

letters to the editor



Cruel sport

Re: "Right over rights" by G Babu Jayakumar and "If Only the Animal Spoke" by Nanditha Krishna (Jan 14). As a foreign tourist and traveller to India over the last 10 years, it is with enormous disappointment that I read of the reversion to legal status of the *Jallikattu*, a 'cultural sport'. This is my first visit to Chennai and Tamil Nadu (some rural areas), and until reading these articles, I was unaware of this cruel event occurring in your country.

From my understanding of general Indian culture and religions, I have always enjoyed the large representation of animals concerning the deities, teachings, temples and

intended compassion of this spiritual country and people. The conduct of the *Jallikattu*, no matter how regulated, is contrary to these fundamental concepts. Many tourists, like myself, find this practice not only incredibly cruel and dangerous, but yet another perversion of human greed and "fun" in the apparent guise of "tradition and culture". If this is truly considered and officially supported as the tradition and culture of Tamil Nadu, then I am deeply saddened and repelled. I won't be visiting this state again while it is permitted!

— Kate Blaszk, by email

Call for compassion

Re: "If only the animal spoke" by

Nanditha Krishna (Jan 21). Kudos to Nanditha Krishna for her highly elucidative article on *jallikattu* and arguing how culture stems from the fundamental value of compassion to all living beings. Society today is prone to violence due to various factors. Let us not add to the social chaos the violence through *jallikattu* which is cruel to animals and causes physical harm to the young men who fight the animals.

— G Narayanaswamy, Chennai

Culturally wrong

Re: "Right over rights" by G Babu Jayakumar and "If only the animal spoke" by Nanditha Krishna (Jan 21). By and large the cruel game of *jallikattu* should be brought to an end. It is not only injurious to the bulls, whose genitals are rubbed with chilly powder and chemicals but also harmful to the youth engaged in the game. You need not call it historical or cultural for the reasons cited. It is for our Chief Minister to consider the ban on the dangerous sport.

— K Ramadoss, Chennai

Courting tact

Re: "Move to centre court" by NS Jagannathan (Jan 21). The author aptly describes the SC verdict on MPs' disqualification as illustrative