

# The Punjab Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property Act, 1953

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### Act 11 of 1953

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The Punjab Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property Act, 1953 Punjab Act No. 11 of 1953 Statement of objects and reasons - The East Punjab Requisitioning of Immovable Property (Temporary Powers) Act, 1948, was amended by the President's Act II of 1951, as the High Court had held the 1948 Act to be void.<sup>2</sup> The President's Amending Act expires on the 17th April, 1953. Therefore the opportunity is taken to replace the entire enactment on the lines of the Central Act, namely, the Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property Act, 1952. Punjab Government Gazette Extraordinary dated 13, March 1953. Received the assent of the President on the 15th April, 1953; and was published in the Punjab Government Gazette, Extraordinary, of the 15th April, 1953. An Act to provide for the requisitioning and acquisition of immovable property for the purposes of the State. It is hereby enacted as follows :-

#### 1. Short title, extent and duration.

(1) This Act may be called the Punjab Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property Act, 1953. (2) It extends to the whole of the State of Punjab. (3) [ \* \* \* ] [Sub-section (3) omitted by Punjab Act 13 of 1973, section 2.]

#### 2. Definitions.

- In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires. -(a) "award" means any award of an arbitrator made under section 8; (b) "competent authority" means any person or authority authorised by the State Government, by notification in the official Gazette, to perform the functions of the competent authority under this Act for such area as may be specified in the notification; (c) "landlord" means any person who for the time being is receiving, or is entitled to receive, the rent of any premises, whether on his own account, or on account or on behalf or for the benefit, of any other person or as

a trustee, guardian or receiver for any other person, or who would so receive the rent or be entitled to receive the rent if the premises were let to a tenant;(d)the expression "person interested" in relation to any property, includes all persons claiming or entitled to claim, an interest in the compensation payable on account of the requisitioning or acquisition of the property under this Act;(e)"premises" means any building or part of a building and includes -(i)the garden, grounds and out-houses, if any, appertaining to such building or part of a building;(ii)any fittings affixed to such building or part of a building for the more beneficial enjoyment thereof;(f)"prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act;(g)"property" means immovable property of every kind and includes any rights in or over such property;(h)"tenant" means any person by whom or on whose account rent is payable for any premises and includes such sub-tenants and other persons as have derived title under the tenant under any law for the time being in force.

### **3. Power to requisition of immovable property.**

(1)Where the competent authority is of opinion that any property is needed or likely to be needed for any public purpose, being a purpose of the State, and that the property should be requisitioned, the competent authority -(a)shall call upon the owner or any other person who may be in possession of the property by notice in writing (specifying therein the purpose of the requisition) to show cause, within fifteen days of the date of the service of such notice on him, why the property should not be requisitioned, and(b)may, by order, direct that neither the owner of the property nor any other person shall, without permission of the competent authority dispose of, or structurally alter, the property or let it out to a tenant until the expiry of such period, not exceeding two months, as may be specified in the order.(2)If after considering the cause, if any, shown by any person interested in the property, or in possession thereof, the competent authority is satisfied that it is necessary or expedient so to do, it may, by order in writing, requisition the property and may make such further orders as appear to it to be necessary or expedient in connection with the requisitioning;Provided that no property or part thereof -(a)which is bona fide used by the owner thereof as the residence of himself or his family; or(b)which is exclusively used either for religious worship by the public or as a school, hospital, public library or an orphanage or for the purpose of accommodation of persons connected with the management of such place of worship or such school, hospital, library or orphanage, shall be requisitioned :Provided further that where the requisitioned property consists of premises which are being used as a residence by a tenant for not less than two months immediately preceding the date of the service of notice under sub- section (1), possession of the property shall not be taken unless the competent authority has provided such tenant with alternative accommodation which, in its opinion is suitable.

