

**TIGER DEATH IN DHARBANDORA**

Decomposed carcass of tiger found in Aglote raises concern over big cat's future in Goa

**MAIN POINTS**

- Carcass found on May 2, 2026.
- Tiger likely died more than a fortnight ago; carcass was decomposed.
- DCF Jiss Varkey and Collem Range staff visited the site after receiving information.
- Postmortem conducted on May 3 by a team of three veterinary doctors at Mollem.
- NTCA, Bengaluru informed; team from NTCA expected to visit Goa.
- Forest Department submitted detailed report to Goa government on May 7.
- Villagers report repeated tiger movement in Sacorda area over the last month.
- From 2009 to 2026, six tiger deaths have been reported in Goa.



**AGLOTE, DHARBANDORA**  
 • Carcass found in private forested area at Murge, a few metres from Satpal Arboretum.  
 • Close to Bhagwan Mahavir Wildlife Sanctuary and Mollem National Park.



**3 TEETH RECOVERED**  
**7 NAILS RECOVERED**  
**HIND LEG & VERTEBRA FOUND**  
**HEAD, THORACIC PORTION & FRONT LEG MISSING**

**TIGER DEATHS IN GOA: 2009-2026**

**2009**  
 Tiger found in snare set for Sambar at Wadiyer, Keri, Sattari (near Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary).

**2019-2020**  
 Four tiger carcasses found in Golaulim forests, Sattari.

**ANOTHER TIGER LOST.**  
 TIME TO STRENGTHEN CONSERVATION, NOT JUST COUNT TIGERS.

**Tiger Death in Dharbandora Rekindles Debate Over Goa's Big Cat Future**

**"I Will Contest and Win on BJP Ticket": Dilip Parulekar on 2027 Polls**

In a candid conversation on Just Casual by Goemkarponn, former Tourism Minister and ex Saligao MLA Dilip Parulekar spoke openly about the controversy surrounding remarks on St Francis Xavier, growing political polarisation in Goa, unrest within BJP ranks, and his political future ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections. Speaking to Editor Suraj Nandrekar on the eve of his birthday, Parulekar asserted that he remains a "loyal BJP soldier" and expressed confidence that he will contest and return to the Assembly on a BJP ticket in 2027.

**By Satyavatinandan Satrekar**

The discovery of a decomposed tiger carcass inside a private forested area at Murge in Aglote, Dharbandora, has once again brought Goa's fragile tiger habitat and wildlife protection systems under sharp focus.

The carcass, found on May 2 near the Satpal Arboretum in the Collem Forest Range, has triggered concern among conservationists and forest officials alike, especially at a time when the All India Tiger Estimation 2026 exercise is underway across the country, including in Goa.

Forest officials said the tiger had likely died more than two weeks before the remains were discovered. The carcass was found scattered across three locations in the privately owned forest land belonging to Keshav Bhatgalkar. Only portions of bones, skin and decomposed body parts remained when officials reached the site.

Deputy Conservator of Forests (North Goa Division) Jiss Varkey, along with forest staff from the Collem Range, inspected the area soon after information about the tiger death was received.

Speaking to the media, Varkey confirmed that the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Bengaluru, had been informed and that further investigations would follow the prescribed NTCA guidelines.

On May 3, a team

of three veterinary doctors conducted the postmortem at the Nature Interpretation Centre in Mollem to determine the exact cause of death.

While forest authorities have not officially indicated foul play, the absence of several body parts has raised questions among wildlife activists

month. Residents claim sightings have become more frequent in recent years, suggesting that Goa's forests continue to serve as a movement corridor for big cats travelling between Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa.

The latest death has revived a long standing debate on whether Goa requires a dedicated tiger reserve and stronger protection mechanisms.

Official records show that from 2009 to 2026, six tiger deaths have been reported in Goa. In 2009, a tiger was found trapped in a snare set for sambar near Wadiyer in Keri, Sattari, close to the Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary. Between 2019 and 2020, carcasses of four tigers were discovered in the forests of Golaulim in Sattari.

Wildlife experts say the recurring tiger deaths indicate that while Goa may not have a permanently settled tiger population comparable to larger reserves, the state undeniably forms part of an active tiger landscape.

The timing of the incident is also politically significant. The proposal to notify parts of Goa's forests as a tiger reserve remains under national scrutiny, with conservationists arguing that the state's forests are ecologically important for tiger dispersal and survival.

At the same time, opposition to the tiger reserve proposal continues from sections concerned about

▶ **CONTD TO PAGE 03..**

**Ek Tha Tiger?...**

- ▶ **Decomposed tiger carcass found on May 2 at Murge, Aglote in Dharbandora**
- ▶ **Carcass discovered inside private forest land near Bhagwan Mahavir Wildlife Sanctuary**
- ▶ **Forest officials say tiger likely died over two weeks before discovery**
- ▶ **Head region, thoracic portion and front leg missing from carcass**
- ▶ **Seven nails and three teeth were recovered during the postmortem**
- ▶ **NTCA Bengaluru informed, team expected to visit Goa**
- ▶ **Forest Department submitted a detailed report to the Goa government on May 7**
- ▶ **Villagers reported repeated tiger movement in the Sacorda area over the past month**
- ▶ **Six tiger deaths officially recorded in Goa between 2009 and 2026**
- ▶ **Incident revives debate over the feasibility of a tiger reserve in Goa**



However, the advanced stage of decomposition made preliminary conclusions difficult.

