



# Death by design

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## **Tighter regulations cannot eliminate the element of danger intrinsic to jallikattu**

- In situations involving humans and animals, Murphy's law takes a strong hold: if things can go wrong, they most likely will.
- Jallikattu may have drawn the attention of animal rights activists for the innumerable accounts of cruelty to bulls, but the deaths fall mostly on the human side of the ledger.
- The animals suffer but generally survive the ordeal, while a few youth lose their lives.
- In keeping with the guidelines set by the Supreme Court to regulate the sport, the Health Department had also deployed teams of doctors from Pudukottai.
- But danger is in the very nature of the blood sport that is jallikattu. Unpredictability is intrinsic to the sport.
- Attempts to ban the sport have been opposed on the ground that it is an inseparable part of Tamil Nadu's culture.
- The Tamil Nadu government in 2017 took the ordinance route to allow for the holding of jallikattu following a ban by the Supreme Court, and the Centre exempted bulls from the rules framed for ensuring the well-being of performing animals.
- After every loss of human life the regulations might get tighter, but the danger to the life and limb of participants, spectators, and bull-owners will remain in the conduct of jallikattu.

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