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Ministers Face Backlash Over Secret £7 Billion Afghan Relocation Scheme

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The British government is under growing scrutiny after revelations of a secretive £7 billion evacuation effort that relocated thousands of Afghans to the United Kingdom. The mission, concealed from the public for nearly two years under a court-ordered super-injunction, was carried out without parliamentary approval or taxpayer awareness.

The covert operation, codenamed **Operation Rubific**, was launched after the Ministry of Defence (MoD) lost a sensitive database containing the personal information of Afghans who had applied for resettlement in the UK. The breach exposed over 100,000 individuals to possible retribution from the Taliban. In response, the government initiated a clandestine airlift to bring those affected to safety, ultimately flying in 18,500 Afghans, with plans for a total of 23,900 arrivals.

Using unmarked government-chartered aircraft, the airlifts took place regularly, landing at airports like Stansted and Royal Air Force (RAF) Brize Norton. The evacuees were processed discreetly and housed in Ministry of Defence properties or hotels pending permanent accommodation. However, this large-scale relocation has ignited debate amid Britain's ongoing housing crisis and strained public services.

Shockingly, 20 per cent of all MoD housing stock has reportedly been allocated to the resettled Afghans. A government source also warned that one in ten of the arrivals may enter the homelessness system, increasing pressure on local communities. In light of last summer's unrest in certain neighbourhoods, officials acknowledged potential "public disorder" risks as details of the operation became public.

Public outrage has intensified as discrepancies emerged between official statements and court evidence. While Defence Secretary John Healey told Parliament the total cost of the operation ranged between £400 million and £850 million, court documents from secret hearings cited the figure repeatedly as £7 billion. The lack of clarity has prompted calls for transparency and accountability.

Justice Chamberlain, who presided over the case, expressed disbelief at the figures presented during proceedings, even questioning the logic behind such extreme secrecy. "This is a resettlement program for immigrants to the UK," he remarked, raising concerns over the government's intent to withhold information from the public.

Adding to the controversy, hundreds of those rescued are now preparing to sue the British government for the initial data breach, which could result in an additional £1 billion in compensation. Manchester-based firm Barings Law, which represents over 1,000 claimants, criticised the government's conflicting narratives. "We urge the Ministry of Defence to be clear and transparent with the public about the extent of this fiasco," said Adnan Malik, a spokesperson for the firm.

Labour Member of Parliament Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi, who chairs the Commons Defence Committee, indicated he may recommend a formal investigation, calling the breach and its aftermath “wholly unacceptable.”

While the government has now closed the relocation scheme, leaving an estimated 70,000 at-risk individuals stranded in Afghanistan, public confidence continues to erode. With mounting costs, legal challenges, and widespread confusion, the operation has sparked serious questions about government oversight, immigration policy, and fiscal responsibility.