

Indian board games take political, social hues

Board games are being designed to simplify various issues of the day, but can they achieve scale and impact?



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At Fields of View, Bharath Palavalli and team design games on various social issues

Image: Selvaprakash Lakshmanan for Forbes India

Seven years ago, when Bharath Palavalli decided to solve some of the world's most pressing issues by playing board games, people looked askance at him. In 2012, the Bengaluru-based researcher co-founded Fields of View (FoV), a think-tank that simplifies and attempts to solve complex socio-economic issues through a series of games and simulations. From garbage management and urban mobility to migration and gender disparity, the team designs games to engage students, voluntary organisations, policymakers, researchers and the common public.

One of FoV's popular board games called ₹ubbish, for instance, gets four to six people to become managers of a ward-level dry waste collection centre (DWCC) in a city and supervise local movement of waste. Garbage that goes uncollected ends up in the landfill. If the latter becomes full, all players lose. The game requires players to win by using resources (money, manpower, data) strategically to build DWCCs across the city. The aim, Palavalli explains, is to help people understand the process and challenges of waste management in metros, and how they can help smoothen the process.

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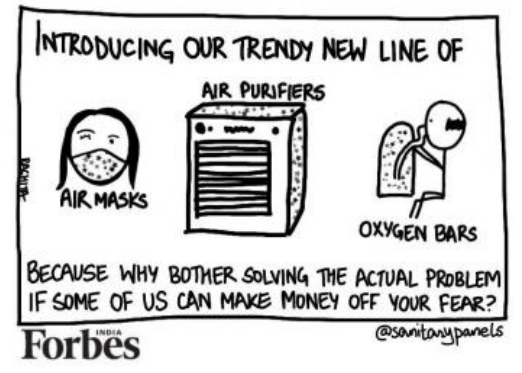
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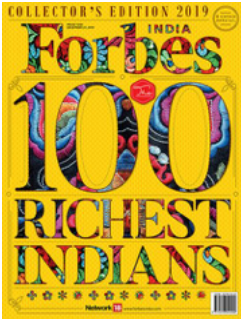
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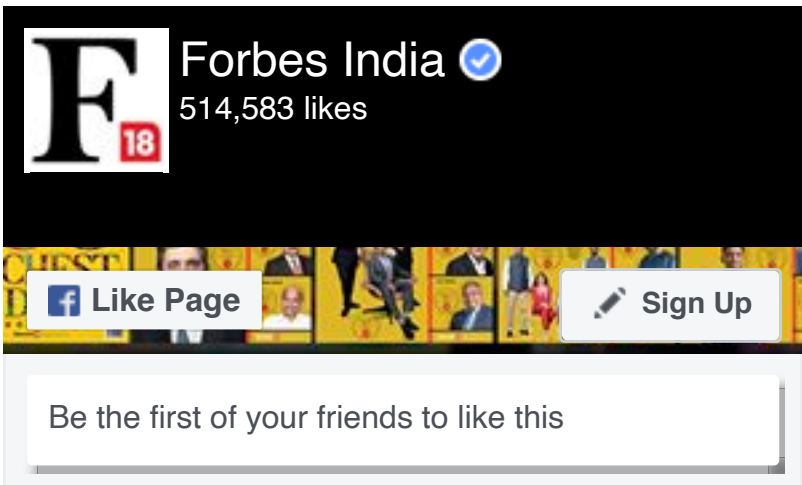
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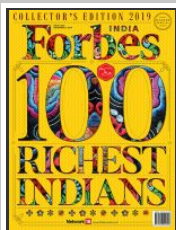
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