

The refugee influx in 1947, when Karachi became the capital of Pakistan, its population was just above 400,000.

overtaxed and health and sanitation problems

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GOVERNMENT POLICIES BETWEEN 1947 AND 1957

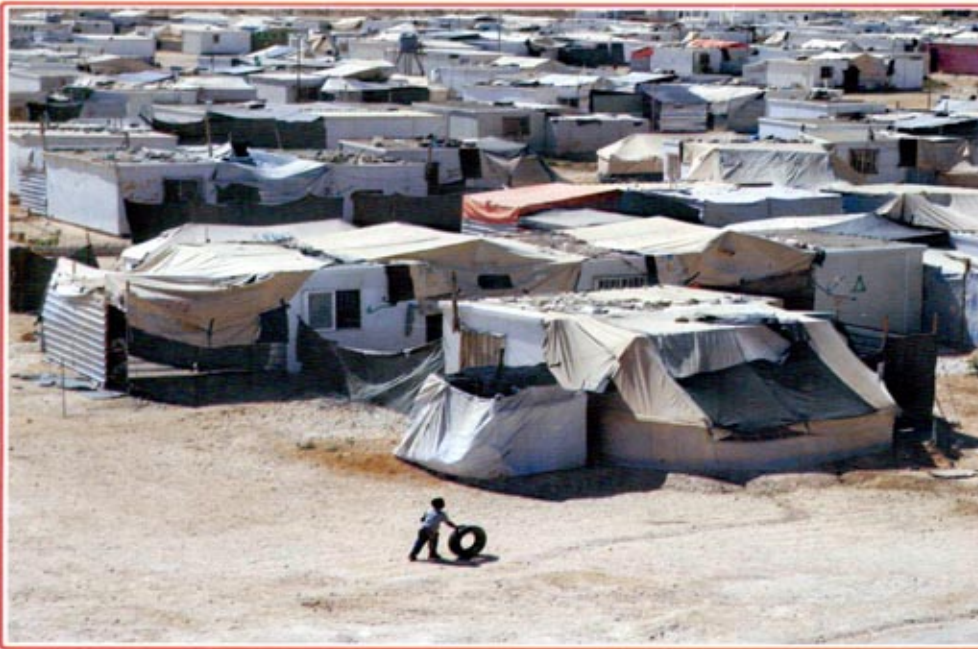
Between 1947 and 1951, over 600,000 refugees from India moved into the city. The vast majority of them were poor and destitute. They occupied all open spaces in the city centre, including parks, playgrounds, school buildings and cantonment lands. The services of the city were



multiplied. In addition to the refugee influx, a number of civil servants also moved to the new capital, along with people from the northern areas who came in search of jobs. However, the latter migration was no more than 5 per cent of the total influx.

The response of the





construction of housing units for the refugees employed in government jobs. However, this development was on so small a scale that it did not in any way affect the housing situation in Karachi.

Thus the government response between 1947 and 1959 failed completely to tackle the housing crisis that the city was faced with, and in

government to the influx The initial response: Initially, the government permitted the squatters to occupy all available land and vacant public buildings in the city. Some buildings were later vacated, and the residents moved into open areas in the cantonment. There, between the army barracks which had been given as accommodation to the new administration, they were allowed to squat. The government spent 70 to 80 million during this period on providing water and sanitation infrastructure for the squatters. The Greater Karachi plan: In 1950, the Karachi Improvement Trust (KIT) was established to tackle the problems the city was faced with. KIT was later upgraded to become the Karachi Development Authority (KDA) in 1957.

In 1952, KIT, with the assistance of a Swedish firm of consultants (MRV), prepared a master plan for Karachi, known as the Greater Karachi Plan, or the MRV plan. The plan envisaged the creation of a new administrative area which would be linked to the old town by fast roads. The resettling of refugees in 10 storey flats on the land that they occupied in the city centre was also proposed so that they would be close to their places of work. Housing for government servants: In addition to providing infrastructure

to the refuge colonies the government also undertook the these 12 years the supply of houses lagged far behind the demand. 5.3 The causes for the failure of government policies Political factors: The period between 1951 to 1959 was one of considerable political instability in Pakistan, and a decision on the implementation of the MRV plan could not be taken. It was felt in government circles that the high-rise heavy density housing in the city centre proposed by the plan should only be permitted if a new administrative centre away from the old town was created. Alternatively, the poor should be removed to colonies outside the city. Lack of data: An adequate data base was not established for the preparation of the MRV plan, and the research necessary for development and implementation of the concept was not carried out. Consequently, the MRV plan was designed on the assumption that Karachi's population in the year 2000 would be 3 million, a figure which was reached in 1969! The problem of finances: The planners of the 1950's could only think in terms of building houses for the poor, complete with all services. In addition, the development of 60,000 housing units for Karachi's poor was unfortunately linked with the creation of a new administrative centre. The finances required for this undertaking were beyond the resources of the new state