

A Young Bright Mind



This is a story of a 14-year-old from Maharashtra, who is developing a mobile app to solve the issue of migrated voters and ensure their greater electoral participation without having to travel across the country.

India is a large country where a major number of people are illiterate and are unaware of the electoral system. Their apathy towards the process results in lesser participation, which thereby makes a valuable vote go to waste, causing a disruption to our democracy.

In order to stop this chain of apathy, we have to do something via which people can participate in the elections carried out in any part of the country, by

not having the need to physically go there. The Election Setu App can solve this problem of migrated voters. This app will also help people get quick and accurate election results.

After getting all permissions and getting the app ready, the most important task is to promote the app and spread information about it. To ensure active participation of people in elections through this app, we will use all social media platforms, television and other media and also carry out guide tours by zila parishad teachers and the other government staff in villages. This way, there will be Setu duties for government teachers instead of election duty.

Anand Gajanan Gawande
Washim, Maharashtra





‘Raju Ban Gaya Voter Man’

Raju woke up jovial and excited in morning. It was his birthday. But that was not the only reason for celebration. Just a day before his Intermediate results had been declared. He had topped in the entire district, scoring 98.5 per cent marks in the examination. His house was filled with several guests since the morning, all of them congratulating Raju on his remarkable success. His father's phone too had been ringing continuously since last night with congratulatory calls and good wishes from family and friends.

That was not all. A few journalists had come to interview Raju. One of them asked him how he was feeling about this achievement, Raju said that he was feeling very great.

Just then the journalist's phone rang. He listened to the other voice and said, "Hello, Mr Harish, please tell me –when is the enrolment?.....Fine, I will reach on time." After ending the call, the journalist told Raju that it was related to upcoming Lok Sabha election so he had to take the call. "Sorry," he told Raju, and resumed his interview.

The journalist next question to Raju was, "What do you want to become in the future?"

After thinking it over, Raju said, "In a democratic country, citizens have certain responsibilities. I want to honestly fulfil those responsibilities and want to serve my country."

The journalist chuckled and said, "Oh, that's commendable. You are talking like a politician, Raju-ji-how old are you?"

Raju replied excitedly that it was his birthday, that he had turned 18 years old that day.

The journalist said, "If you have turned 18, then you are legally an adult, and you can participate in the upcoming elections. So make sure to get your name enrolled in the voter's list."

After the journalist left, Raju went to his father and said that he wanted to get his name registered in the voter's list.

Most of the guests had left by then. Raju's father had just sat down to relax with a cup of tea with the family. His father said, 'Yes, that's truly the best gift you can give yourself, Raju beta, but first let me find out and explain the latest process of name registration on the voters' list to you. Maybe tomorrow...or next week...'

"But, Papa, I already know the process of registration, Baba," Raju told his surprised father. "It was explained at my school on January 25, on the occasion of National Voters' Day." And Raju rattled off the entire procedure –he told his father that for registration one needs to fill Form-6, which can be easily obtained from nearest Election Office, from the Registration Officer's office, online from National Voters Service Portal (nvsp.in), or even from the Block Level Officer.

Raju's father said, "Then what are we waiting for, son! Let's go to the Registration Officer and have the registration done. And on the way back, we will get your birthday cake too to celebrate your 18th birthday in the evening!" Everyone clapped.

As Raju went to pick up his bag, his father reminded him to get his ADHAAR card, along with a passport-size colour photograph and his birth certificate.

"Sure, Papa," said Raju, all set to go.

As he got on to the motorcycle behind his father, he exclaimed, "Now that I'm 18, I can drive the motorcycle too, right, Papa?"

"Yes, why not?" said his father. "You already have a Learner's licence, and tomorrow we can apply for a proper driving licence at the RTO tomorrow."

"Wooooow!" Raju whooped with joy, "Yessss!"

That day, Raju's happiness knew no bounds. At the nearest Election Office, he filled Form-6 and submitted it, and the Election Officer also congratulated Raju on becoming a voter.

At the cake shop, the shopkeeper asked, "What should I write on the cake, sir?"

Raju's father said, "Well... write Happy Birthday to You, Raju..."

But Raju interrupted his father and said, "No, Papa, today I have turned 18 and have also become a voter. This birthday is extra-special!"