### **4. Power to take possession of requisitioned property.**

(1)Where any property has been requisitioned under section 3, the competent authority may, by notice in writing, order the owner as well as any other person who may be in possession of the property to surrender or deliver possession thereof to the competent authority or any person duly authorised by it in this behalf within thirty days of the service of the notice.(2)If any person refuses or fails to comply with an order made under sub-section (1), the competent authority may take possession of the property and may, for that purpose, use such force as may be necessary.

## **5. Right over requisitioned property.**

(1) All property requisitioned under section 3, shall be used for such purposes, as may be mentioned in the notice of requisition. (2) Where any premises are requisitioned under section 3, the competent authority may order the landlord to execute such repairs as may be necessary and are usually made by landlords in that locality and as may be specified in the notice, within such reasonable time as may be mentioned therein and if the landlord fails to execute any repairs in pursuance of such order, the competent authority may cause the repairs specified in the order to be executed at the expense of the landlord and the cost thereof may, without prejudice to any other mode of recovery be deducted from the compensation payable to the Landlord.

## **6. Release from requisitioning.**

(1) The competent authority may at any time release from requisition any property requisitioned under this Act and shall, as far as possible, restore the property in as good a condition as it was when possession thereof was taken subject only to the changes caused by reasonable wear and tear and irresistible force : Provided that where the purposes for which any requisitioned property was being used cease to exist, the competent authority shall, unless property is acquired under section 7, release that property, as soon as may be from requisition. [(1-A) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), the State Government shall release from requisition, -(a) any property requisitioned or deemed to be requisitioned under this Act before the commencement of the Punjab Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property (Amendment) Act, 1973, on or before the expiry of a period of five years from such commencement, (b) any property requisitioned under this Act after such commencement, on or before the expiry of a period of five years from the date on which possession of such property was surrendered or delivered to or taken by the competent authority under section 4, unless such property is acquired under section 7 within the period of 5 years aforesaid] [Sub-section (1A) inserted by Punjab Act 13 of 1973, section 3.] (2) Where any property is to be released from requisition, [under sub-section (1) or sub-section (1-A)] [Certain words inserted by Punjab Act 13 of 1973, section 3.] the competent authority may, after such inquiry, if any, as it may in any case consider necessary to make or cause to be made, specify by order in writing the person to whom possession of the property shall be given and such possession shall, as far as practicable, be given to the person from whom possession was taken at the time of the requisition or to the successors-in-interest of such person. (3) The delivery of possession of the property to the person specified in an order under sub-section (2) shall be a full discharge of the State Government from all liability in respect of the property, but shall not prejudice any rights in respect of the property which any other person may be entitled by due process of law to enforce against the person to whom possession of the property is given. (4) Where any person to whom possession of any requisitioned property is to be given is not found and has no agent or other person empowered to accept delivery on his behalf, the competent authority shall cause a notice declaring that the property is released from requisition to be affixed on some conspicuous part of the property and shall also publish the notice in the official Gazette. (5) When a notice referred to in sub-section (4) is published in the official Gazette, the property specified in such notice shall cease to be subject to requisition on and from the date of such publication and shall be deemed to have been delivered to the person entitled to possession thereof and the State Government shall not be liable for any

compensation or other claim in respect of the property for any period after the said date.(6)Where any property requisitioned under this Act or any material part thereof is wholly destroyed or rendered substantially and permanently unfit for the purpose for which it was requisitioned by reason of fire, earthquake, tempest, flood or violence of any army or of a mob or other irresistible force, the requisition shall, at the option of the State Government be void :Provided that the benefit of this sub-section shall not be available to the State Government where the injury to such property is caused by any wrongful act or default of that Government.

## **6A. [ Application for release from requisitioning. [Section 6-A and 6-B added by Punjab Act 24 of 1954, section 2.]**

(1)After a period of two years from the date of requisitioning of any property, the owner or any person interested in such property, may apply to the competent authority to release it from requisition :Provided that such application may be made before the expiry of two years from the date of requisitioning of the property, if there have arisen circumstances which the owner or any person interested in the property could not have urged when given an opportunity to show cause under clause (a) of sub-section (1) of section 3.(2)On receipt of an application under sub-section (1) the competent authority may, after calling for such information as may be found necessary from the owner or any person interested in the property or making such further inquiry as it may consider necessary, pass such orders as it deems fit.

