Served by a magnificent irrigational network, this had truly been the granary of sub continent. The disturbance caused to Indian food economy was great. For sometime, the problem of displaced persons created a great deal of confusion, and the Government efforts to intensify food production seemed to have been put out of gear.83 But very soon it became apparent that the food drive and rehabilitation could go hand in hand, each complementing the other. The influx of a sturdy industrious rural population was indeed a blessing in disguise. It provided the guarantee that every inch of land abandoned by Muslim tillers was

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80 Ibid. 
81 The Sixth Year After the Freedom (April 1952 – March 1953). Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. 
83 Ibid. 
84 Ibid., p. 56.
brought under the plough and made to yield more.\textsuperscript{84} It also accelerated the processes of reclamation and deforestation. The result was a steady rise in the country's food production.

**URBAN REHABILITATION**

The rehabilitation of urban refugees primarily involved the provision of housing accommodation and of suitable employment. Urban rehabilitation presented greater difficulties. The proportion of urban population was much higher in the case of non-Muslims who had come to India than in the case of Muslims who had migrated to Pakistan. It was estimated that number of urban immigrants was 50 percent higher than that of urban emigrants.\textsuperscript{85} Another difficulty was presented by the fact that the standard of living of incoming non-Muslims was very much higher than that of the Muslims who had left India. But they had been forced to accept a serious reduction in the standard of living because they had to leave behind their property and other assets. They had to now depend on monetary assistance from the Government. So far as housing was concerned, the houses left behind by Muslims were many inferiors to what the urban refugees were accustomed to in West Punjab. Besides, East Punjab had fewer towns where these refugees could be accommodated. As a result of the great influx to cities and towns and the suspension of building activity during the war, the housing situation was serious even before partition.\textsuperscript{86}

The influx of refugees had rendered the situation still worse. The occupational disparity between the Muslims and non-Muslim refugees had resulted in a plethora in certain occupations like business and professions and the resultant shortage in skilled and unskilled labour. This made the problem of re-employment of refugees complicated.

\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{86} Ibid.
**Housing:** The task of rehabilitating the urban population called for a much larger outlay of financial resources. Housing became a major problem virus.

The number of urban refugees that was to be settled in the East Punjab, was estimated at 13,00,000 while the number of departing urban Muslims was nearly 8 to 9 lakh. Thus about 4 to 5 lakh of additional urban refugees were to be settled in towns.\(^7\) There was a considerable imbalance; for every two Muslim town - dwellers who had fled India there were at least three Hindus or Sikhs who sought asylum in India. The Hindus and Sikhs pouring into India had been, as a rule, more affluent than their Muslim counterparts. The houses left behind by the latter were not only fewer but also smaller and, generally, in the poorer quarters and in many instances in a condition of dilapidation; the simple operation of exchange could hardly meet the situation.\(^8\)

What Muslim evacuees had left behind in India amounted barely to 1,75,000 houses. Of these, even after eventual repairs hardly 1,36,000 were found suitable for human habitation.\(^9\) They would have only catered to the needs of just about half of the urban refugees, whose number was estimated at 25 lakhs. The problem stood out in all its frightening proportions. New tenements were required for no fewer than about 2 lakhs.

After displaced persons had been lodged in whatever accommodation was available or could be commandeered, there were thousands and thousands still lacking a roof over their heads. Quite a number of refugees had found accommodation with their relatives and friends, while a few who brought some money with them were able to purchase houses to obtain them on rent.\(^9\) But in view of the shortage of accommodation, a majority of the refugees had to live in tents or temporary structures and in houses abandoned by the evacuees. But

\(^7\) Urban Rehabilitation in East Punjab (n.d.), Sinha, p. 1.
\(^9\) Ibid., p. 58.
that was a drop in the ocean. Government's immediate efforts were directed
towards settling them in dharamsalas, barracks, tents and other improvised
shelters.

The first step to tackle the question on all India basis was made at the
New Delhi conference of the head of Rehabilitation Departments of all States
in July 1948. The main decision taken at this conference was the allocation of
fixed quotas of refugees to each state according to their absorptive capacity.\textsuperscript{91}
The states were requested to draw up detailed plans for housing these displaced
persons taking into account the accommodation available in evacuee houses,
vacant barracks, etc. After their plans had been approved by the central
ministry, the states were provided with the necessary funds in the shape of long
term loans. The central Government undertook construction only in areas like
Delhi, under its own administration. The housing schemes till March 1949
received the approval of the Government of India and involved the expenditure
from central revenues of about Rs. 165,800,000.\textsuperscript{92} The states formulated
elaborate schemes. The development of colonies on the outskirts of existing
towns were envisaged. Plans were laid down for separate self-contained
townships, each with its own civic centres, hospitals, markets and shops,
educational institutions and residential accommodation. The states also laid
emphasis on affording the refugees opportunities of gainful employment. Thus
many of the new townships that sprang into existence came to be models of
self-help, the displaced persons sharing proudly in the adventure with an
intimate feeling of belonging.\textsuperscript{93}

The Ministry, realizing the limitations imposed by the acute shortage of
building materials, impressed on the states the necessity for restricting their use

\textsuperscript{90} Vakil, C.N., 1950. \textit{Economic Consequences of Divided India}. Bombay, Vora and Co.
Publishers Ltd., p. 93.
\textsuperscript{91} \textit{After Partition}, 1948. Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting,
p. 61.
\textsuperscript{92} \textit{The Second Year After Freedom (April 1948 – March 1949)}. Delhi, Publications Division,
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
\textsuperscript{93} Rao, U. Bhaskar, 1967. \textit{The Story of Rehabilitation}. Delhi, Publication Division, Ministry of
Information and Broadcasting, p. 59.
to the minimum. The Ministry took the precaution of building up a central stockpile of scarce materials like cement, steel and bricks, from which quarterly allotments were made to the states in proportion to their requirements. Frequently, non-Governmental construction, too, was allowed to requisition help from this source. But the greater part of the building operations, whether dissected by Government or privately sponsored, was executed by the refugees themselves. More then, 1,400,000 urban displaced persons had been accommodated in evacuee house. By the end of March 1950, 19,900 PUCCA houses had been completed and 11,300 were under construction.\textsuperscript{94} About 23,600 semi-pucca tenements had been built by 1950 and 10,500 were under construction.\textsuperscript{95}