Raju turned to the shopkeeper, "So please write this on the cake Raju ban gaya Voter Man."

Dr. Rajiv Joshi





Rupa and the Magic of ELCs A Modern Fairy Tale from Telangana

Rupa lives in a small village called Adilabad in Telangana, in a remote area, far away from town. Yet it has a good government school in which Rupa is studying in class X. She is a bright, active student and is very interested in her studies and extracurricular activities.

One day while she was preparing for her examinations, the electricity failed and the village was plunged into darkness. She heaved a sigh of resignation. This was a regular feature in the village. Electricity failures were frequent and, in addition to this, there was a lack of essential supplies to the village. Rupa, keenly aware of these shortcomings in her village, was often upset by them.

One day, she asked her mother, 'Amma, why is our village like this? Why is there no regular supply of electricity, no ration supplies... and those people who bully everyone, why are they not taken to task?'

The mother looked sadly at Rupa and said, 'Listen, child, the blame lies with us ourselves. We elected the wrong person this time. It is the fault of people like your father, who got lured and misled by the liquor and money distributed by the candidates and voted for them. Such a mistake! And now we are all suffering due to wrong voting decisions.'

Rupa thought for a minute and glanced at her Mother, who looked quite unhappy. She said, 'Amma, you never had Voter Education and Electoral Literacy Clubs or ELCs during your childhood.'

'What is an ELC?' asked Rupa's mother.

Rupa explained, 'An ELC is a Electoral Literacy Club. So... just like "literacy" classes teach you how to read and write, this club helps you to learn how to

understand the fair voting process and make a correct decision about voting. Amma, in these ELC meetings we are taught how to enrol and register as voters and to cast our vote in an honest and responsible way, and choose the right and deserving leader.'

The mother looked at her daughter in wonder. 'This is a really good way to teach people the right way to vote. How lucky you are! I wish we had such ELCs during our childhood. But then, as you know, I never went to school when I was your age.'

Rupa smiled confidently. She said, 'Amma, there is no need to feel you missed out on it all. You can even now learn all about voting and how to make the right decision—right here at the Chunav Pathshala in our village. You can become a member of the Chunav Patshala set up at our polling station and learn all about ethical voting through interesting activities, games and films. It's even better than going to everyday school!'

Amma cheered up hearing her daughter's words.

'Really?!' she exclaimed. 'I will become a member of Chunav Pathshala tomorrow itself. And not only that, I will encourage all my friends in our village to become members, too.' Rupa gave her mother a tight hug. Literate or not, Rupa's mother was always a bright spark, ready to better herself. No wonder Rupa had taken after her.

As promised, her mother became a member of the Chunav Pathshala and also helped many others in the village to become members. Soon, the village was well acquainted with the electoral process and the rules of voting.

Rupa is now soon to become a proud voter of India on completing 18 years. She recollects the day when she motivated her mother and started the process of voter awareness right in her own home. Thanks to the Electoral Literacy Club at her school she is well informed about elections and voting. Her mother, who also has social welfare and progress at heart, motivated several villagers to enrol in the Chunav Pathshala. Now the village is not ignorant about voting any more.

She is an aware future voter of India and knows that there are of 9,376 ELCs in Telangana State now. These ELCs are run according to the guidelines and directives laid down by the Election Commission of India.

This was just one small step taken by a young girl to create awareness. It was a step towards a change which had the power to motivate a hundred footsteps in the right direction – to vote ethically; to vote responsibly as citizens of India. Finally, it upholds the democratic pledge that the right decision in casting the vote always leads to achievement of the desired change in society.

Deepthi, Telangana





For a Brighter Tomorrow

81-year-old Ram Prasad was a highly respected man of his village. The villagers looked up to him for his wisdom and rationality at solving all their problems. His grandson Monu who turned 18, the eligible age to become a registered voter in the country, enrolled himself in the electoral roll after his grandfather advised him to become a responsible citizen of this country.

