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Dear Bangaloreans, here's a board game about your city's smelly problem

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Wednesday, March 11, 2015 - 05:30

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Anisha Sheth | The News Minute | March 11, 2015 | 5.04 pm IST Follow

@anisha_w The moral of the story is that you play the game in order to get the point. A group of researchers in Bengaluru have designed a game that will explain to Bangaloreans how important it is to know where their garbage goes. Fields of View, which works with public safety and security in urban systems, has developed the Kaasu-Kasa (Money-Waste) board game, in which players try

to ensure that the IT city is garbage-free. In English, the game is titled Rubbish – the word “rubbish” beginning with the rupee symbol. One of the researchers at the group and who worked on the board game Bharath Palavalli told The News Minute said that the game is part of their research work, which looks at ideas that could make urban systems work. Their work involves designing games and simulations that could be played or used by citizens, and this usage is turn used by the researchers at Fields of View to understand if their ideas could work in the real world. In Kaasu-Kasa for instance, the idea is to ensure that garbage is disposed of properly through Dry Waste Collection Centres (DWCC). Four to six people can play at a time, and each player is a DWCC manager who must ensure that each ward in the city has a well-functioning DWCC. “The game is built to understand the dynamics of waste disposal, its logistics, and what happens to the garbage once it leaves your house. Most people dissociate themselves with waste once it gets out of their houses. Now at least, because of the problems in the last 4-5 years (the recent garbage crisis in Bengaluru), people know that there is a landfill,” Palavalli says. If garbage keeps piling up in the landfills, then everybody loses the game, Palavalli says. “It’s a game of collective failure or collective winning. It’s pretty much how real life works, right?,” he adds, explaining that the game was designed to test whether or not a de-centralised system of garbage disposal could work. One of the partner groups that Fields of View works with is Hasiru Dala, an organization which specializes in waste disposal. The idea for the game originated in discussions with Hasiru Dala, which will also get various groups such as students to play the game, and thereby create awareness about waste management. Palavalli says that his organization partners with the Dala in such exercises, as they are a “data collection tool”. The manner in which people play the game is observed by the researchers and is used as a means to understand whether or not a decentralized model, or a particular type of regulatory framework would function in the real world. He also said that he and his colleagues took great care to ensure that the complexity of the problem at hand was not lost when designing a game. He said that Kaasu-Kasa was developed in around seven months, but that some games took longer because they did not want to “misrepresent the complexities of a

problem. It is not simplistic, and if you make it a simplistic game, then you reduce the value of such a game because you would not be talking about the problem anymore." The game is not available in the market, but Fields of View creates as many pieces of the board game as necessary. The other groups with whom the group have partnered with are Amsterdam-based Media Lab and the IIT-Bangalore. (Photo Courtesy: Fields of View) Tweet Follow @thenewsminute

Religion

Karnataka ministers and Lingayat pontiffs meet: Will go ahead with demand for separate religion

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The meeting concluded with the members penning down a resolution regarding the demand for a separate Lingayat religion.

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In the last few weeks, Karnataka has witnessed a massive movement for a separate Lingayat religion with opposition from various quarters, within and outside the community.

On Thursday, the pontiffs of over 20 Lingayat Mutts, their followers, and several political leaders, including Karnataka Cabinet Ministers, met at Bengaluru's Jnana Jyothi Auditorium to discuss the ongoing Veerashavia vs Lingayat debate.

The meeting, which began at 10.30am, concluded with the members penning down a resolution regarding the demand for a separate Lingayat religion.

Backed by Water Resources Minister MB Patil, Transport Minister Basavaraj Rayareddy and Congress leader Vinay Kulkarni, pontiffs of various mutts including the Tontadarya Mutt's Siddhalinga Swami, Sirigere Mutt's Taralabalu Shivakumara Swami along with experts, scholars and activists took part in the seminar.

The members of the meeting decided that they would go ahead with their demand for granting minority religion status for Lingayatism.

“In 2014, the UPA government had given minority religion status to those following Jainism. It is not just the Centre, but also the state government, which has the power to do so. Hence, we are going to demand a separate code for Lingayat religion while collecting census data along with the demand for granting us a minority religion status,” the Tontadarya pontiff said.