A conference of Rehabilitation ministers was summoned in New Delhi in December, 1950 which reviewed the housing problem and decided that, in the first instance, efforts should be concentrated on providing accommodation for those who were still without any shelter or who were living in tents, dharamshalas, roadside pavements, public buildings, temples, mosques, hospitals and schools. They were to be given first consideration Ninety percent of the funds provided for housing was decided to be used for the construction of suitable shelters for this category. They were all to be provided with single room houses with a verandah and improvised kitchen, a bath a latrine and a courtyard.\textsuperscript{96} The state governments had been asked to prepare schemes accordingly. It was also decided that all persons living in tents should be provided with accommodation before the arrival of the monsoon in 1951.\textsuperscript{97} The state governments were also requested to utilize evacuee land for the construction of houses. The conference reached agreement also on the type of tenements that would meet this pressing demand. These small units cost only

\textsuperscript{94} The Third Year After Freedom (April 1949 – March 1950). Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
\textsuperscript{95} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{96} The Fourth Year After Freedom (April 1950 – March 1951). Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
\textsuperscript{97} Ibid.
about Rs. 2,100 to put up though in Bombay and Delhi the cost was somewhat higher, ranging from Rs. 2,400 to Rs. 3,500.98

The ministry sanctioned schemes designed to encourage refugees to build houses for themselves. Plots were acquired and developed and them allotted to displaced persons. After scrutinizing the blue prints prepared for these houses the Government sold them building materials at controlled rates.99 For this purpose, a stockpile of building materials had been built up by the governments of India. Non refugee plot holders who were also similarly assisted had to put their houses at the disposal of the Government for being allotted to refugees for a maximum period of five years. A special branch of the central public works department had been set up to look after the handling of refugee housing schemes. The government of India had undertaken to finance housing schemes sponsored by provinces and states. Besides, refugees who were constructing houses on plots allotted to them by the Government were provided with financial assistance. A grant of upto Rs.500 was provided to enable the refugees to construct houses.100

The Government of India had planned for the construction of 19 townships which, when fully developed accommodated around 630 thousand refugees. Some of the townships which emerged were toward, Nilokheri, Kalkaji, Sonepat, Chandigarh, Kandla, Sardarnagar, Premnagar and Hastinapur. Each of these was a complete and viable unit, equipped with schools, hospitals, shopping centers and industrial sites with basic amenities like water-works, sewage or electricity. Government’s aim was not merely to set up a conglomeration of houses, but to assist with everything that goes to make community life happy and purposeful. Faridabad, as well as Nilokheri

100 *The Fifth Year After Freedom (April 1951 – March 1952)*. Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
were designed as a complexly medium and small scale industries. At Kandla (Gandhidham) a flourishing shipping industry was built up. Thus, the ultimate process of rehabilitation was inextricably linked up with the implementation of the Ministry’s housing programme. The following statement gives an idea of the location and size of the proposed townships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>No. of persons to be catered for (in thousands)</th>
<th>For Displaced Persons from</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bhopal</td>
<td>Bairagarh</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Sind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bombay</td>
<td>Ulhasnagar, Ahemdabad</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>Sind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>Kalkaji</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>West Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sheikhsarai</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>West Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>Faridabad</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>NWFP and W. Punjab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sonepat</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>West Punjab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bahadurgarh</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>West Punjab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chandigarh</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>West Punjab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nilokheri</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>West Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEPSU</td>
<td>Tripuri</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Bahawalpur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kutch</td>
<td>Kandla</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Sind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>Pratapnagar, Udiapur</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Sind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.P.</td>
<td>Shahjehanpur</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>West Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>Halsa Raigachi</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>East Bengal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total for these Townships</strong></td>
<td><strong>633</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from the 19 townships, 136 villages were developed with meticulous attention to detail as suburbs of existing cities and towns. All the modern civic amenities were provided for in these colonies. The ministry was responsible for construction of more than 1.62 lakh houses and tenements in these townships and colonies. A further 45,000 tenements were put up either by private parties or by co-operative societies with the assistance of the Government by way of loans. In addition, some 15,000 plots were developed for building purposes. During this period over Rs. 26 Crores had been spent by the Government of India on the extension of existing towns and the

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construction of new townships.\textsuperscript{104} The housing programme involved expenditure of over Rs. 60 crores up to the end of March 1956. The Second Five-year plan allocated a sum of Rs. 5.7 crores for the completion of construction and development operations and for the provision of amenities.

The largest number of urban displaced persons settled at Delhi. More than five lakhs of them had gravitated to the capital, about three lakhs of whom could neither be accommodated in evacuee houses nor find shelter with relatives and friends.\textsuperscript{105} By the end of 1954, there was a drastic change that was coming over the capital. The city seemed to be expanding out endlessly, new colonies were springing up everywhere, each one well equipped with a school, hospital, shopping center and provided with ample civic amenities. About 12,000 houses, 38,000 tenements and 7,600 shops had been constructed in 73 colonies.\textsuperscript{106} In addition, 18,000 plots each ranging from 200 to 1000 square yards, had been developed for building purposes. To supplement its own efforts, Government made liberal advances in the shape of building loans to displaced persons and co-operative societies. The total of such loans stood at Rs. 1.38 crores in 1957.\textsuperscript{107}

**Employment:** Provision of housing accommodation was only one aspect of the problem of suitable remunerative occupations. Muslim refugees had left behind a number of shops and business premises which the Government of India decided to give over to the incoming refugees.\textsuperscript{108} Since majority of the refugees from Pakistan belonged to the trading classes, the number of shops left behind by Muslims would hardly have sufficed to provide them with business premises. It was, therefore, decided to construct new premises to supplement these. The Government also undertook to repair some of the damaged shops. Since a number of shops left behind by the Muslim refugees

\textsuperscript{104} The First Five Year Plan, A Draft Outline, July 1951, Govt. of India. File No. 4/8, p. 240, Punjab State Archives, Chandigarh.
\textsuperscript{106} Ibid., p. 62.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.
were seized and illegally occupied before the custodian of Evacuee Property could take charge of them, the procedure of allotment was neither smooth nor successful. The Government had decided not to evict refugees from the shops unless suitable alternative premises were found for them; so the illegal occupants were asked to report to the government and in most cases they were recognized as tenants. Thus, a very few shops were left for allotment to those who had approached the Government through proper channels. The Ministry formulated a three-point plan to meet the situation. It provided a safeguard against the problem assuming distressing proportions. The three essential features of this plan were:

(i) Attempts to secure direct employment for those accustomed to service.