When elections were to be conducted in their village, Monu and his grandfather decided to go together and cast their votes. Monu had even introduced his grandfather to an interesting new mechanism introduced in the electoral system called VVPAT. "Grandpa, do you know there is a new device in the voting system which displays the name of your chosen candidate for seven seconds after you cast your vote in the EVM?" Grandfather Ram Prasad, who was thoroughly impressed with this new piece of information, expressed his joy and pride in the Election Commission of India and their initiatives. "Good, now this will ensure the transparency and credibility of the Electronic Voting Machine," said Ram Prasad.

While learning about the newer things incorporated in the electoral system of our country, grandfather Ram Prasad's eyes were filled with tears after past memories started haunting him. How could he forget that nearly 20 years earlier, during Bihar's Assembly Election, his dear son Rambali was killed due to a ruckus created by fringe elements, leaving behind

a fatherless child Monu. The past memories became more vivid as Ram Prasad recalled how those external elements would try their best to cause a societal upheaval and scare the voters away. The attack by the vile perpetrators had increased for some liquor and other intoxicants. It was only after the Commission's major intervention and the introductions of EVMs that such fringe attacks were brought under control.

Ram Prasad's chest was filled with pride and hope for the future of the country after seeing his grandson's enthusiasm to participate in the elections. Despite a young boy's loss of his father, his determination to stand up to the democratic values of this country could not be deterred and a young lad today, holds the light of hope for tomorrow.

Kapil Sharma,
Office of CEO, Bihar



Manipur

*"Let's stand together
To make a meaningful election,
Electing a responsible representative
Let's make a meaningful society..."*

*We, disabled, make them know
Cry with a loud voice
For equality
Let's participate in election...*

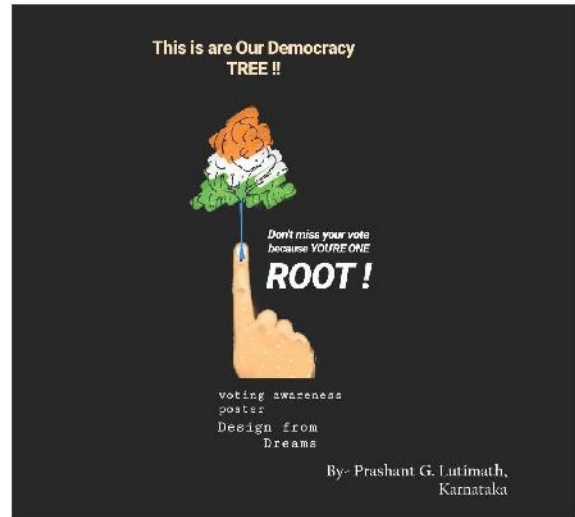
*Let's show our courage
While making an equal society
Let's participate in election
To make our country developed...*
-Local Song, CEO Office

Rajasthan

**“ Change
your opinion
into voice,
Cast ballot of
your choice.”**
-Shikha Soni

**लोकतंत्र है
हमारी पहचान
बनें जागरुक,
करें मतदान।**

-Dr Sudheer Soni



मतदान एक कार्य महान

स्वशियों का त्यौहार है यह, नहीं है कोई मजबूरी
बस साथ में एक I-Card जरूरी।
सुनते हैं सबकी पर रखते अपने मन में,
मतदान करते हैं हम पूरे अनुशासन में।
हम हैं देश के वोटर
दिल मतदान के लिए कहता,
दिशा पोलिंग बूथ की और,
और हाथ में वोटिंग कार्ड है रहता।
लोकतंत्र के पर्व में सबसे बड़ा यह काम महान
पूरी तरह सोच-विचार के करते हैं हम मतदान।
यदि रहना है निर्भीक व स्वतंत्र
तो मतदान ही केवल एक है मंत्र
लोकतंत्र का नहीं कोई विकल्प
आओ मतदान का हम ले संकल्प
लोकतंत्र का बढ़ता मान
यदि करते हम मतदान