The seers announced that a memorandum, in this regard, would be submitted to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah later in the day.

“CM Siddaramaiah has assured that he will set up a special committee to see if there are differences between Veerashaivas and Lingayats. If there is, then the committee will probe these differences and suggest if it would be favourable to

grant a minority religion status for the Lingayats,” said retired IAS officer, Jamdar.

However, the heads of the Pancha Peetha mutts in South Karnataka were not present at the meeting.

These seers had strongly rejected the idea of a separate religion and had claimed that the Lingayats and Hindus are the same.

However, amongst the separatists, infighting arose regarding the difference between Veerashaivas and Lingayats.

While the pontiffs of North Karnataka claim that Lingayats and Veerashaivas are different, the Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Mahasabha claimed that they are the same

The Tontadarya pontiff said that all efforts are being made to convince the heads of the Pancha Petha mutts to join their cause.

“In 1996, the Mahasabha had approached the Karnataka High Court and petitioned for a separate code for Veerashaiva-Lingayats while collecting census data. The High Court had rejected this plea. In 2013, during the UPA regime, the appeal to the Central government had also rejected the Mahasabha’s appeal. The problem is that Veerashaivas are the 38th subset of Lingayats. Hence, we want a separate religion for Lingayats,” the Tontadarya pontiff added.

Civic issues

Locals oppose new Bengaluru metro station on Masjid ground, say they were not consulted

Children of nearby areas use this ground for playing and at least four schools located in the area use the ground for sports meets and other school functions.

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The construction of the Cantonment Metro Station for the Phase II of the Namma Metro on a public ground is facing stiff opposition from residents of the area.

Locals at Bamboo Bazaar are opposing the construction of a metro station on the Madina Masjid grounds. Despite the opposition, the metro authorities are continuing with soil testing procedures, according to a report (<http://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/bengaluru/2017/aug/10/locals-say-no-to-metro-station-in-new-bamboo-bazaar-1641059--1.html>) by Ashwini M Prasad for The New Indian Express.

“They should have at least consulted us. After all, it is we who use the service and not officials. They cannot decide on the alignment according to their whims and fancies,” Shakeel Ahmed a resident of Bharathinagar an adjoining locality, told TNIE.

The residents are opposed to the construction of a metro station on the ground as it serves as a venue for prayers during Ramzaan. Also, children of nearby areas use this ground for playing. Besides this, at least four schools located in the area use the ground for sports meets and other school functions.

The residents and representatives of the Masjid are now planning to launch a campaign asking the BMRCL to stick to its original plan.

Originally, the Metro Station was to come up near the Bengaluru Cantonment Railway Station acting as an integration point for the surface railway and the metro and help ease Bengaluru's traffic mess.

“While world-over, organisations are opting for integration, here we are doing the opposite,” Rajkumar Dugar, a Vasanthnagar resident told (<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/bangalore/fight-over-cantonment-metro-station/article19458773.ece>) The Hindu. Dugar has also filed a memorandum with the BMRCL opposing the move.

Defending its position on its choice of location, the BMRCL has responded saying that the ground was chosen as it was to acquire land from the BBMP than the railways.

The Hindu report, however, added that the South Western Railways in a statement has said that land could be allotted for the purpose of setting up the metro station.

Earlier a report (<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bengaluru/bengaluru-land-struggle-pushes-metro-away-from-cantonment-railway-station/articleshow/59676515.cms>) in the Times of India published on July 20 quoted a special land acquisition officer of the BMRCL who cited cost and other technical issues for not opting for the railway land. Interestingly, RK Saxena, divisional railway manager, of the South Western Railway division told ToI that it was never contacted formally for the land.

This episode of citizen activism against an infrastructural project in the city is not new.

Recently residents of many localities of Bengaluru have criticised the BBMP for setting up Indira Canteens at the cost of trees, playgrounds and heritage structures.

Indira Canteens, a pet project of the state government, was announced by CM Siddaramaiah during his budget speech in March. The CM had promised setting up 198 low-cost eateries like that of Amma canteens introduced by late J Jayalithaa in the neighbouring state.