(ii) Provision of facilities for technical and vocational training, particularly for younger people. This enabled refugees to equip themselves with new skills and earn an independent living. Besides, it served to redress the imbalance created in certain sectors of the economy by the mass migration of Muslims to Pakistan.

(iii) Grant of liberal financial aid was provided to persons desirous of re-establishing themselves in business or industry. This was coupled with assistance in several other forms as for example, the provision of business or industrial premises special quotas of certain controlled commodities, and licenses.

**Employment Through Government Agencies:** A large number of refugees were formerly in government or private service. In the early days of the partition, there was no co-ordination between different Ministries and Government agencies in providing employment to the refugees and this resulted in confusion and delay. In March 1948 an Employment Co-ordination
committee was set up to bring about the co-operation of provincial and state governments and industrial and business concerns in providing employment to the refugees.\textsuperscript{111}

(a) **Employment Exchanges:** An invaluable part of governments machinery for placing refugees in suitable jobs was the Employment Exchanges under the control of the Directorate General of Resettlement and Employment in the Ministry of Labour. Under instructions from the Home Ministry, the Exchanges accorded the highest priority in the matter of placement to displaced persons. It was estimated that up to the end of 1959, about 9 lakhs of displaced persons had registered themselves with different exchanges in the country; of these 2,62,000 had been secured jobs.\textsuperscript{112}

(b) **Special Employment Bureau:** This was also run by the Ministry of Labour. This was established in March 1948 in order to find employment for highly qualified refugees who had high academic qualifications or an experience of ten years or who were having a monthly income of over Rs.500 before the partition.\textsuperscript{113}

(c) **Transfer Bureau:** This was in charge of the Ministry of Home Affairs. It was originally meant for providing employment to surplus staff and displaced government & tenants in the services of the central and state governments. These facilities were extended to government servants from N.W.F.P, Sind, Baluchistan, West Punjab, East Bengal, Sylhet and Assam. Facilities had also been extended to certain highly qualified non-official refugees.\textsuperscript{114} All Ministries of the government of India had to notify vacancies, except those which were filled through the Public service commission, to the transfer bureau and preference was to be

\textsuperscript{111} *The Second Year After Freedom (April 1948 – March 1949).* Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

\textsuperscript{112} *The Thirteenth Year After Freedom (April 1959 – March 1960).* Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
given to recommendations made by it. The Bureau also helped Displaced Government servants in settling arrears of payment, pensions, provident funds etc. with the government of Pakistan. The total number of persons thus absorbed in the different services had been placed in the neighborhood of 80,000.\textsuperscript{115}

\textbf{TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING}

A very large proportion of the urban displaced person came from the distributive trades. There had been an exodus of skilled Muslims from India which had created a lacuna in the fields of skilled workers. The only thing the displaced persons lacked was training. It was thus the government adopted technical and vocational training schemes. As a vital part of its rehabilitation programme plans to this end were put into vigorous execution as early as in 1948. In the initial stages, the emphasis was on short term courses, so that trainees could start earning their livelihood. The ministry itself, quickly, set up a network of centers where intensive short term training was imparted in more than 100 different crafts and vocations. Training centers in Delhi, Ajmer – Merwara and East Punjab and later on in Bombay and Uttar Pradesh started training refugees and over 2,000 seats were sanctioned for this purpose.\textsuperscript{116} A special committee was appointed in 1952 under the presidency of Mr. Mehr Chand Khanna (later Minister of Rehabilitation) to review the entire Vocational and Technical Training Scheme.\textsuperscript{117} The committee recommended that a target of 80,000 displaced persons be fixed for receiving training during the First Five Year Plan period.\textsuperscript{118} This target was fulfilled and by 1958 more than one lakh persons had passed through the centre run by the State Governments, the Arab-ki-Sarai centre in New Delhi, directly under the control of Rehabilitation

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} Rao, U. Bhaskar, 1967. \textit{The Story of Rehabilitation}. Delhi, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, p. 64.
Ministry, and industrial training centers functioning under the Directorate General of Employment and Training.\textsuperscript{119} The ‘Arab Ki Sarai’ was one of the most ambitious projects started in August, 1948 and it was completely reorganized in November, 1949.\textsuperscript{120} The new machines purchased from Japan were demonstrated at this centre by the ministry and, those interested, were taught how to use them.\textsuperscript{121} The services of six Japanese technicians were requisitioned at the same time, not only to help install the machinery, but also to impart instruction to the initial batches of trainees. The installation of machinery and power supply was completed by April, 1956 and the centre took on 200 displaced persons in the first instance for training in 12 different crafts such as spinning from rag cotton, weaving, carpet making, oil extraction, button making, and tin smithy.\textsuperscript{122} Displaced persons admitted for vocational and technical training were granted stipends of Rs.30 per month each.\textsuperscript{123} Women undergoing specialized training in nursing or midwifery were given each a monthly stipend ranging from Rs.25 to Rs.60.\textsuperscript{124} They were also assisted in finding suitable employment on completion of these courses.

