DAY 2: CURFEW, PROTESTS, RUBBER BULLETS; 60 INJURED

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SRINAGAR/ANANTNAG, July 20: Curfew continued to remain imposed in Kashmir for the second consecutive day today. Protestors defied the curfew restrictions at several places and held demonstrations against the Gool incident.

Police and paramilitary forces burst smoke shells and resorted to lathicharge to disperse the protestors. The demonstrators pelted stones on cops. In the subsequent clashes 60 persons including 31 police and security personnel were injured. Half a dozen women also sustained injuries.

Some vehicles in the cavalcade of former chief minister and PDP patron Mufti Mohammad Sayeed also came under stone pelting at Hyderpora here. However, his security guards did not retaliate. Mufti was on his way from airport to his residence.

Reports said that intense clashes occurred between protestors and security forces and police at Quimoo townsip of district Kulgam.

Police used force to quell the demonstrators. Five protesters including three women and 10 CRPF personal and a police official were injured during the clashes.

Hundreds of police and para-military CRPF men wearing riot gear and armed with sophisticated weapons enforced the curfew in all the four district headquarters Anantnag, Pulwama, Shopian Kulgam and other major townships of south Kashmir.

Forces had laid the barricades and concertina wire on the streets to thwart any protests. People were not allowed to go to mosques to offer prayers during the day.

“It was a curfew. I came out of the gate of the house in the afternoon to offer Nimaz in Masjid but the forces deployed outside did not allow me to go to masjid,” a resident

of Pulwama town told Kashmir Times over phone.

Reports of harsh restrictions were also reported from other towns. However, amid restrictions fierce clashes erupted between forces and protesters at Quimoo Kulgam.

“Hundreds of people including women came out of their houses in Bonapora Quimoo and staged protests after the rumour of the death of a youth Zahid Ahmad who was injured during the clashes yesterday spread in the area. The forces deployed in the area tried to disperse the protesters triggering fierce clashes which continued for nearly an hour.

The forces resorted heavy teargas shelling resulting in the injuries to five protesters including three women. During the clashes, several CRPF men and two police men including a sub-inspector were also

injured after being hit by the stones. A report said police fired rubber bullets on protestors.

The injured protesters were identified as Haneefa Banoo, Raoof Ahmad, Shahnawaz Ahmad, Shaheena and Rukhsana. All of them were taken to district hospital Anantnag where they are undergoing treatment. “Five people including three women and a police man have been brought to hospital,” said medical superintendent of hodspital, Dr Fazil Kochak. DIG, south Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said police had to use tear smoke shells to disperse the protesters who attacked them with stones.

“Despite raining stones on us we used only teargas shells to disperse the protesters. No rubber bullets were fired. All the five were injured due to tear gas shelling. 10 CRPF personal and a sub-inspector

of police were also injured in stone throwing. One of the CRPF man is serious,” DIG said. Reports of clashes were also received from Kakpora. “Though there were no restrictions in the town but at around

4 pm as the party of police and CRPF men passed by a group of youth started pelting stones at them trigeering clashes. In retaliation, they burst tear smoke canisters to disperse the stone pelting youth.

However, nobody was injured during the clashes,” reports said.

Meanwhile, police has rounded up nearly ten youth from Kakpora and Qazigund areas during overnight raids.

“The policemen last night raided at least 15 houses in Kakpora and arrested atleast five youth including two brothers for their involvement in stone pelting,” reports said. They arrested youth have been identified as Ajaz Ahmad Lone, Showkat Ahmad lone, Pir Imtiyaz and John Mohammad.

Reports said that at least five youth were also arrested from different villages of Qazigund for taking part in yesterday’s protests.

Amid strict restrictions in all the townships located on the Yatra route today, authorities cleared all the Yatris who were stuck in Pahalgam for last two days. “We have cleared at least 500 Yatra vehicles allowing them to move towards Jammu during the day. More Yatris will be cleared during the night,” DIG said.

In Srinagar, police vans fitted with public address system announced the imposition of curfew. The people were not allowed to move outside their houses due to strict curfew. Today additional deployment of forces was made to enforce the curfew. Thousands of paramilitary CRPF and police armed with sophisticated weapons and riot gear guarded the deserted streets, lanes and by-lanes to enforce strict curfew and to foil any attempt of people. In most of the places, police and other security forces have spread wires across the road and important intersections to prevent the movement of people and vehicles. Troops had also blocked many roads leading to sensitive areas with the armoured vehicles.

At Humhama, youth resorted to heavy stone pelting at police, injuring Deputy SP Zahoor Ahmed critically.

Agitated protestors smashed the windowpanes of two CRPF vehicles at Nawab Bazar area of Srinagar on Saturday morning. Eyewitnesses said that protestors damaged both the vehicles completely. Soon after this incident, CRPF personnel went berserk and ransacked dozens of residential houses. Stray incidents of stone pelting were reported from Sabzi Market Soura and Zainakot. Locals alleged that CRPF smashed the windowpanes of scores of houses and even did not spare the vehicles parked in different yards and roads.

Heavy stone pelting incidents were reported from South Kashmir’s Bonigam, Mughal Gund Yesoo area of Qazigund. Deputy Inspector General of Police South Kashmir Vijay Kumar and SP Kulgam reached on spot to diffuse the situation.

