Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Discuss the constitutional and humanitarian responsibilities of the Indian state towards displaced populations, with reference to the rehabilitation of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Constitutional protection, Article 21, refugee governance, humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation, livelihood security, international obligations, durable solutions

Model Answer

India's engagement with displaced populations reflects the interaction between humanitarian responsibilities, constitutional protections and national security considerations. The rehabilitation of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in Tamil Nadu illustrates this approach.

Constitutional and Humanitarian Dimensions

1. **Right to life and dignity:** Article 21 extends to all persons, including refugees, and protects their life and personal liberty. Access to basic shelter, healthcare and essential services is therefore significant.
2. **Humanitarian assistance:** Housing, financial assistance, education and healthcare support help displaced families maintain minimum living standards and social dignity.
3. **Social integration:** Livelihood opportunities, skill development and access to public services can reduce long-term dependence on camp-based assistance.

Challenges in Refugee Rehabilitation

1. **Legal uncertainty:** India lacks a comprehensive national refugee law, resulting in considerable reliance on executive decisions and administrative arrangements.
2. **Economic vulnerability:** Limited employment opportunities, documentation difficulties and dependence on financial assistance can restrict self-reliance.
3. **Intergenerational concerns:** Children and young people in long-term displacement situations require sustained access to education, skills and social opportunities.
4. **Durable solutions:** Voluntary repatriation, local integration and other safe resettlement options require careful consideration of individual circumstances.

Towards Dignified Rehabilitation

The construction of houses and enhancement of financial assistance for Sri Lankan Tamil families represent measures addressing immediate welfare needs. Such interventions should be complemented by transparent eligibility procedures, livelihood support, educational access and grievance-redress mechanisms.

India's refugee governance must balance humanitarian commitments with legitimate security and administrative concerns while ensuring dignity and protection for displaced persons.

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