**Loans for Urban Rehabilitation:** As the most of the refugees did not have the means to start any business or profession on their own, the Government of India decided to grant them loans. The administration of these loans was in the hands of the provincial and the state governments. Loans were granted for the purchase of machinery and equipment and for the expansion of business. Maximum amounts fixed for each class of borrowers are indicated below:

1. Traders, shopkeepers and those persons who wish to start their own Rs. 5000 workshop or cottage industries

\textsuperscript{118} The First Five-Year Plan; A Draft Outline (July 1951). New Delhi, Govt. of India, Planning Commission, p. 4.
\textsuperscript{119} Rehabilitation Division (1948-65) File No. RH(c)5(2) 50 I, p. 8, National Archives, New Delhi.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., p. 13.
\textsuperscript{122} The Third Year After Freedom (April 1949 – March 1950). Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
\textsuperscript{123} Ibid., p. 66.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
2. Doctors, Lawyers, Architects and Consulting Engineers who wish to start their own workshop or cottage industries Rs. 3000

3. Purchase of tongas who wish to start their own workshop or cottage industries Rs. 1000

4. Other who wish to start their own workshop or cottage industries Rs. 500

All advances made were free of interest for the first year and during this period no recovery was made. In subsequent years, the interest was changed at the rate of three percent. The loans were to be repaid within four years. Upto the end of March 1950, the state governments had paid Rs.52.5 million to individual borrowers, Rs.78 million to 1,500 groups and co-operative societies of urban displaced persons with a membership exceeding 17,000. The total expenditure or loans given upto the end of May 1958 were of about Rs. 600 crores, of which a sum of Rs. 279 crores was spent during the First Plan Period.

In April 1952, it was decided to afford relief to persons with verified claims in respect of immovable property left behind in Pakistan. Recovery to the extent of 10 percent of the verified claim was postponed until the payment of the first installment of compensation. Upto January 31, 1954 over 25,000 persons with loans amounting to Rs.3.65 crores, had taken advantage of it. Non-claimant refugees received generous relief in May, 1954 when all the small urban loans not exceeding Rs.300 and the interest thereon were remitted. From April 1954, while non-claimants continued to be eligible for such loans, all but the following four categories of claimants were excluded from the benefits of the scheme:

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126 Rehabilitation Division (1948-65) File No. 110/19/52 RHA, New Delhi, National Archives, p. 8.

127 The First Year After Plan; A Draft Outline (July 1951), New Delhi, Planning Commission, Government of India, p. 4.


129 Rehabilitation Division (1948-65) File No. 110/19/52 RHA, New Delhi, National Archives, p. 19.

(i) Individuals who had received vocational or technical training under a government scheme and wished to set up a trade of their own.

(ii) Settlers in the New Townships.

(iii) Inmates of homes and infirmaries who had left, or had been sent out, to settle in one vocation or another.

(iv) Individuals who though they had been sanctioned loans in the past, had not been paid, or only partially paid, the amount of such loans.131

Advances to claimants upto a limit of Rs. 5,000 were made against the compensation due to them. These advances were not treated as loan; and no interests was levied on them. The funds available under the scheme were distributed between claimants and non-claimants in the ratio of three to one. Schemes for small urban loans were discontinued in 1957-58. Upto March 1957, urban loans amounting to Rs. 14.88 crores had been advanced.132

Rehabilitation Finance Administration: With a view to providing finance for large industries, the government of India decided to create the Rehabilitation Finance Administration. A bill was passed on March 23, 1948 bringing the Rehabilitation Finance Administration into being and it commenced work from June 1, 1948 but the actual loan operations were started in September 1948.133 Its administration was in the hands of the Chief Administrator who as also the Chairman of the Executive Board which consisted of six other members, three officials and three non-officials. There was also an advisory body, consisting of non-officials representing the provinces of origin and destination of the refugees. It had its head office at Delhi and had branches at Simla, Bombay, Calcutta and a sub-office at Lucknow. The organization of Rehabilitation Finance administration was

131 Ibid.
133 Ministry of Rehabilitation and Loan Advancement, A.I.C.C. Files, File # CL-9, p. 32.
highly centralized and each loan application had to be sent to the head office at Delhi for approval.

The Rehabilitation Finance Administration had a capital of Rs.10 crores. It could grant direct loans to the extent of 5 crores and rediscount bill of exchange upto Rs.1 crore. In addition to these, it was empowered to guarantee loans made by banks or other financial institutions to refugees upto a maximum of Rs.2 crores. While under the Provincial loan scheme examined above advances could be made only upto Rs. 5,000 the Rehabilitation Finance Administration was empowered to loan amounts between Rs. 5,000 and Rs. 50,000 to individuals, partners, joint families or to private limited companies engaged in large scale business and industry. In the case of co-operative societies and public joint stock companies, it could grant loans upto a maximum of Rs. 1 lakh. For loans amounting to over Rs.1 lakh, it was necessary to approach the industrial finance corporations.

The borrower had to pay 6 percent interest on the loans granted to them, while the administration paid 3 percent on the amounts, which it drew from the government. Loan repayment started after one year but no later than two years from the date were given for a maximum period of ten years and were repayable in annual instalments on which the advance was made. The administration called for reports from bankers and other parties in order to ascertain the bona fides of the applicants, and it had access to books, accounts, and other documents in order to enable it to exercise supervision over the dispersal of the loan by the applicant. The total amount of loan sanctioned upto December 1957 was Rs.12.25 crores. It was estimated that these loans had

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134 The Second Year After Freedom (April 1948 – March 1949). Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
135 Ibid.
136 Rehabilitation Division (1948-65), File No. 7132/Misc./B-51 (Part I), p. 23, National Archives, New Delhi.
137 Ibid., p. 27.
138 Ibid., pp. 27-28.
139 The Eleventh Year After Freedom (April 1957 – March 1958). Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
resulted, directly or indirectly in the resettlement of about 3 lakh of displaced persons.\textsuperscript{140}

