CURFEW RESTRICTIONS, STRIKE PARALYSE NORMAL LIFE FOR 20TH DAY

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Curfew lifted from old Srinagar city, protests, clashes

SRINAGAR, Jul 28: Curfew was again lifted from old city of Srinagar today. Youth took to streets at several places blocked roads, held demonstrations and clashed with police and security forces.

Curfew continued in Anantnag and Pulwama, while normal life remained paralysed for the 20th consecutive day today in view of the curfew and separatist sponsored general strike. Top separatist leaders Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, Mohammad Yasin Malik and Shabir Ahmad Shah continue arrested or under house arrest.

Reports of clashes were also received from Shopian, Imam Sahib, Kellar, Baramulla and some other areas. However, a police spokesman in a statement said, “The situation throughout the Kashmir valley remained peaceful and under control today. There was no report of any untoward incident from anywhere in the valley. Except Anantnag town, there were no restrictions anywhere in the Kashmir valley. Minor instances of stone pelting were reported from some places.”

Reports indicate that curfew will be re-imposed tomorrow in old city of Srinagar and some parts of civil lines area in view of a call by separatists for march to Jamia Masjid on Friday tomorrow. Authorities have already announced curfew in Anantnag and Pulwama towns.

This morning curfew was lifted from the old city of Srinagar. Youth took out processions at Bohrikadal, Barbar Shah and other areas. The procession was

stopped by police near Khanyar resulting in clashes. Protestors resorted to massive stone-pelting while security forces retaliated with tear-smoke shells. Clashes also broke out in Bohrikadal area of Srinagar city where a large number of youth raised slogans, pelted stones on the police and Para-military troopers.

Clashes also ocuured at Batamaloo. Reports said that security forces fired teargas shells to disperse protestors at Khatidarwaza in old city here. The clashes erupted between youth and forces when the former blocked main road and were staging protest against the recent civilian killings in the Valley.

Police swung into action and fired teargas shells to disperse the protestors. Later, youth resorted to stone pelting which resulted in brief clashes. Female folk from Mughal Mohalla and other areas of Chattabal Srinagar took out a procession against what they called atrocities committed by police in the area. They alleged that during nocturnal raids police not only harassed and thrashed them but also dragged the youth from the houses and lodged into police stations.

The residents of Rampora Chattabal alleged during nocturnal raids security forces went on a rampage. “Scores of men in uniform in a dozen police gypsies raided the area ransacked houses and detained the youth. They have been lodged in police station Qamarwari where we were not allowed to meet them,” said a local.

A police official denied the reports that any innocent was touched in the area. “We detained some of the wanted stone-pelters, while others fled from the area,” he said.

Reports from Tral town of South Kashmir’s Pulwama district said that at least three protesters suffered injuries while three youth were apprehended by police during clashes at Hardamir village.

In Sangam area of South Kashmir’s Anantnag district agitated youth attacked police post with stones. When CRPF chased them, a youth whom police identified as Shahzad Ahmed Dar son of Ghulam Mohiuddin a resident of Naina Sangam jumped into the river Jehlum. A police official said that the youth was rescued by police due to injury to his leg he was shifted to SKIMS Srinagar.

South Kashmir’s Anantnag, Pulwama and Kulgam reeled under curfew while restrictions were in place in Shopian district. Restrictions were also in place Sopore and Kupwara town.

In Sopore a community hall was set on fire by miscreants during the dead of the Wednesday night. A police official on condition of anonymity said that stone-pelting incidents on Thursday were witnessed from scores of areas across Kashmir including Habba Kadal, Nowhata, Rainawari, Safakadal, Sarafkadal, Rajouri Kadal, Nawakadal, Batamaloo, Kulgam Chursu, Padgampora, Shopian, Pulwama, Sopore and Sangam Anantnag.

According to locals, CRPF went on rampage in Tahab Pulwama, after youths staged a pro-freedom protest, and damaged windowpanes of scores of residential house. The CRPF action sparked massive protest while locals hit to roads and resorted to massive stone-pelting.

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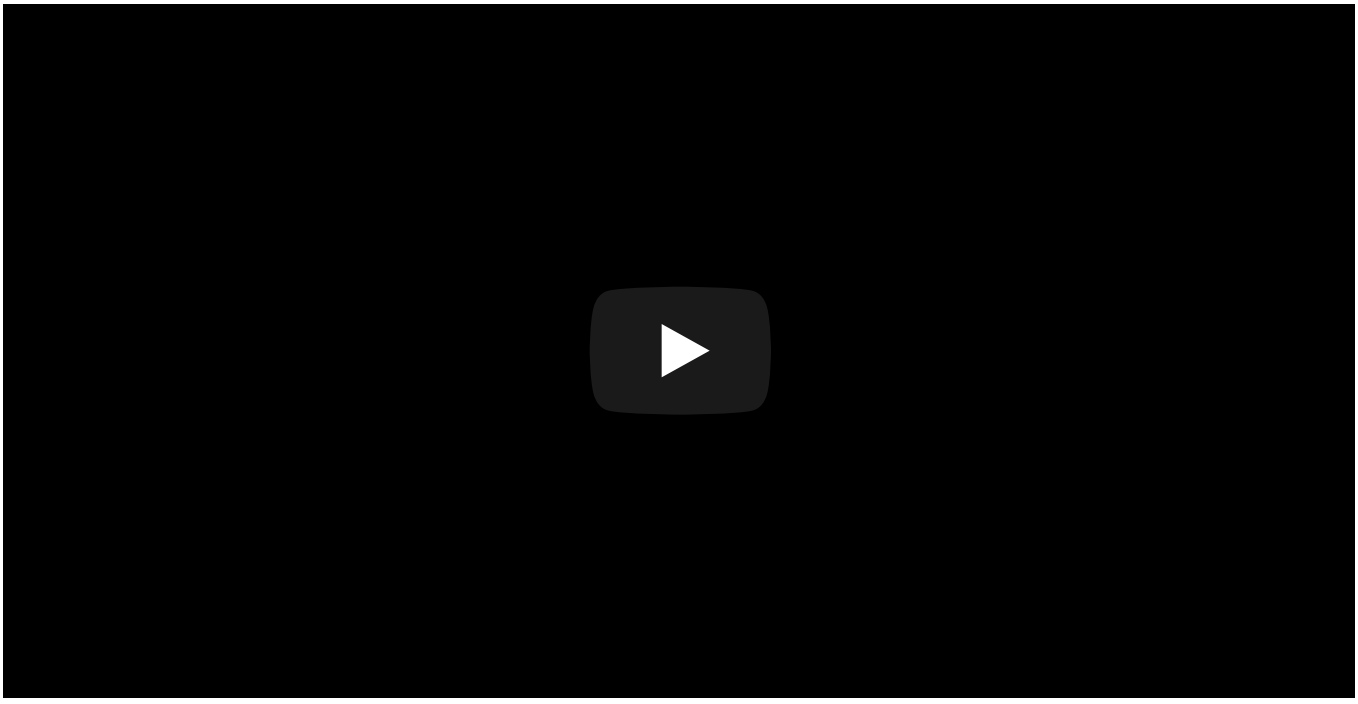

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