Curfew re-imposed in parts of Srinagar after clashes, 2 dozen injured

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Deserted Shikara boats moored on the banks of Dal lake on Sunday. —Excelsior/Shakeel

190 Pry schools to re-open today

Fayaz Bukhari

Srinagar, Aug 18: Authorities today re-imposed curfew like restrictions in parts of Srinagar after violent overnight clashes in which two dozen persons were injured while Government said it has eased restrictions in more areas in Kashmir.

The curfew restrictions were eased yesterday morning but it led to protests in the afternoon that continued till last night forcing authorities to impose strict restrictions in old city areas.

At least two dozen persons were admitted to hospitals with pellet injuries from the old city where violent clashes broke out last night. The clashes, as per the official sources, were reported in at least 47 locations across Kashmir till last night. The sources said that minor clashes took place today at around two dozen places across Kashmir despite restrictions in these areas.

The heavy overnight clashes took place mostly in Rainawari, Nowhatta and Gojwara areas of old city during the night. Security forces fired tear smoke, chilly grenades and pellets to disperse the protesters. The officials said clashes also took place in other areas including Soura.

The roads in these areas were strewn with stones and bricks in the morning, a sign of heavy stone pelting during the night.

Srinagar's SMHS hospital reported at least 17 people with pellet injuries. However, 12 were discharged at the same time and 5 with grevious injuries were admitted there and later discharged in the morning after surgeries. Sources said that there were many more injuries but they didn't report to hospitals for fear of being identified and listed by the security agencies as stone pelters.

A 65-year-old man, Mohammad Ayub of Braripora was admitted to SMHS hospital with suffocation caused by firing of tear smoke in old city area yesterday afternoon. He, however, died in the hospital last evening and was buried during the night. The family members said that a tear shell exploded in front of him and it led to his suffocation and death at hospital. A government official said that he has no knowledge of the incident.

And Government today said that over 190 primary schools will re-open tomorrow in Srinagar, besides restoring full functionality of Government offices across Kashmir valley.

Addressing an evening presser here, Government spokesman, Rohit Kansal, said that the process of easing of prohibitory orders and providing relaxations continued on Sunday as well.

He said the relaxations were provided in 50 Police Stations today as against 35 police stations

yesterday (Saturday) and the duration in the relaxation was increased from six hours to eight hours.

Hoping to continue the relaxation in coming days, Kansal said that no untoward incident was reported from the areas where relaxation was provided; adding traffic including public transport plied and shopkeepers opened their businesses.

“In some areas, miscreants forced some shopkeepers to shut down their shops. Security forces in those areas have taken note of it and action will be taken against the culprits”, he said.

He added that there were no reports of any untoward incident across Kashmir. “There were reports of incidents of disturbance at 2-3 places where relaxation was not given, the security forces dealt with those incidents locally”, he added. He said that 2 persons received minor injuries in these incidents.

He said that it was the endeavour of the Government to restore all the landlines to their full functionality as soon as possible and the BSNL officers and technicians are working continuously to restore working of exchanges across Kashmir valley.

The spokesman said that the Government would attempt to restore infrastructural and developmental works as the overall situation further improves.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, said that they had consultations with the Education Department officials over the opening of these schools. He said that adequate security will be provided for opening of these schools. When asked who will take responsibility if anything untoward happens to the students, he said: “I will take responsibility of any untoward incident”.

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