Veterinary doctor Ketan Chowgule stated that the carcass appeared to be over three weeks old. He revealed that seven nails and three teeth were recovered, while the head region, thoracic portion and front leg were missing. Portions of the hind leg and coccygeal vertebra were found. Officials confirmed the animal was an adult tiger.

and local villagers. Specimens collected from the carcass have been sealed for forensic investigation.

The tiger was found only a few metres away from the Bhagwan Mahavir Wildlife Sanctuary and Mollem National Park, an ecologically sensitive forest belt that forms part of the Western Ghats corridor.

Villagers from Sacorda said tiger movement had been repeatedly noticed in the area over the last



Sunday Thought

## Is a Tiger Reserve Feasible in Goa?

**T**he debate over declaring a tiger reserve in Goa has returned with urgency after a decomposed tiger carcass was found in Sacorda near the Bhagwan Mahavir Wildlife Sanctuary earlier this month. Forest officials said the tiger's teeth and nails were missing, raising suspicions of poaching and exposing the fragile state of wildlife protection in the state. (The Times of India)

The timing is significant. The Supreme Court is currently examining recommendations to notify nearly 468 square kilometres of forest land in Goa as a tiger reserve. The state government has opposed the proposal, arguing that tigers in Goa are merely transient animals moving between Karnataka and Maharashtra and that a reserve could affect thousands of residents. (The Times of India)

But the recent death weakens the government's argument. Tigers do not simply wander into unsafe landscapes unless those forests are ecologically connected and capable of supporting them. Goa's forests form a crucial part of the Western Ghats corridor, one of the richest biodiversity belts in the world. If tigers are repeatedly entering these forests, it means the habitat matters.

Across India, tiger conservation is facing a paradox. Tiger numbers have increased nationally, but so have tiger deaths. National Tiger Conservation Authority data showed 166 tiger deaths in 2025, with many occurring outside protected reserves due to electrocution, territorial conflict, poaching, road accidents and shrinking habitats. (The New Indian Express) In 2026 alone, Madhya Pradesh recorded a worrying number of tiger



deaths, prompting court intervention and scrutiny of forest management. (The New Indian Express)

These figures show that merely increasing tiger populations is not enough. Survival depends on secure habitats, trained protection staff and uninterrupted forest corridors. Goa currently lacks a dedicated tiger reserve framework that could bring stronger surveillance, scientific monitoring and central funding.

Opponents fear displacement of local communities and restrictions on livelihood activities. Those concerns are genuine and cannot be dismissed. India's conservation history includes examples where forest dwellers paid the price for poorly planned environmental policies. Goa cannot afford a model that alienates local residents or treats villages as obstacles.

However, a tiger reserve need not automatically mean mass relocation. Several reserves across India function with buffer zones, eco sensitive planning and community participation. Conservation today must move beyond fortress style policies and include people as stakeholders.

The real question is not whether Goa has enough tigers. The question is whether Goa is willing to protect the forests it still has before mining pressure, infrastructure expansion and unchecked tourism fragment them further.

The dead tiger found in Sacorda is more than a wildlife incident. It is a warning. Goa stands at a crossroads between ecological responsibility and political hesitation. A carefully planned tiger reserve, with safeguards for local communities, may no longer be an environmental luxury. It may be a necessity.

## Masterstroke

## The Modi-Shah Duo -The Invincible Election Winning Machine

Irfan Iqbal Gheta

**A**pril 4, 2026, may well be remembered as the day India's political landscape underwent a seismic transformation. It was the day the results of the Assembly elections in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, Assam and West Bengal were declared, producing outcomes that stunned political observers and reshaped national narratives overnight.

Before the elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party was in power only in Assam and Puducherry. In Assam, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma dominated headlines through a fiercely aggressive campaign and controversial statements that kept the BJP firmly in the spotlight. The BJP's victory there was never really in doubt. The only question was the scale of the mandate Sarma Ji would deliver.

Yet, the mother of all electoral battles was undoubtedly West Bengal. The entire nation watched closely as Mamata Banerjee, the street fighter chief minister who had ruled Bengal for fifteen years, faced perhaps the toughest political battle of her career. A palpable anti incumbency wave, coupled with allegations of corruption and administrative fatigue, appeared to steadily weaken the Trinamool Congress. Still, few expected the dramatic collapse that unfolded on May 4.

Down South, the political churn was equally extraordinary. Kerala delivered a verdict in favour of the Congress led alliance, while Puducherry remained with the NDA. But it was Tamil Nadu that produced the biggest shock of all.

