Dhirio - Bull Fighting

Prelims – *History of India, Current events of national importance.*

Why in News?

Recently, Legislators from all parties in the Goa assembly have demanded the legalisation of bull fighting.

- Bull fighting in Goa, locally referred as **Dhirio or Dhiri**
- It is a custom to organise fights after the harvest season.
- Dhiri was a part and parcel of *Every Church fest* and villagers gather to witness the sport in which two thorough-bred bulls fight each other.
- **Bulls and Training** - It begins with two bulls dashing at each other and locking horns.
- They head-butt each other, repeatedly charge and retreat, provoked by trainers standing behind them.
- It can be over in a few minutes or stretch for more than an hour.
- The bull that is pushed out of the arena first or runs away loses the fight, *unlike in Spain* where the fight ends only when the animal is killed.



- **Historical relevance –** The practice dates back to the Harappan civilization and evidence suggests that such fights were held for sport and entertainment.
- **Cultural relevance –** Traditionally held in paddy fields and football grounds of Goa.
- Selected and trained bulls who have been brought to the fighting pitch.

- **Issues –** Bullfighting involves pitting two bulls against each other in a violent and often bloody confrontation.
- These events subject the animals to significant physical and psychological harm, including fractures, puncture wounds, and severe stress.
- Bulls can even be stabbed to death at times.

- **Current status –** The high court banned this practice in 1997, citing violations of the ***Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.***
- **Challenges –** Fights continue to be organised secretly in coastal villages of South and North Goa.
- They are popular for betting.

Reference

The Indian Express – Bull Fight