Police resorted to heavy tear gas shelling to disperse the protestors in South Kashmir's Pulwama district. Protestors marched towards DC office Pulwamma amid anti-India slogans. At least six civilians were
injured in the police action.

Reports of clashes were also received from Bandipora, Aloosa, Ashtengoo, Tangmarag and Kakapora.

The separatist leadership continued to remain either arrested or house arrested at their respective residences. Those included Hurriyat Conference (G) Chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Hurriyat Conference (M), Chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, JKLF Chairman Mohammad Yasin Malik, Shabir Ahmad Shah, Nayeem Ahmad Khan, Javid Ahmad Mir, Zaffar Akbar Bhat, Bukhtar Ahmad Wani and others.

Clashes also erupted at Bandipora township in north Kashmir, from wee hour and, people tried to defy restrictions and stones towards the police. The police also burst smoke shells and resorted to lathi charge.

Demonstrations were also held at Sopore despite curfew. Clashes occurred at Main Chowk Batapora, Chinkipora, and Aarampora during which tear gas shells were used by police and para military forces.

Reports said that people took to streets and held protest demonstration at Batamaloo, Safakadal, Humhama, Peerbagh, Hyderpora, Burzullah, Bemina, Nowgam, Soura, Habbakadal and Amirakadal.

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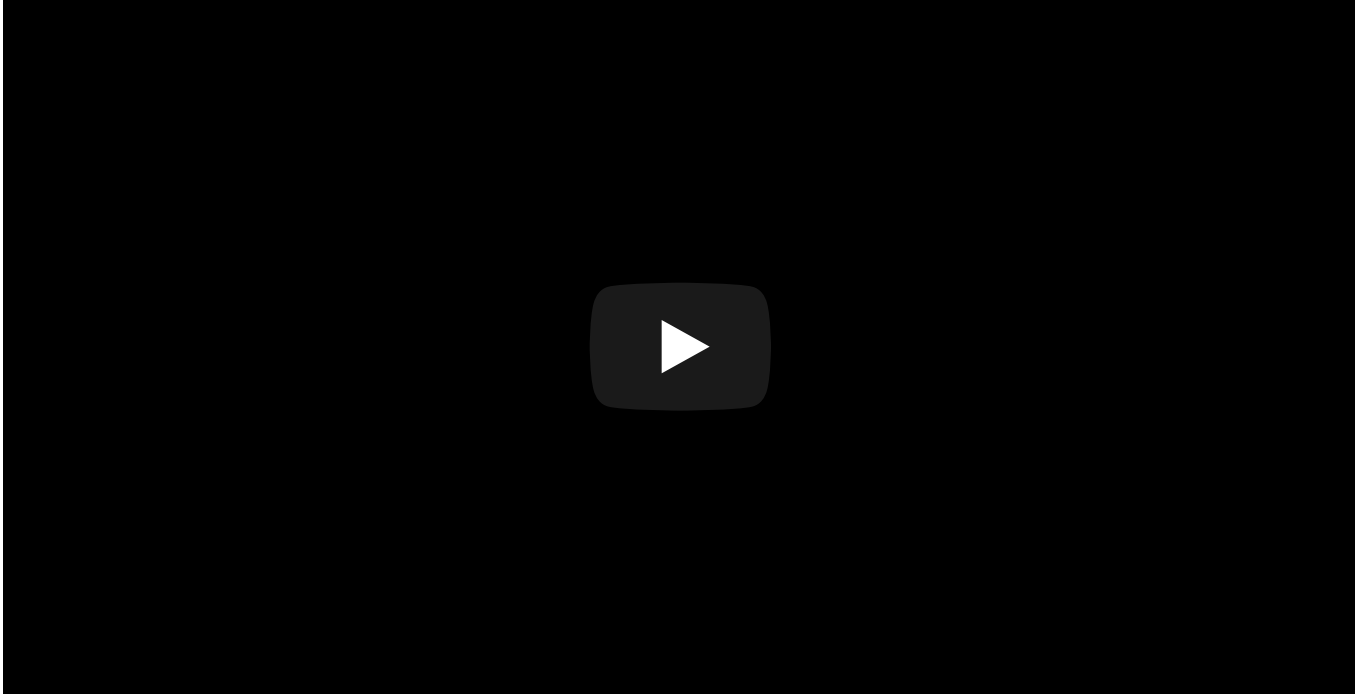

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J&K RELATED WEBSITES

- J&K Govt. Official website (http://jkgad.nic.in/)
- Jammu Kashmir Tourism (http://www.jktourism.org/)
- JKTDC (http://www.jktdc.co.in/)
- Mata Vaishnodevi Shrine Board (http://www.maavaishnodevi.org/)
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UTILITY

- Train Enquiry (http://www.enquiry.indianrail.gov.in/ntes/)
- IRCTC (http://www.irctc.co.in/)

- Matavaishnodevi (http://www.matavaishnodevi.com/)
- BSNL (http://www.bsnl.in/)
- Jammu Kashmir Bank (http://www.jkbank.net/)
- State Bank of India (http://www.statebankofindia.com/)

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