This story is dedicated to the hundreds of thousands of Booth Level Officers (BLOs), who take up the colossal and painstaking exercise of identifying all eligible persons (citizen residents, above 18 years of age) and ensure that they get registered as voters.

This is the inspiring story of a female Booth Level Officer and a young and aspiring voter; this story will also serve as an illustrated guide to the process of registration and voting.

**Illustration:** Sandhya Prabhat, Anish Daolagupu (Pg. 56,57)

**Story:** Prateek Thomas, Kanan Dhru & Kelly Dhru
Arjun, Amma has to go a little early today. We’ll read the rest when I’m back, okay?

Amma, can you make poori-channa for dinner today?

Amma will be late today, but I’ll make it tomorrow. I promise.

Be a good boy and don’t give Paati any trouble!
AMMA, I'M LEAVING WITH SURESH. I'LL BE BACK BY SIX.

YOU'RE LEAVING EARLY AND COMING LATE? ARE YOU ON ELECTION DUTY, AGAIN?

MA, YOU KNOW I HAVE TO, ALL TEACHERS DO!

BUT I HAVE MY DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT AT FIVE THIRTY. HOW WILL I GO FOR THAT?

CAN'T WE RESCHEDULE IT FOR ANOTHER DAY?

THAT'S VERY EASY FOR YOU TO SAY, ISN'T IT?

I'LL FIGURE OUT SOMETHING, AMMA.
AMMA IS ANGRY AT ME.

SHE HAS HER DOCTOR’S APPOINTMENT TODAY, BUT I DON’T THINK I’LL BE BACK BY THEN.

HMM. MAYBE YOU COULD CALL THE CLINIC AND MOVE HER APPOINTMENT.

OH!

SHE WASN’T VERY PLEASED WHEN I SUGGESTED THAT.

TRY TO GET HOME EARLY IF YOU CAN. IF NOT, WE’LL SEE.

I WILL.
Miss, why are you and the other teachers going out to houses in the evenings?

All of you are going on election duty.

Who can answer Rajiv’s question?

It is one of the biggest and most complex exercises done anywhere in the world.

That’s right. Do you know what makes the elections in our country special?
India has 7 recognized national political parties, 42 recognized state political parties, and more than 2000 unrecognized political parties.

Election Commission of India used more than 1.4 million electronic voting machines.

4.6 million polling staff and about 2.5 million security personnel were deployed in more than 800,000 polling stations.

Over 2000 observers, 140,000 micro-observers, 4.5 million supervisory staff, and about 75,000 video-graphers in the same general election.

40,599 digital cameras, 119 special trains comprising 3060 coaches for transporting central police forces all over the country.

55 helicopters to do more than 600 sorties and airlift 6,800 security personnel and innumerable election materials.
COUNTLESS BUSES AND JEEPS, TRACTORS, MOTORCYCLES, BULLOCK CARTS, MULES, AND CAMELS HELP WITH THE TRANSPORTATION OF MEN AND MATERIAL.

NOT TO FORGET THE HUGE EXERCISES DONE IN THE PRE-POLL PERIOD.

YOU ARE TRYING TO LOCATE ELIGIBLE OR MISSING VOTERS FROM WITHIN A POPULATION OF 1,210,193,422.

SPREAD OVER A GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF 3,287,260 SQ. KMS.

DISTRICTS OVER 640 ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICTS, 5924 SUB-DISTRICTS, 7,935 TOWNS AND 640,567 VILLAGES.

IT IS NO MEAN TASK, AND ALL EFFORTS HAVE TO BE MAMMOTH, NAY GIGANTIC OR JUST INFINITELY COLOSSAL TO MATCH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE TASK AT HAND.
LAST DAY OF ELECTION DUTIES! SHALL WE LEAVE?

SAAB GHAR PE NAHIN HAIN.

YOU'RE BACK AGAIN? COME TOMORROW.

PLEASE COME! MY DAUGHTER HAS JUST TURNED EIGHTEEN, SHE'S BEEN WAITING TO ENROLL AS A VOTER.

I GOT MY VOTERS ID YEARS BACK... BUT I'M NOT SURE WHAT THE PROCESS IS NOW.

I'LL BE GLAD TO HELP HER WITH EVERYTHING.
Salma, because you completed 18 years of age on first January, you are eligible as a voter.

