

## International

# Israeli army ready to pull back if violence stops

Majority of Israelis back Palestinian state

JERUSALEM, Oct 27 : The Israeli army said today it is ready to pull back its forces from flashpoint areas in the Palestinian territories if violence drops, but is bracing for a prolonged cycle of unrest and possible terror attacks, reports AFP.

"In every area in which we see the degree of violence is coming down we shall redeploy the forces and take the tanks back," army spokesman General Ron Kitrey told reporters.

After two days marked by a sharp easing in the level of street violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the army and police forces were nevertheless preparing for fresh clashes Friday, declared a day of rage by Palestinians.

Kitrey said the army had already pulled out several tanks from the Netzarim junction area of the Gaza Strip which has been the scene of some of the fiercest fighting over the past month.

"We really try to signal to the Palestinians that we do have a deep wish to start talking again instead of continuing this violent dispute," he said, but added: "The basic assumption of the IDF (Israeli Defence Forces) is that the year 2001 will be a year of unrest."

And he said that over the last few days, there had been a dramatic increase in live shootings from the Palestinian side.

The number of heavily populated violent waves of stone-throwing is being decreased in the last days but the number of live shootings has increased."

Kitrey also said Thursday's suicide attack by an Islamic Jihad militant against an army post in the Gaza Strip, which

killed the bomber and slightly wounded a soldier, "is not the last."

"We have 'hot warnings' of several attempts to cause as great a damage as possible to the Israeli population," he said.

The army had a constant flow of information about planned "terror" activities, he said, following the Palestinian Authority's release of militants from Islamic Jihad and its larger rival Hamas in recent weeks.

Israel was also preparing for tensions on the border with Lebanon and has closed the occupied Mount Hermon and Mount Dov areas to civilians, Kitrey added.

Meanwhile, a majority of Israelis back the creation of a Palestinian state, according to a poll published on Friday after a month of deadly clashes in the Palestinian territories.

The Gallup poll published in the Hebrew newspaper Maariv found that 57 percent supported the establishment of a state, up from 46 percent three months ago, while 36 percent were opposed, down from 41 percent.

But a full 70 percent of those surveyed said they backed Prime Minister Ehud Barak's decision to declare a "time-out" in the seven year Oslo peace process with the Palestinians because of the unrest, while 23 percent were opposed.

Some two thirds of the 601 people questioned also said they backed Barak's idea of a "unilateral separation" between Israel and the Palestinians if there is no peace accord, and the number of those who support the peace process dropped to 59 percent from 68 percent last month, the poll found.



Democratic presidential candidate US Vice President Al Gore (L) stands on the stage with his daughter Kristin (R) prior to the start of a campaign rally in downtown Madison, Wisconsin, where over 30,000 supporters gathered on Thursday.

-AFP photo

## Troops disperse anti-India protest march in Kashmir

Shabir Ahmed Shah arrested, 14 killed in violence

SRINAGAR, India, Oct 27 : Indian troops in Kashmir broke up a protest today and arrested a top Muslim separatist as he tried to lead a march through the streets of the state's summer capital Srinagar, reports AFP.

Shabir Ahmed Shah was arrested along with a dozen supporters.

The protest coincided with a general strike in Srinagar to mark the 53rd anniversary of Kashmir's accession to India and the arrival of Indian troops.

The annual strike, supported by Muslim militant groups, was called by the All Party Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference, an umbrella organisation comprising around two dozen separatist parties.

The marchers, chanting slogans like "Indian army leave Kashmir," walked with black banners that read "27th October -- Black Day in Kashmir."

Some of the younger protesters also wore shackles and chains to symbolise what they view as India's repressive policies in Muslim-majority Kashmir.

There was little resistance when the police moved in to break up the march, even when Shah and his supporters were led away.

All schools and colleges in Srinagar, as well as shops and business establishments, banks and government offices remained closed Friday because of the strike call.

Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir signed the instrument of accession on October 27, 1947 after appealing for Indian help to ward off an invasion by Pakistani tribesmen.

The deployment of Indian forces erupted into a full scale war -- the first of two that India and Pakistan would fight over the disputed Himalayan region.

The day has been marked by a strike every year since 1989, when Kashmiri Muslims launched an armed insurgency against Indian rule.

The decade-long violence has claimed 34,000 lives.

India accuses Pakistan of supporting the insurgency with arms and money. Islamabad denies the charge but extends open moral and diplomatic to what it sees as the Kashmiris' just struggle for self-determination.

Meanwhile, a dozen Muslim militants were among 14 people killed in the latest incidents of separatist-linked violence in Indian Kashmir, police said today.

Shabir Ahmed Shah was arrested along with a dozen supporters.

The protest coincided with a general strike in Srinagar to mark the 53rd anniversary of Kashmir's accession to India and the arrival of Indian troops.