## **6B. Further application for release from requisitioning.**

- After the application for release from requisition made under section 6-A has been rejected by the competent authority and the appeal filed before the State Government under section 10-A has also been rejected, no further application for the release from requisition of property in question will be entertained by the competent authority till the expiry of a further period of two years :Provided that another application may be made by the owner or any person interested in the property within two years of rejection of the first appeal if any further circumstances have arisen which he could not have urged in his previous application.]

## **7. Power to acquire requisitioned property.**

(1)Where any property is subject to requisition the State Government may, if it is of opinion that it is necessary to acquire the property for a public purpose, at any time acquire such property by publishing in the official Gazette a notice to the effect that the State Government has decided to acquire the property in pursuance of this sectionProvided that before issuing such notice the State Government shall call upon the owner of, or any other person who, in the opinion of the State Government may be interested in, such property to show cause why the property should not be acquired; and after considering the cause, if any, shown by any person interested in the property and after giving the parties an opportunity is being heard, the State Government may pass such orders as it deems fit.(2)When a notice as aforesaid is published in the official Gazette, the requisitioned property shall, on and from the beginning of the day on which the notice is so

published, vest absolutely in the State Government free from all encumbrances and the period of requisition of such property shall end.(3)No property shall be acquired under this section except in the following circumstances, namely :-(a)where any works have, during the period of requisition, been constructed on, in or over, the property wholly or partially at the expense of the State Government and the Government decides that the value of, or the right to use, such works should be secured or preserved for the purposes of Government; or(b)where the cost of restoring the property to its condition at the time of its requisition would, in the determination of the State Government, be excessive and the owner declines to accept release from requisition of the property without payment of compensation for so restoring the property.(4)Any decision or determination of the State Government under sub- section (3) shall be final and shall not be called in question in any court.(5)For the purposes of clause (a) of sub-section (3) "works" includes buildings, structures and improvements of every description.

## **8. Principles and methods of determining compensation.**

(1)Where any property is requisitioned or acquired under this Act there shall be given compensation which shall be determined in the manner and in accordance with the principles hereinafter set out, that is to say :-(a)where the compensation can be fixed by agreement, it shall be given in accordance with such agreement;(b)where no such agreement can be reached, the State Government shall appoint as arbitrator a person, who is, or has been, or is qualified for appointment as a Judge of a High Court;(c)the State Government may, in any particular case, nominate a person having expert knowledge as to the nature of the property requisitioned or acquired to assist the arbitrator and where such nomination is made, the person to be compensated may also nominate an assessor for the same purpose;(d)at the commencement of the proceedings before the arbitrator, the State Government and the person to be compensated shall state what in their respective opinion is a fair amount of compensation;(e)the arbitrator shall, after hearing the dispute, make an award determining the amount of compensation which appears to him to be just and specify the person or persons to whom such compensation shall be paid; and in making the award, he shall have regard to the circumstances of each case and the provisions of sub-sections (2) and (3), so far as they are applicable.(f)where there is any dispute as to the person or persons who are entitled to the compensation, the arbitrator shall decide such dispute and if the arbitrator finds that more persons than one are entitled to compensation, he shall apportion the amount thereof amongst such persons;(g)nothing in the Arbitration Act, 1940, shall apply to arbitrations under this section.(2)The compensation for the requisitioning of any property shall consist of -(a)a recurring payment, in respect of the period of requisition of a sum equal to the rent which would have been payable for the use and occupation of the property, if it had been taken on lease for that period; and(b)such sum, or sums, if any, as may be found necessary to compensate the person interested for all or any of the following matters, namely :-(i)pecuniary loss due to requisitioning;(ii)expenses on account of vacating the requisitioned premises;(iii)expenses on account of re-occupying the premises upon release from requisition; and(iv)damages (other than normal wear and tear) caused to the property during the period of requisition, including the expenses that may have to be incurred for restoring the property to the condition in which it was at the time of requisition.(3)Where any property is acquired in connection with the new Capital of the State of Punjab[as that Capital and State existed immediately before the 1st November, 1966] [Inserted by the Punjab Adaptation of Laws (State and