Documents Required

Age Proof

1. Birth Certificate issued by Municipal Authority or Competent Office
2. School Leaving Certificate
3. Copy of Certificate of Class 10 with Date of Birth
4. Certificate by Primary Health Centres (PHC)
5. For voters above 25 years, Gram Panchayat can certify age

Proof of Ordinary Residence

1. Copy of EPIC of Parents
2. Birth Certificate issued by the Municipal Authority
3. Passport
I’ll submit your documents within the next few days.

Your name will be added to the voter’s list.

HOW CAN I FIND OUT IF MY NAME HAS BEEN ENROLLED?

You can go to the official website of the Election Commission and check there. It will have the electoral rolls of assembly constituencies in India.

The address for the Election Commission’s website is www.ecilnic.in

But what about voters who are from a smaller city or town? How can they find this information?

The Booth level officer/Assistant Electoral Registration Officer in every area and e-gram centres provide this service, so voters can enquire there and find out too. The helpline number 1950 can also be used for the inquiry.
No person can register in more than one constituency.

KAMALA, SALMA IS SHIFTING TO A NEW CITY FOR HIGHER STUDIES IN A FEW MONTHS.

IS THERE A WAY TO TRANSFER HER NAME IN THE ELECTORAL ROLLS?

OF COURSE, ALL SHE NEEDS TO DO IS TO FILE CLAIM APPLICATION IN THE NEW PLACE OF RESIDENT WITH EPIC NUMBER IN PART IV OF THE FORM NO 6.
NO PERSON CAN REGISTER IN MORE THAN ONE CONSTITUENCY.

BUT HOW WILL MY NAME BE REGISTERED IN THE VOTERS LIST? ISN'T IT FINALIZED?

THE ELECTORAL ROLLS ARE PREPARED THROUGH A PROCESS OF MULTIPLE REVISIONS.
LIKE ME, HUNDREDS OF OTHER OFFICERS GO FROM DOOR-TO-DOOR AND COLLECT INFORMATION ABOUT ELECTORS.

SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS THAT THE ELECTORAL ROLLS ARE BEING CONTINUOUSLY UPDATED?

WOW, AND I USED TO THINK THIS WAS A ONCE-IN-FIVE-YEARS PROCESS!

INDEED, AND YOU CAN FILE ANY APPLICATION FOR THE ADDITION, DELETION, CORRECTION OR TRANSPOSITION WITH THE BOOTH LEVEL OFFICER / ASSISTANT ELECTORAL OFFICER OR ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICER.
Akka, in order to vote, I will need my voters ID, isn't it?

First of all, your name must be in the voters list. Then, you can have either 'electoral photo identity card', voters slip, passport, driver's license, as the proof of identity, to vote.

Once your name is added to the voters list, the election commission will issue an electoral photo identity card, like this, also called as EPIC.

But, when I go to college, will I have to get a new EPIC card there?

No. Once issued, EPIC remains valid for electoral identification throughout the country, even if you change base.
Salma, your vote is your invaluable right. Always remember this.

Never let anyone influence your vote by offer of money or a gift of any kind, and nor should you try to influence anyone’s vote.

Oh, it’s past five! I should be leaving.

Thank you so much for coming, Akka.

It’s nothing, my dear. I was only doing my duty.
GOOD EVENING, DR. SRIHARAN'S CLINIC.

HELLO, MY MOTHER-IN-LAW, VASANTHI HAS AN APPOINTMENT WITH DR. SRIHARAN FOR 5:30, CAN WE RESCHEDULE IT FOR 6:30 TODAY?

AMMA, I'VE RESCHEDULED YOUR APPOINTMENT TO 6:30.

LET ME QUICKLY FRESHEN UP, AND WE'LL LEAVE.
HOW COME YOU'RE HOME SO EARLY?
AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THE KITCHEN?

I HAVE MADE CHANA PURI FOR ARJUN!
YOU KNOW YOU DON'T HAVE TO RESTRICT YOURSELF TO JUST THIS TIME. THE KITCHEN DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN!
VOTING DAY, 4 MONTHS LATER.

DIFFERENTLY ABLED VOTERS ARE GIVEN A PREFERENCE IN VOTING.
How is that possible? I've come to vote only now.

Someone has already cast a vote in your name.

Don't worry, we've informed the presiding officer.

The law allows you to cast a tendered vote, a tendered ballot paper will be given to you and you will be required to sign your name on the list of tendered votes.
YOU CAN PROCEED.

SALMA SHEIK!
YOU CAN GO IN NOW.