The marchers, chanting slogans like "Indian army leave Kashmir," walked with black banners that read "27th October -- Black Day in Kashmir."

Some of the younger protesters also wore shackles and chains to symbolise what they view as India's repressive policies in Muslim-majority Kashmir.

There was little resistance when the police moved in to break up the march, even when Shah and his supporters were led away.

All schools and colleges in Srinagar, as well as shops and business establishments, banks and government offices remained closed Friday because of the strike call.

Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir signed the instrument of accession on October 27, 1947 after appealing for Indian help to ward off an invasion by Pakistani tribesmen.

The deployment of Indian forces erupted into a full scale war -- the first of two that India and Pakistan would fight over the disputed Himalayan region.

The day has been marked by a strike every year since 1989, when Kashmiri Muslims launched an armed insurgency against Indian rule.

The decade-long violence has claimed 34,000 lives.

India accuses Pakistan of supporting the insurgency with arms and money. Islamabad denies the charge but extends open moral and diplomatic to what it sees as the Kashmiris' just struggle for self-determination.

Meanwhile, a dozen Muslim militants were among 14 people killed in the latest incidents of separatist-linked violence in Indian Kashmir, police said today.

Shabir Ahmed Shah was arrested along with a dozen supporters.

The protest coincided with a general strike in Srinagar to mark the 53rd anniversary of Kashmir's accession to India and the arrival of Indian troops.

The marchers, chanting slogans like "Indian army leave Kashmir," walked with black banners that read "27th October -- Black Day in Kashmir."

Some of the younger protesters also wore shackles and chains to symbolise what they view as India's repressive policies in Muslim-majority Kashmir.

There was little resistance when the police moved in to break up the march, even when Shah and his supporters were led away.

All schools and colleges in Srinagar, as well as shops and business establishments, banks and government offices remained closed Friday because of the strike call.

Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir signed the instrument of accession on October 27, 1947 after appealing for Indian help to ward off an invasion by Pakistani tribesmen.

The deployment of Indian forces erupted into a full scale war -- the first of two that India and Pakistan would fight over the disputed Himalayan region.

The day has been marked by a strike every year since 1989, when Kashmiri Muslims launched an armed insurgency against Indian rule.

The decade-long violence has claimed 34,000 lives.

India accuses Pakistan of supporting the insurgency with arms and money. Islamabad denies the charge but extends open moral and diplomatic to what it sees as the Kashmiris' just struggle for self-determination.

Meanwhile, a dozen Muslim militants were among 14 people killed in the latest incidents of separatist-linked violence in Indian Kashmir, police said today.

Shabir Ahmed Shah was arrested along with a dozen supporters.

The protest coincided with a general strike in Srinagar to mark the 53rd anniversary of Kashmir's accession to India and the arrival of Indian troops.

The marchers, chanting slogans like "Indian army leave Kashmir," walked with black banners that read "27th October -- Black Day in Kashmir."

Some of the younger protesters also wore shackles and chains to symbolise what they view as India's repressive policies in Muslim-majority Kashmir.

There was little resistance when the police moved in to break up the march, even when Shah and his supporters were led away.

All schools and colleges in Srinagar, as well as shops and business establishments, banks and government offices remained closed Friday because of the strike call.

Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir signed the instrument of accession on October 27, 1947 after appealing for Indian help to ward off an invasion by Pakistani tribesmen.

The deployment of Indian forces erupted into a full scale war -- the first of two that India and Pakistan would fight over the disputed Himalayan region.

The day has been marked by a strike every year since 1989, when Kashmiri Muslims launched an armed insurgency against Indian rule.

The decade-long violence has claimed 34,000 lives.

India accuses Pakistan of supporting the insurgency with arms and money. Islamabad denies the charge but extends open moral and diplomatic to what it sees as the Kashmiris' just struggle for self-determination.

Meanwhile, a dozen Muslim militants were among 14 people killed in the latest incidents of separatist-linked violence in Indian Kashmir, police said today.

Shabir Ahmed Shah was arrested along with a dozen supporters.

The protest coincided with a general strike in Srinagar to mark the 53rd anniversary of Kashmir's accession to India and the arrival of Indian troops.

The marchers, chanting slogans like "Indian army leave Kashmir," walked with black banners that read "27th October -- Black Day in Kashmir."

Some of the younger protesters also wore shackles and chains to symbolise what they view as India's repressive policies in Muslim-majority Kashmir.

There was little resistance when the police moved in to break up the march, even when Shah and his supporters were led away.

All schools and colleges in Srinagar, as well as shops and business establishments, banks and government offices remained closed Friday because of the strike call.

Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir signed the instrument of accession on October 27, 1947 after appealing for Indian help to ward off an invasion by Pakistani tribesmen.