concurrent Subjects) Order, 1968.] compensation may be paid, whether by agreement or by award of the arbitrator, either in money or in kind or partly in money and partly in kind, and where there is no person competent to alienate the property or there is a person with limited interest in such property or there is any dispute as to the persons entitled to receive the compensation or as to the apportionment thereof, the arbitrator shall make an award in such manner or make an arrangement in such a way as may be equitable having regard to the interests of the persons concerned.(4)The compensation for the acquisition of any property under section 7, in the absence of an agreement shall be -(a)the price which the requisitioned property would have fetched in the open market, if it had remained in the same condition as it was at the time of requisitioning and been sold on the date of acquisition, or(b)twice the price which the requisitioned property would have fetched in the open market if it had been sold on the date of requisition, whichever is less.(5)Where there are several persons interested in the compensation, it shall be lawful for the State Government, either on its own motion, or on an application from any person interested to appoint the same or any other arbitrator to make an award or supplementary award in respect of the dispute.

## **9. Payment of compensation.**

- The amount of compensation under an award shall, subject to any rules made under this Act, be paid or given by the competent authority to the person or persons entitled thereto in such manner and within such time as may be specified in the award.

## **10. Appeals from orders of requisitioning.**

(1)Any person aggrieved by an order of requisition made by the competent authority under sub-section (2) of section 3 may, within twenty-one days from the date of service of the order, prefer an appeal to the State Government :Provided that the State Government may entertain the appeal after the expiry of the said period of twenty-one days, if it is satisfied that the appellant was prevented by sufficient cause from filing the appeal in time.(2)On receipt of an appeal under sub-section (1), the State Government may, after calling for a report from the competent authority and giving an opportunity to the parties of being heard and after making such further inquiry, if any, as may be necessary, pass such orders as it thinks fit and the orders of the State Government shall be final.(3)Where an appeal is preferred under sub-section (1), the State Government may stay the enforcement of the order of the competent authority for such period and on such conditions as it thinks fit.

## **10A. [ Appeals from order of competent authority rejecting application for release from requisitioning.] [Section 10-A added by Punjab Act 24 of 1954, section 3.]**

(1)Any person aggrieved by an order made by the competent authority under sections 6-A and 6-B may, within twenty-one days from the date of service of the order, prefer an appeal to the State Government :Provided that the State Government may entertain the appeal after the expiry of the said period of twenty-one days if it is satisfied that the appellant was prevented by sufficient cause

from filing the appeal in time.(2)On receipt of an appeal under sub-section (1) the State Government may, after calling for a report from the competent authority and after making such further inquiry as it may consider necessary, pass such orders as it deems fit and the orders of the State Government shall be final.

## **11. Appeals from awards in respect of compensation.**

- Any person aggrieved by an award of the arbitrator made under section 8 may, within thirty days from the date of such award, prefer an appeal to the High Court within whose jurisdiction the requisitioned or acquired property is situate :Provided that the High Court may entertain the appeal after the expiry of the said period of thirty days, if it is satisfied that the appellant was prevented by sufficient cause from filing the appeal in time.

## **12. Competent authority and arbitrator to have certain powers of Civil Courts.**

- The competent authority and the arbitrator appointed under section 8 while holding an inquiry or as the case may be, arbitration proceedings under this Act, shall have all powers of a civil court, while trying a suit, under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, in respect of the following matters, namely :-(a)summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him on oath;(b)requiring the discovery and production of any document;(c)reception of evidence on affidavits;(d)requisitioning any public record from any court or office;(e)issuing commissions for examination of witnesses.