**Industrial Rehabilitation:** The government, in consultation with the Planning Commission, decided in November, 1953 to set up industries, not only in refugee townships and colonies, but also in every other area with a large concentration of displaced persons. The plan was to attract industrialists displaced and others as well to these areas through generous provision of facilities. Allotments totaling Rs. 75 lakh were made in 1954-55 for this purpose and Rs. 1 crore during 1955-56.\textsuperscript{141} The pattern of financial assistance for the setting up of medium industries was laid down in 1954. Government pledged the following facilities:

(a) Allotment of factory site on a defined payment basis, the cost being recovered in five annual equated instalments with interest at 4 percent per annum. Industrialists were also promised loans for the construction of buildings as well as for the purchase of machinery up to 50 percent of the costs. Such loans were to bear interest at a rate beginning from four and half percent per annum depending on the period of repayment, which could extend from 7 to 15 years.\textsuperscript{142}

(b) If the industrialist so desired, government undertook to construct factory building in accordance with his own specifications and to lease both the factory and the land on which it stood to him. The rent to be viable would be assessed at the rate of 4 percent per annum on the cost of the land and 5 ½ percent on the cost of the buildings. Further, the industrialist would be at liberty, anytime tearing the period of the lease,


\textsuperscript{141} Ibid., p. 69.

\textsuperscript{142} Ibid., p. 71.
to acquire both land and buildings on payment of the market value of the former and the depreciated cost of the latter.143

(c) Provision of water and electricity at charges comparable to those prevailing in neighboring industrial areas were made.144

These substantial concessions were freely available for every project which was considered technically sound and which could be implemented within a reasonable period of time. But a very strict condition invariably stipulated was that the industry should recruit all unskilled labour, and as many skilled and semi-skilled workers as possible, from among displaced persons in the area. Upto the end of May 1958, as many as 45 medium – scale projects, involving an outlay of Rs. 1.92 crores had been sanctioned and these provided employment to about 9,400 refugees.145 The response to the scheme was heartening and among the important townships and colonies were Faridabad, Bahadurgarh, Sonipat, Panipat, Rajpura and Patiala in Punjab; Malviya Nagar and Kalkaji in Delhi; Sarounagu, Ulhasnagar, Pimpri (Poona) and Bantwa in former Bombay State, Naini, Hastinapur, Gobindnagar (Kanpur) and Adarshnagar in Uttar Pradesh; Ajmer in Rajasthan; Bairagarh and Katni in Madhya Pradesh.146 The whole effort of the Rehabilitation was later taken over by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

A committee consisting of a representatives of the ministry of Industries and supply, the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation and the Government of East Punjab was appointed to suggest ways of promoting cottage and small-scale industries. The committee recommended the promotion of small-scale industries not requiring complicated machinery in refugee camps and townships so as to convert them into working centres. It also recommended the provision of expert advice, equipment and technicians to these industries. In pursuance of the recommendations of the committee, the Government of India

143 Ibid.
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid.
arranged for the sale of disposal stores, valued at Rs. 1 crore and comprising machines, tools, textile stores and consumer goods, to refugees and to cooperative societies formed by them in order to help them to start small industries.\textsuperscript{147} Land was also acquired for the Machinery Hardware and Manufacturers Co-operative Industrial Society Ltd. representing 275 industrial concerns from West Pakistan which participated in the scheme.\textsuperscript{148} The government also assisted refugees by recommending them to various authorities for the allotment of premises, electricity, raw materials, import and export licenses, railway priorities and other permits.

**Education:** Education also played a very important part in the rehabilitation programme. The government of India had taken measures to help the displaced students to continue their studies without being hampered by lack of funds or facilities. Provincial and State governments had been asked to take measures to ensure this. They had been requested to expand the capacity of the existing institutions, to introduce double shifts and to start new schools and colleges. The government of India had promised to reimburse them for the expenditure incurred up to the primary standard. A scheme for granting loans to students and trainees abroad whose guardians were now in refugee-distress had been sanctioned.\textsuperscript{149} The Government of India considered the problem of education and training of the younger generation urgent and were anxious that refugee students and trainees wishing to pursue their studies or training should not be prevented from doing so for lack of funds.\textsuperscript{150} Students of the IX and X classes were exempted from tuition admission and examination fees. For the purchase of books, stationery and the like, poor students received cash grants up to Rs. 75. Assistance in the sphere of collegiate and technical education was in the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{146} Ibid., p. 72.
\item \textsuperscript{147} Ibid., p. 9.
\item \textsuperscript{149} The Hindu, Monday December 01, 1947, Madras.
\item \textsuperscript{150} Ibid., Monday, January 12, 1948.
\end{itemize}

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shape of loans for study, both within the country and abroad. Provinces and States had also been asked to waive domicile restrictions.

Primary education continued to be free for all displaced students. In the secondary and higher classes 50 percent of the displaced students received freeships or half free ships and yearly cash grants for the purchase of books and stationery ranging from Rs. 6 to Rs. 15. Students who went in for technical courses in medical engineering or agricultural colleges were eligible for scholarships ranging from Rs. 30 to Rs. 60. Generous grants were provided by the Government. The total of such grant-in-aid upto the end of March 1953 was nearly Rs. 33.5 lakhs of which about Rs. 25.7 lakhs went for the building and equipment of new institutions. Upto the end of March 1959 Rs. 2.17 crores had been spent on grant-in-aid which also included assistance given to medical and cultural institutions. A school for orphans and children of widows named Kasturba Niketan School at Lajpat Nagar in New Delhi, proved to be an instant success. This scheme was rapidly extended to other refugee schools. It eventually embraced over a lakh of children, displaced and non-displaced, in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, West Bengal and Jammu and Kashmir. The government of India had the first claim on the services of students who were financed by them.