The deployment of Indian forces erupted into a full scale war -- the first of two that India and Pakistan would fight over the disputed Himalayan region.

The day has been marked by a strike every year since 1989, when Kashmiri Muslims launched an armed insurgency against Indian rule.

The decade-long violence has claimed 34,000 lives.

India accuses Pakistan of supporting the insurgency with arms and money. Islamabad denies the charge but extends open moral and diplomatic to what it sees as the Kashmiris' just struggle for self-determination.

Meanwhile, a dozen Muslim militants were among 14 people killed in the latest incidents of separatist-linked violence in Indian Kashmir, police said today.

Shabir Ahmed Shah was arrested along with a dozen supporters.

The protest coincided with a general strike in Srinagar to mark the 53rd anniversary of Kashmir's accession to India and the arrival of Indian troops.

The marchers, chanting slogans like "Indian army leave Kashmir," walked with black banners that read "27th October -- Black Day in Kashmir."

Some of the younger protesters also wore shackles and chains to symbolise what they view as India's repressive policies in Muslim-majority Kashmir.

There was little resistance when the police moved in to break up the march, even when Shah and his supporters were led away.

All schools and colleges in Srinagar, as well as shops and business establishments, banks and government offices remained closed Friday because of the strike call.

Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir signed the instrument of accession on October 27, 1947 after appealing for Indian help to ward off an invasion by Pakistani tribesmen.

The deployment of Indian forces erupted into a full scale war -- the first of two that India and Pakistan would fight over the disputed Himalayan region.

The day has been marked by a strike every year since 1989, when Kashmiri Muslims launched an armed insurgency against Indian rule.

The decade-long violence has claimed 34,000 lives.

India accuses Pakistan of supporting the insurgency with arms and money. Islamabad denies the charge but extends open moral and diplomatic to what it sees as the Kashmiris' just struggle for self-determination.

Meanwhile, a dozen Muslim militants were among 14 people killed in the latest incidents of separatist-linked violence in Indian Kashmir, police said today.

Shabir Ahmed Shah was arrested along with a dozen supporters.

The protest coincided with a general strike in Srinagar to mark the 53rd anniversary of Kashmir's accession to India and the arrival of Indian troops.

The marchers, chanting slogans like "Indian army leave Kashmir," walked with black banners that read "27th October -- Black Day in Kashmir."

Some of the younger protesters also wore shackles and chains to symbolise what they view as India's repressive policies in Muslim-majority Kashmir.

There was little resistance when the police moved in to break up the march, even when Shah and his supporters were led away.

All schools and colleges in Srinagar, as well as shops and business establishments, banks and government offices remained closed Friday because of the strike call.

Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir signed the instrument of accession on October 27, 1947 after appealing for Indian help to ward off an invasion by Pakistani tribesmen.

The deployment of Indian forces erupted into a full scale war -- the first of two that India and Pakistan would fight over the disputed Himalayan region.

The day has been marked by a strike every year since 1989, when Kashmiri Muslims launched an armed insurgency against Indian rule.

The decade-long violence has claimed 34,000 lives.

India accuses Pakistan of supporting the insurgency with arms and money. Islamabad denies the charge but extends open moral and diplomatic to what it sees as the Kashmiris' just struggle for self-determination.

Meanwhile, a dozen Muslim militants were among 14 people killed in the latest incidents of separatist-linked violence in Indian Kashmir, police said today.

Shabir Ahmed Shah was arrested along with a dozen supporters.

The protest coincided with a general strike in Srinagar to mark the 53rd anniversary of Kashmir's accession to India and the arrival of Indian troops.

The marchers, chanting slogans like "Indian army leave Kashmir," walked with black banners that read "27th October -- Black Day in Kashmir."

Some of the younger protesters also wore shackles and chains to symbolise what they view as India's repressive policies in Muslim-majority Kashmir.

There was little resistance when the police moved in to break up the march, even when Shah and his supporters were led away.

All schools and colleges in Srinagar, as well as shops and business establishments, banks and government offices remained closed Friday because of the strike call.

Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir signed the instrument of accession on October 27, 1947 after appealing for Indian help to ward off an invasion by Pakistani tribesmen.

The deployment of Indian forces erupted into a full scale war -- the first of two that India and Pakistan would fight over the disputed Himalayan region.

The day has been marked by a strike every year since 1989, when Kashmiri Muslims launched an armed insurgency against Indian rule.

The decade-long violence has claimed 34,000 lives.

India accuses Pakistan of supporting the insurgency with arms and money. Islamabad denies the charge but extends open moral and diplomatic to what it sees as the Kashmiris' just struggle for self-determination.

Meanwhile, a dozen Muslim militants were among 14 people killed in the latest incidents of separatist-linked violence in Indian Kashmir, police said today.

Shabir Ahmed Shah was arrested along with a dozen supporters.