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Camera : V.Parkash

Story : Elections in Kashmir

Location: Srinagar , Kashmir. Date of event 30th March, 57

Cloudy dull day. Tri X and one roll Plus X.

On January 25, 1957, the Kashmir Constituent Assembly formally adopted the constitution framed by it and the state of Kashmir which has been a bone of contention between India and Pakistan decided finally to stay with India. At the same time the UN Security Council passed a resolution to freeze this action of Kashmir Constituent Assembly and in another resolution the Security Council decided to send Mr. Jarring of Sweden to report in the matter of Kashmir.

For the first time Kashmiris are exercising their right of vote by electing members for its Legislative Assembly and for the first time in their life, people of Kashmir were handling a ballot paper. The majority party in Kashmir is National Conference which is secular. Irrespective of religion Hindus Muslims and Sikhs are the supporters of this party which has been ruling Kashmir since the Maharaja of Kashmir (Sir Hari Singh) was asked to quit the state in 1947.

There are altogether 75 seats in the assembly. The National Conference won 38 seats unopposed. For many contested seats there was keen contest between the candidates of National Conference and candidates of other parties viz Praja Prishad, Praja Socialist and independent.

Including contested and unopposed seats, it is reported National Conference has so far captured 52 seats. A few seats have been won by Praja Prishad and Praja Socialist party and the results of some have yet to come.

Roll. 1,

In the Khanyar area of Srinagar there was keen contest between the National Conference candidate and the candidate of Socialist party. Shots of lined up voters waiting for their turn. It was raining and many were protected under the cover of an umbrella. Medium and close up shots of voters.

Top shot showing the Khanyar area with voters moving round the street.

Shots of Muslim women who were completely covered under a 'Burqa' a sort of a tent.

Roll. 2

Top shot taken at Pampur village which is rural constituency. Shots of men and women voters crowding round the booth. But ladies had the first chance while men waited to take their turn.

Shot of a candidate's representative addressing voters from a window of a rural house. The sign of National Conference Campaign 'Farmer standing in the field' is seen pasted on the mud wall.

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Roll. 2 Continued.....

Medium shot of voters coming forward for taking the ballot paper. Every voter was given a distinguishing mark with indelible ink on the index finger. This was a precaution against fraud of misrepresentation by coming for the secondtime.

Ballot paper being handed over to the voter.

Roll. 3.

Shot of a long row of women voters waiting Kakpur polling booth. Medium and close up shots of the women.

~~Mr~~ Traditionally women's chance was first and while women stand in queue the men had to do the Baby sitting by taking care of infants. Shot of men with infants in their laps squatting on the floor.

Shot of a large number of men voters waiting for their turn by outside the barrier.

Roll. 4.

A general view of a Kashmir village. The houses are made of mud.

Shot of campaign posters of National Conference. The farmer standing in the field represents the policy of uplift of the farmers. The second poster shows flags of India and Kashmir side by side.

General shots of Srinagar Kashmir showing scenes of River Jhelum and small boats plying in it.

Shot of a bridge in Kashmir which is more or less a land mark for the city of Srinagar.

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END.

The coverage was made on the 30th and the film is being shipped by the first available plane on the 31st. On account of bad weather it is not definite if the plane will leave today but at the time of writing 10 A.M. (31st March) it is expected the plane will go at about 1 P.M. If it goes it will make connection in Delhi on Sunday. In any case this is the first shipment which is going out and I hope you would be able to use the same. Thanks.