## **13. Power to obtain information.**

- The State Government or the competent authority may, with a view to carrying out the purposes of section 3 or section 6, or section 7, or section 8, by order require any person to furnish to such officer, as may be specified in the order, such information in his possession as may be specified relating to any property which is requisitioned or acquired, or intended to be requisitioned or acquired, under this Act.

## **14. Power to enter and inspect.**

- The competent authority or any officer, empowered in this behalf by such authority by general or special order, may enter and inspect any property for the purposes of determining whether, and if so, in what manner an order under this Act should be made in relation to such property or with a view to securing compliance with an order made under this Act.

## **15. Service of notice and orders.**

(1)Subject to the provisions of this section and any rules that may be made under this Act, every notice or order issued or made under this Act, shall -(a)in the case of any notice or order of a general nature or affecting a class of persons be published in the official Gazette; and(b)in the case of any

notice or order affecting an individual corporation or firm, be served in the manner provided for the service of summons in Rule 2 of Order XXIX or Rule 3 of Order XXX as the case may be, in the First Schedule of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908; and(c)in the case of any notice or order affecting an individual person (not being a corporation or firm) be served on such person(i)by delivering or tendering it to that person; or(ii)if it cannot be so delivered or tendered, by delivering or tendering it to any officer of such person or any adult male member of the family of such person, or by affixing a copy thereof on the outer door on some conspicuous part on the premises in which that person is known to have last resided or carried on business or personally worked for gain; or failing service by these means;(iii)by post.(2)Where the ownership of the property is in dispute or where the persons interested in the property are not readily traceable and the notice or order cannot be served without undue delay, the notice or order may be served by publishing it in the official Gazette, and where possible, by affixing a copy thereof on any conspicuous part of the property to which it relates.

## **16. Easement not to be disturbed.**

- No person interested in any property requisitioned or acquired under this Act shall, without the previous written consent of the competent authority or except for the purposes of effecting repairs or complying with a municipal requirement, wilfully disturb any convenience or easement attached to such property or remove, destroy or render unserviceable anything provided for permanent use therewith or discontinue or cause to be discontinued any supply or service provided for the property.

## **17. Delegation of powers.**

(1)The State Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, direct that the powers exercisable by it by or under this Act shall, in such circumstances and under such conditions, if any, in such circumstances and under such conditions, if any, as may be specified in the notification, be exercisable also by an officer subordinate to that Government.(2)All notifications issued under sub-section (1) shall be laid, as soon as may be, before both the houses of the State Legislative.

## **18. Protection of action taken in goods faith.**

(1)No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against any person for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or any order made thereunder.(2)No suit or other legal proceeding shall lie against the State Government or the competent authority for any damage caused or likely to be caused by anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or any order made thereunder.

## **19. Bar of jurisdiction of Civil Courts.**

- Save as otherwise expressly provided in this Act no civil court shall have jurisdiction in respect of any matter which the competent authority or arbitrators is empowered by or under this Act to determine, and no injunction shall be granted by any court or other authority in respect of any



action taken or to be taken in pursuance of any power conferred by or under this Act.

## **20. Penalty for offences.**

- Whoever contravenes any provision of this Act, or any rule made thereunder, or any order made or direction given under this Act, or obstructs the lawful exercise of any power conferred by or under this Act, shall be punishable with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees.

## **21. Certain persons to be public servants.**

- The competent authority, every arbitrator and every officer empowered by the State Government or the competent authority while exercising any power or performing any duty under this Act, shall be deemed to be a public servant within the meaning of section 21 of the Indian Penal Code.