The Displaced Persons Claims Act And Compensation Schemes:

Resettlement of displaced persons, both in urban and rural areas, was not, except in the very early stages, a haphazard process. The millions who came to India from West Pakistan had left behind fertile lands, flourishing business concerns and factories, hotels, cinemas and houses. Abandoned, side by side, was movable property of incalculable worth, machinery, plant and

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152 Ibid., p. 76.
equipment, household effects and the countless other things one associates with the possession of property or the conduct of commerce and industry. The Government had decided to give as much compensation as possible to displaced persons who, owned immovable property in West Pakistan, claims had been invited and in 1950 Claims Act was passed and displaced persons were invited to present claims in West Pakistan. A Chief Claims Commissioner was in charge of the claims organization. About 300 registration centres had been opened throughout the country and 47000 claims had been registered by March 1951. The claims had to be verified and evaluated by four commissioner Agricultural land, which was dealt with under separate scheme, was excluded from the scope of these operations.

By 1953, the total number of claims filed was 5.35 lakhs comprising about 10.38 lakh property sheets. A vast organization came into being under the Chief Claims Commissioner. Besides, a large establishment at the New Delhi headquarters there were 264 claims officers, each with his own administrative and clerical staff. It took nearly three years to complete those operations. Hundreds of thousands of claimants had to be heard patiently and diligently and cross-examined before the claims could be verified. By 1953, some 3,90,000 claims had been verified. The total value of those verified claims was of the staggering order of Rs.500 crores.

The recovery of loans from persons whose claims had been verified had been suspended to the extent of 10 percent of the value of their verified

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156 *Clubs for Property in Pakistan* (A Press Note by Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation dated October 28, 1947); Hindu Mahasabha Papers, C-168, p. 13.
157 *The Fourth Year After Freedom (April 1950-March 1951)*, Delhi, Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
159 Ibid.
160 Ibid.
claims.161 Pending sanctions of the compensation scheme by the Government, applications for compensation had been invited from widows and the old and the infirm receiving maintenance allowance, the inmates of women’s homes and infirmaries, the residents of the mud hut colonies in the Punjab etc. A nucleus organization under the chief settlement commissioner had been set up to receive and scrutinize the applications.162 This procedure enabled grant of compensation to the more needy displaced persons on the finalization of the scheme. Legislation in regard to the utilization of evacuee properties and the grant of recompense was prepared.

By the end of the eighth year after freedom, a few thousand claims remained unverified and some revisions left undecided, a Supplementary Claims Act was exacted in March, 1954.163 As the negotiations with Pakistan regarding the conflicting claims of displaced persons from the two countries bore no result, a beginning was made with the payment of compensation based on the claims verified. Under the claims act meanwhile, the displaced person (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Act was enacted in October 1954.164 The act empowered the central Government to acquire evacuee property for the relief and rehabilitation of and compensation to displaced persons.165 During 1955-56, compensation applications were invited from all claimants who had not had the opportunity of filing such applications under the priority categories.166 As a result 4,35,000 applications were received.167 7000 more applications received after the expiry of the last date were also admitted.168 81,000 applications for rehabilitation grants were now being dealt with. In all about 96,000 claimants had received compensation upto January 31, 1956. A

161 The Sixth Year After Freedom (April 1952-March 1953), Delhi Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
162 Ibid.
163 The Eighth Year After Freedom (April 1954-March 1955), Delhi Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
164 Ibid.
165 Ibid.
166 The Ninth Year After Freedom (April 1955-March 1956), Delhi Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
167 Ibid.
168 Ibid.
sum of Rs.23.78 crore was paid to 81,000 claimants upto that period of this amount, Rs.15.61 crore was paid in cash, Rs.4.59 crore in property and Rs.3.58 crore by adjustment of public dues.\footnote{169} Over 4,000 claimants purchased pool properties worth Rs.6 crore and 11,000 persons received agricultural lands and grooves. Quasi permanent owners of land in the Punjab and Pepsu numbering 143,847 had been given permanent ownership of land measuring about Rs.44 crore.\footnote{170}

During the year 1957, several measures were taken to speed up the payment of compensation to displaced persons. The total sum paid as compensation in 1956-57 was Rs.25.10 crore.\footnote{171} Upto January 1957, 1.50 lakh out of 4.5 lakh claimants had received compensation amounting to Rs.48.07 crore of this amount, Rs.3.20 crore were paid in cash, Rs.10.32 crore in property and Rs.7.55 crore by adjustment of public dues.\footnote{172} In addition, 11,172 certificates of admissibility of compensation were issued and loans in the form of compensation paid to 4,324 claimants.\footnote{173}

Upto January 1958, 2.60 lakh claimants out of the total number of 4.60 lakhs had been paid compensation. Of these, 6.43 lakhs had been paid the first installment under the interim scheme and 2.17 lakh full compensation under the final scheme.\footnote{174} All but a small number of priority cases had already been paid along with more than 50 percent of the small claimants, whose claims were for Rs.10,000 or less. About 50 percent of the bigger claimants had also been paid. The amount of compensation paid upto January 31, 1958 was Rs. 76.04 crores. This comprised Rs. 44.02 crores in cash, Rs. 19.88 crores by transfer of property and Rs.12.14 crores by adjustment of public dues.\footnote{175} Rules were also liberalized with regard to allotment of properties against statements of account.

\footnote{169}{Ibid.}
\footnote{170}{Ibid.}
\footnote{171}{Ibid.}
\footnote{172}{Ibid.}
\footnote{173}{Ibid.}
\footnote{174}{The Tenth Year After Freedom (April 1956 – March 1957), Delhi Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.}
\footnote{175}{The Eleventh Year After Freedom (April 1957 – March 1958). Delhi Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.}
Out of the total number of 5.04 lakh displaced persons who filed compensation and rehabilitation grant applications up to 31st December, 1961 about 4.97 lakh were paid compensation amounting to Rs. 164.80 crores. Of this compensation Rs. 59.37 crores were paid in cash, Rs. 81.10 crores by transfer of properties and Rs.24.33 crores by way of adjustment of public dues.