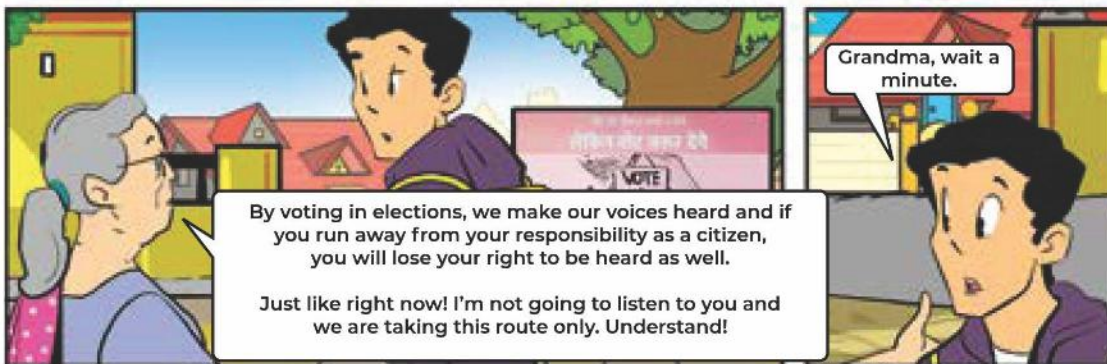


चाहे आबादी हो या गिर की हो वोट, कीमती है हर एक वोटर का वोट

- Bhupendra Lal

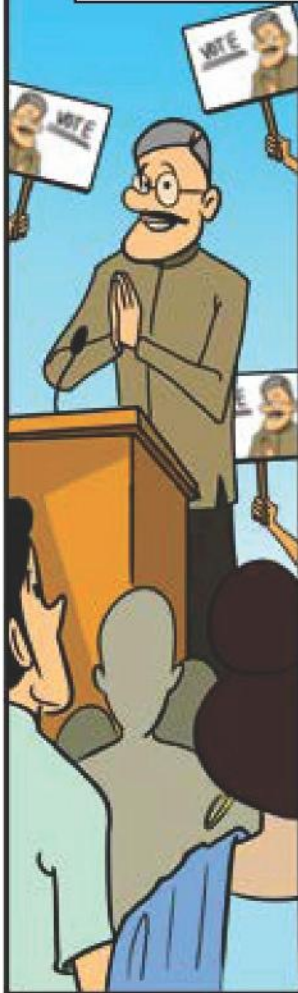
My Vote Matters







However, if a majority of us refuse to vote, then a small number of people risk picking an inadequate representative. Before elections, candidates tell us their plans. By voting for the right candidate/making an informed choice, we ensure that our country moves towards peace, progress and prosperity.



Test Your Voter Quotient (VQ)

Level - 1

Q. 1 What is the Voter Helpline phone number?

- (a). 1950 (b). 1098 (c). 1947 (d). 1097

Q. 2 Which is the relevant date for determining the age qualification of 18 years?

- (a). First day of May of the year in which the electoral roll is prepared or revised
(b). First day of December of the year in which the electoral roll is prepared or revised
(c). First day of January of the year in which the electoral roll is prepared or revised
(d). First day of July of the year in which the electoral roll is prepared or revised

Level - 2

Q. 3 What should be the maximum distance of a voter's house from a polling station as per election norms?

- (a). 1 Km (b). 2 Km (c). 3 Km (d). 5 Km

Q. 4 What is ECI's arm for enhancing electoral education and participation known as?

- (a). National Voters' Service Portal
(b). National Contact Centre
(c). India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management
(d). Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation programme

Level - 3

Q. 5 How many parliamentary constituencies are there in India?

- (a). 243 (b). 343 (c). 443 (d). 543

Q. 6 What is full form VVPAT?

- (a). Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail
(b). Vote Verification Printer And Toner
(c). Vacancy Vote Paper Authentication Test
(d). Verification Vector Printing and Testing

Level - 4

Q. 7 First Lok Sabha Elections were held in which year?

- (a). 1951-52 (b). 1919 (c). 1935 (d). 1947

Q. 8 Which authority conducts elections for state legislative assemblies and legislative councils?

- (a). The State Election Commission
(b). The Election Commission of India
(c). The Vidhan Parishad
(d). The Panchayat

Level - 5

Q. 10 Postal Ballot Facility is extended to:

- (a). Persons with Disability and Senior Citizens over 80 years
(b). First time electors (c). Women electors (d). Tribal electors

Q. 11 Name the chemical used to prepare the voters' ink.

- (a). Potassium Nitrate
(b). Silver Nitrate
(c). Calcium Hypochlorite
(d). Silver Halide