

# Panel headed by Amit Shah to monitor disposal of 'enemy' properties

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A Group of Ministers (GoM) headed by Union Home Minister Amit Shah will monitor the disposal of over 9,400 enemy properties, which are likely to fetch about ₹1 lakh crore to the exchequer. According to an official order, two other high-level committees, one to be headed by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, and other to be co-chaired by Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla, will also be set up for disposal of immovable enemy properties vested in the Custodian of Enemy Property for India under the Enemy Property Act.

Enemy properties were those left behind by the people who took citizenship of Pakistan and China. The order said an Inter-Ministerial Group will be constituted for the disposal of enemy properties and it will be co-chaired by the Union Home Secretary and the Secretary of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management.

Representatives of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Economic Affairs, Department of Expenditure, Department of Public Enterprises, Department of Legal Affairs, and Ministry of Corporate Affairs, among others, will be members of the inter-ministerial group.

The order said the Centre may constitute an alternative mechanism comprising Home Minister Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari.

In 2018, the then Union Minister of State for Home Hansraj Gangaram Ahir had informed Rajya Sabha that “the estimated value of all enemy properties is approximately ₹1 lakh crore”.

Among the 9,280 properties left behind by Pakistani nationals, the most number of properties (4,991) are located in Uttar Pradesh, followed by West Bengal which has 2,735 such estates. There are 487 such properties in Delhi. Among the 126 properties left behind by Chinese nationals, 57 are located in Meghalaya, followed by West Bengal with 29. Assam has seven such properties.

According to the Act, enemy property refers to any property belonging to, held or managed on behalf of an enemy, an enemy subject or an enemy firm. There are 9,280 properties left behind by Pakistani nationals and 126 properties left behind by Chinese nationals.

**SOURCE:** *The Hindu*