## **22. Power to make rules.**

(1)The State Government may, by notification in the official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.(2)In particular, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may provide for all or any of the following matters, namely :-(a)the procedure to be followed by the competent authority in making inquiries under section 3 or section 6;(b)the procedure to be followed in arbitration proceedings and appeals under this Act;(c)the principles to be followed in determining the compensation and method of rendition of such compensation;(d)the principles to be followed in apportioning the cost of proceedings before the arbitrator and on appeal under this Act;(e)the manner of service of notices and orders;(f)any other matter which has to be or may be, prescribed.(3)All rules made under the provisions of this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be, before the [X X] [The words 'both the Houses of' omitted by the Adaptation of Punjab Laws Orders, 1970.] State Legislature.

## **23. Validation of certain requisitions and acquisitions.**

(1)All immovable property which purports to have been requisitioned by the State Government for any public purpose, under any law in force prior to the commencement of this Act, and which, immediately before such commencement was used or occupied by the State Government or by an officer or authority subordinate to that Government shall, as from the commencement of this Act, be deemed to be property duly requisitioned under section 3 of this Act, and every such requisition shall, notwithstanding any judgment, decree or order of any court, be deemed always to have been valid as if this Act had been in force on and from the date of the requisition and the requisition had been duly made by a competent authority under this Act, and all the provisions of this Act shall apply accordingly :Provided that all agreements and awards for the payment of compensation in respect of any such property for any period of requisition before the commencement of this Act and in force immediately before such commencement shall valid and shall be deemed always to have been valid and shall continue to be in force and shall apply to the payment of compensation in respect of that property for any period of requisition after such commencement.(2)Every acquisition

of immovable property purporting to have been made before the commencement of this Act by the State Government for any public purpose, under any enactment for the time being in force in the State and which, immediately before such commencement was used or occupied by the State Government or by an officer or authority subordinate to that Government shall, notwithstanding any defect in, or invalidity of, the enactment or order under which the acquisition was made, be deemed for all purposes to have been validly made as if the provisions of the said enactment or order had been included and enacted in this section and this section had been in force on and from the date of the acquisition.

## **24. Power to recover rent or damages in respect or requisitioned property as arrears of land revenue.**

(1) Subject to any rules that may be made in this behalf by the State Government any sum due by way of rent in respect of any requisitioned property which is in arrears may be recovered by the competent authority from the person liable to pay the same in the same manner as an arrear of land revenue. (2) Where any person is in unauthorised occupation of any requisitioned property, the competent authority may, in the prescribed manner, assess such damages on account of the use and occupation of the said property as it thinks fit and may, by notice served by post or in such other manner, as may be prescribed by rules made in this behalf, order that person to pay the damages within such time as may be specified in the notice. (3) If any person refuses or fails to pay the damages within the time specified in the notice under sub-section (2), the damages may be recovered in the same manner as an arrear of land revenue.

## **25. Repeals and savings.**

(1) The East Punjab Requisitioning of Immovable Property (Temporary Powers) Act, 1948 (East Punjab Act No. XLVIII of 1948), and the Punjab Requisitioning of Immovable Property (Amendment and Validation) Act, 1951 (President's Act No. II of 1951) are hereby repealed. (2) For the removal of doubts, it is hereby declared that any property which immediately before such repeal was subject to requisition under the provisions of either of the said Acts shall, on the commencement of this Act, be deemed to be property requisitioned under section 3 of this Act and all the provisions of this Act shall apply accordingly : Provided that -(a) all agreements and awards for the payment of compensation in respect of any such property for any period of requisition before the commencement of this Act and in force immediately before such commencement shall continue to be in force and shall apply to the payment of compensation in respect of that property for any period of requisition after such commencement; (b) anything done or any actions taken (including any orders, notifications or rules made or issued) in exercise of the powers conferred by or under either of the said Acts shall, in so far as it is not inconsistent with the provision of this Act, be deemed to have been done or taken in exercise of the powers conferred by or under this Act, as if this Act was in force on the day on which such thing was done or action was taken.-----