Why in News

Over 100 people were injured in three Jallikattu events in Tamil Nadu.

Jallikattu is a traditional bull-taming event that is organised in the state every year as part of the harvest festival Pongal.

Key Points

- **Jallikattu Event:** The sport requires fighters to pounce on a running bull, try to hold on to its hump and move along with the animal without falling or getting hurt.
Old Tradition
- Jallikattu is an old tradition. An ancient reference to bull taming is found in a seal discovered at Mohenjodaro, which is dated between 2,500 BC and 1,800 BC. The sport was called Eru thazuval or “embracing the bull”.
- The term 'jallikattu,' comes from Tamil terms ‘salli kaasu' which means coins and ‘kattu' which means a package tied to the horns of bulls as prize money.

Controversies
- In 2014, the Supreme Court had banned the event after a plea filed by the Animal Welfare Board of India and the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA).
- However, the state government insisted that Jallikattu is a crucial part of its culture and identity. The ban was lifted in January 2017 after massive protests in Chennai.
- Although there are systems in place to check treatment of the bulls and ensure safety of participants and spectators, activists allege that animal cruelty still continues.

Note
Kambala is a traditional bull buffalo race which generally takes place in coastal Karnataka from November to March. The PETA has alleged that Kambala too involves acts of cruelty on animals which are not physiologically suited for racing.

Source: TH