The Displaced persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Act 1954 was passed. The Act contemplated the creation of a compensation pool for the purpose of payment of compensation and rehabilitation grants to displaced persons. This pool was to be made up, among other things, of Evacuee Property, sale proceeds of such property, cash balance lying with the custodian which might be transferred by the Central Government to the Pool and such contributions as might be made by the Pool and such contributions as might be made by the Central Government or state Governments. Further, the Act provided for the displaced persons and also authorized government to frame rules by which it could specify the classes of the displaced persons to whom compensation might be paid and the scales according to which, the form and the manner in which, and the instalment by which compensation to different classes of displaced persons. The central Government was also authorized to frame rules in respect of other matters.

These rules had been framed and with regard to them there were five important issues on which amendments to the existing rules had been suggested by some party members. These were:

1) Value of actionable urban property (Houses and Shops): Under rules 22 and 36 evacuee houses and shops of the value below 5000 and

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175 Ibid.
176 Fifteenth Year After Freedom (April – March 1962). Madras, MLJ Press (Publication on behalf of All India Congress Committee).
177 Ibid.
179 Ibid.
180 Ibid.
181 Ibid., p. 80.
2000 rupees respectively were to be ordinarily allotted to displaced persons in occupation. The same applied to Government built houses and shops.

A suggestion was made that the limit of Rs.5000 and Rs.2000 respectively in case of urban houses and shops should be increased to Rs.10,000. The intention being that more houses and shops should be available for straight allotment for existing occupants.

2) **Scales of Compensations in Certain Cases:**

Rules 45 to 48 and 65 provided for compensation in respect of rural houses and shops left in West Pakistan. The scheme was that if a displaced person was allotted a shop or house in a rural areas, the basis of compensation would be his actual verified claim in respect of this type of property left behind by him. But if he were to be allotted a house or shop in a big town or city in India, the compensation would be worked out at half his verified claim.

It was argued by some that there was no basis for this differentiation and compensation should be the same in all cases whether the allotment was in a rural area or in a town or a city.

3) **Rehabilitation Grant to Certain category of Displaced Persons in PEPSU and the Punjab:**

Under rule 97 provision was made for payment of rehabilitation grants to allottees of agricultural land as compensation for buildings left behind by them in Pakistan. Such payment was to be made only if they had refused the allotment of land or if it had been cancelled. Further, they were not to be entitled to this grant if they had received or were to receive compensation in respect of any urban property.

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182 Ibid., p. 81.
183 Ibid.
It was suggested that rehabilitation grant should be payable to all persons who had been allotted lands in Pepsu and the Punjab, irrespective of whether they had accepted or refused the same.

4) **Scales of Compensation:**\(^{184}\) Rule 16 read with Appendix and 9 provided for a graduated scale of compensation. According to this, the compensation would work out to Rs.333 for Rs.500 going up to a maximum of Rs.2 lakhs for a claim of Rs.18 lakh and above.

There was a suggestion that in no case should the compensation amount to more than Rs. 50,000.

5) **Issue of Bonds for the Full Compensation Amount:**\(^{185}\) Under Rule 17, compensation in the first instance was not to exceed Rs.50,000. It was suggested that for the rest of the amount that would be payable as compensation government bonds might be issued immediately instead of asking the displaced persons to wait till subsequent instalments became available.

The combination of circumstances that was responsible for the delay in compensating the displaced persons in cash or kind, made them extremely critical of the Government of India's policy with regard to evacuee property. The stiff attitude of the Pakistan Government towards non Muslim minorities and various ordinances issued by them to acquire evacuee property, made the displaced persons in India feel that while the Muslim migrants from this side were having all the advantages, the non-Muslim evacuees to India were being made to suffer at the altar of secularism.\(^{186}\) It aroused a sense of dissatisfaction and frustration among the displaced persons, which had its important political implications. The Government of India, however, felt helpless in view of the non co-operative attitude of the Pakistan Government, but they could not retaliate by acquiring the property of all the Muslims, some of whom might

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\(^{184}\) Ibid., p. 82.

\(^{185}\) Ibid., p. 83.
have left only for a temporary period with every intention to come back. Such an action would have been a severe blow to the secular principles on which the future Indian society was designed to be built. The Government of India, therefore, turned down every suggestion from the political leaders who urged them to follow an effective policy.\(^{187}\)

The issue could not be evaded indefinitely. In October, 1952 the Government of India suggested to the Government of Pakistan that “as there was no possibility of the return of evacuees to their respective countries of origin and the evacuee properties were fast deteriorating, the two Governments should take over the evacuee immovable properties in their respective counties and compensate the evacuee owners according to the principles which may be mutually agreed upon.”\(^{188}\) The Government of India suggested that the two governments should agree upon the basis of valuation of property on the two sides. If, however, there was no agreement by direct negotiation the matter could be settled by arbitration or by reference to an impartial tribunal. The debtor country then should pay to the creditor country the difference in value of evacuee property according to the agreed agreements. The Government of Pakistan, however, did not accept the proposal. The continued stalemate with the Government of Pakistan, over the question of evacuee immovable property and constant pressure from the displaced and political leadership to take an effective step, forced the Government of India to take a decision regarding the acquisition of evacuee property in India. It decided in May, 1954 “to acquire rights, title and interests of evacuee owners in these properties in India and to utilize these properties for giving part compensation to displaced person.”\(^{189}\) Consequently, the Displaced Persons (Compensation and Rehabilitation) Act was passed in October, 1954 empowering the Government to acquire evacuee properties for purposes of relief, rehabilitation and compensation. The final


\(^{187}\) Ibid, p. 146.

compensation scheme, drawn up in pursuance of this Act was approved by the parliament in September, 1955.

The Final Compensation Scheme, visualized the payment of compensation to over 4.50 lakh people. Under the scheme, the Government of India acquired all evacuee property valued at Rs. 100 crore and contributed Rs. 85 crore in the shape of Government built property which had been constructed for the displaced persons.\textsuperscript{190} The properties to the value of Rs. 10,000 each which accounted for 90 percent of the evacuee property and 97 percent of the Government built property were declared allotable. They were sold to displaced claimants and non-claimants at the “reserve price”.\textsuperscript{191} The loans advanced towards their purchase were adjusted against their claims.\textsuperscript{192} Full compensation could not be paid because there was vast disparity between the property left by the non Muslims in the West Pakistan as compared to that of the departing Muslims in the East Punjab. A system of “graded cut” was, therefore, introduced by which smaller claimants were ensured larger compensation. For instance, person with claims upto Rs. 5,000 received as much as 55.6 percent of their claims, while persons with claims upto Rs. 26,000 got 33 percent of their claims. The percentage of payment against claims declined progressively so that a claimant for over a lakh of rupees received only 11.1 percent of his claim.\textsuperscript{193}

A ceiling was placed on compensation so that the amount was not to exceed two lakhs of rupees. The cash payment was to be made upto Rs.10,000 and for the remaining amount evacuee and government built property or plots were allotted in lieu of verified claims in accordance with the compensation scale. The displaced persons without verified claims were also given the right to purchase evacuee or government built property.\textsuperscript{194}

\textsuperscript{191} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{192} India - A Reference Annual, 1957 (Delhi, 1957), p. 151.
\textsuperscript{193} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{194} Ibid., pp. 18-20.
Upto the end of December, 1956, a sum of Rs. 45.65 crores was paid in cash, Rs. 9.79 crores in property and Rs. 7.19 crores by adjustment of outstanding public dues advanced in the forms of loans from the Government for various purposes. Auctions of saleable properties was being held all over the country. These displaced persons could bid at the auctions and the value of the property purchased by them at the auctions was adjusted against their verified claims.

**Relief and Welfare:** The Ministry of Rehabilitation had taken some important measures to provide relief and welfare to unattached women and children, the widows and orphans, and the old and the infirm. The establishment of homes and infirmaries formed the most exacting part of the program. In 1950, the Government of India assumed full responsibility for the maintenance and care of three categories of displaced person:

(a) unattached women and their dependents;

(b) unattached children and

(c) the aged and the infirm who had no means of support.

By the end of 1951 there were about 36,000 persons belonging to these categories in homes and infirmaries, besides 13,000 living outside who received doles and other concessions. A Central Advisory Board was constituted to co-ordinate activities, in this field and it undertook to run institutions with funds provided by the Central Government. By December 1953, there were 40 regularly constituted homes and infirmaries spread over

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195 Ibid., p. 151.
196 Ibid.
197 Ministry of Rehabilitation, Govt. of India, A.I.C.C., Files, CL-9, Nehru Memorial Museum Library, New Delhi.
states in the Western region, catering to 29,000 inmates. There were about 9,000 persons outside in receipts of doles.\textsuperscript{109}

Many non-official charitable and social organizations came forward to reinforce Governments efforts. The most prominent among them were the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, the All India Save the Children Committee, the Trust for Sindhi Women and Children, the Arya Pradeshi Pratinidhi Sabha and the Jainendra Gurukul, Panchkula. Some of the major homes for the destitute women and children and for infirm and disabled women were: Sat Narain Home, Subzimandi, Lahore Sheds Home, Rambagh Home, Aged Women’s Home, Mehrauli, Mehrauli Residential School for Girls and Gram Sevika Shiksha Kendra.\textsuperscript{200} By the end of 1956 the number of homes and infirmaries had been reduced to 32 and that of inmates to 22,520. A bare 2,426 were still on the dole.

Maintenance allowances were given as a measure of interim relief by the Ministry of Rehabilitation. All displaced persons who, by a reason of old age, infirmity or illness, were incapable of making a living for themselves and were bereft of means of livelihood were provided for in accordance with a prescribed scale of upto a maximum of Rs.100. The scheme covered about 17,000 persons at one time. The total expenditure incurred up to the end of March, 1957 was nearly Rs. 1.40 crores.\textsuperscript{201} Recipient of maintenance allowances were accorded top priority in the matter of payment of compensation. The allowance was discontinued from the following month from which compensation was paid.

\textbf{Harijans:} The Rehabilitation Ministry drew up special Relief Plans for Harijan refugees and created a separate Harijans section for their execution in February 1945. In order to make sure that the interests of displaced Harijans

\textsuperscript{109} The Seventh Year After Freedom (April 1953-March 1954): Delhi, Publications Divisions, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.


\textsuperscript{201} The Eleventh Year After the Freedom (April 1957-March 1958), Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.

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were not neglected, a Displaced Harijans’ Rehabilitation Board was constituted under the aegis of the All-India Harijan Sewak Sangh\textsuperscript{202}, The Sangh was recognized as an agency of the central Government. The Boards had a central office at Delhi and regional offices in west Bengal, Punjab, Bombay, Rajasthan, Madhya Bharat, Saurashtra and Kutch. The Board was responsible for constructing houses, securing land, granting loans and finding employment for displaced Harijans. By the year 1754, the Board had implemented eight schemes at Delhi, Ajmer, Berar, Ahemdabad and Bombay, under which, 2,203 tenements had been built at a cost of Rs. 36.99 to provide housing accommodation to displaced Harijans. The Board had also found employment for 8,802 families and assisted in the resettlement of 17,273 families on agricultural land\textsuperscript{203}. Loans amounting to Rs. 827 lakh had also been granted to 4,112 families of Harijan craftsmen and artisans.\textsuperscript{204} In addition, 20-cooperative societies had been organized.

The East Punjab which was shaken to its roots could meet the gigantic problems of migration, relief and rehabilitation because the Central Government with its vast resources, mature guidance and leadership came to the rescue of the province and helped it out of the difficult situation. The Central Government withstood all the obstacles and enabled the infant state to stand on its feet, once again. The efforts of the State and Central Governments would have been reduced to naught, had the displaced persons not risen to the occasion. There’s no doubt about the moral values of life but it released creative potentialities and the best in the national character of the Punjabis. As a result, they took up the partition as a challenge and engaged themselves whole-heartedly in their own rehabilitation and the development of the economic life of the state.

\textsuperscript{202} \textit{The Third Year After Freedom (April 1949-March 1950),} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{203} \textit{The Sixth Year After The Freedom (April 1952-March 1953),} Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting.
\textsuperscript{204} Ibid.