The two Dravidian giants, the DMK and the AIADMK, saw their decades old dominance shaken to the core. The surprise disruptor was Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam, or TVK, floated by matinee idol Vijay. Riding on enormous popularity among youth and first time voters, Vijay transformed fan following into political capital with remarkable speed. In its electoral debut, TVK emerged as the single largest party with 108 seats, missing the majority mark by just ten seats. The

so called "Vijay Tsunami" delivered crushing blows to both the DMK and AIADMK, leaving political veterans scrambling for answers. What do these verdicts truly indicate? Is Indian democracy weakening, or is it alive, restless and assertive? How did



experienced leaders like Mamata Banerjee and M.K. Stalin fail to read the public mood despite extensive welfare schemes, populist promises and established party machinery?

Political analysts are struggling to decode the message from the electorate.

In West Bengal, questions are also being raised over the role of the Special Intensive Revision exercise conducted before the elections. Was it a decisive factor behind the Trinamool Congress defeat? Or is the opposition using SIR as a convenient explanation for a much deeper political disconnect? Mamata Banerjee was widely projected as the leader most capable of challenging Prime Minister Narendra Modi nationally if she retained Bengal in 2026. With this setback, her national ambitions now face serious uncertainty.

The broader question emerging from these results is whether voters are increasingly rejecting regional satraps who frequently clash with the Centre. Have voters endorsed political stability, stronger coordination with New Delhi and the BJP's narrative of national integration and development under Prime Minister Modi?

What exactly does the BJP get right election after election? Why does anti incumbency seem far less damaging to the BJP compared to other parties? Most importantly, what can opposition parties do to halt the relentless electoral machine built by the Modi-Shah duo, which now appears determined to dominate every political battleground from Kashmir to Kanyakumari?

And if these trends continue, can Punjab remain outside the BJP's expanding footprint for long?

Interesting times lie ahead for Indian democracy.

# Beyond Beaches, Goa Celebrates Its Living Heritage in Saligao

## Team Goemkarponn

As the sun sets over Saligao's football ground and the stage lights come alive with music, dance and colour, the Goa Heritage Festival 2026 is attempting to showcase a side of Goa often overshadowed by its beaches and nightlife. Organised by the Department of Tourism in association with the Goa Tourism Development Corporation, the three day cultural festival is more than just entertainment. It is part of a larger effort to reconnect tourism with Goa's living traditions, local communities and cultural identity.



Held from May 8 to 10, the festival has transformed the Saligao grounds into a vibrant celebration of music, folk traditions, cuisine, art and performance.

From brass band processions and Ganesh Vandana to Konkani films, fashion showcases and traditional dances, the event reflects the many layers that make up Goa's cultural fabric.

Tourism Minister Rohan A. Khaunte, while inaugurating the festival, emphasised that Goa must move towards year round tourism rooted in local experiences rather than seasonal tourism dependent only on beaches. His remarks reflect a growing push within Goa's tourism sector to promote what is increasingly being



described as regenerative tourism, where communities become active participants rather than silent spectators in the tourism economy.

### That shift is important.

For decades, Goa's global image has largely revolved around its coastline, parties and hospitality industry. While tourism remains the backbone of the State's

economy, many Goans have often expressed concern that the State's cultural identity risks being reduced to clichés designed for visitors. Festivals such as the Goa Heritage Festival attempt to correct that imbalance by bringing local traditions back into public focus.

The line-up itself reflects this intent. The opening evening blended

traditional elements with contemporary performances through brass bands, orchestras and local productions. Saturday's programme expanded the cultural spectrum further with a Konkani film screening, LED performances, fashion showcases and musical acts featuring singer Sudesh Bhosle.

Sunday's concluding events promise a more rooted cultural experience through folk performances like Kalshi and Dekhni alongside live bands and a felicitation ceremony honouring personalities from the Saligao constituency.

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## Tiger Death in Dharbandora Rekindles Debate Over Goa's Big Cat Future

restrictions on local livelihoods, forest rights and developmental activities. The Forest Department submitted a detailed report on the Aglote tiger death case to the Goa government on May 7. An NTCA team from Bengaluru is expected to visit Goa shortly as part of the ongoing investigation. For now, the death of another tiger in Goa has once again exposed the uneasy balance between conservation, development and forest governance in the state. Whether the latest incident becomes another statistic or a turning point in Goa's wildlife policy remains to be seen.

## "I Will Contest and Win on BJP Ticket": Dilip Parulekar on 2027 Polls

be encouraged in Goa. **Q: But because the statement came from a BJP-linked figure, many people assumed this reflects the BJP mindset. What do you say?**

**Dilip Parulekar:** No, absolutely not. Goa BJP is not like that. Goa's social fabric is different. Even BJP leaders here visit temples, churches, mosques and all religious places. We participate in every community programme.

This is not about party politics. It is about maintaining harmony. Goa has always respected all religions. I personally believe no one should insult another person's faith.

**Q: There has been increasing political polarisation across India and many feel Goa is also slowly changing. Do you agree?**

**Dilip Parulekar:** People may try to create issues during elections, but Goa is still different. Here, communities have lived together for hundreds of years. We grew up attending each other's festivals.

Even today, if there is a feast in a

church, Hindus participate. During temple festivals, Christians come and help. This is the real Goa. Social media may amplify controversies, but on the ground people still believe in coexistence.

**Q: Let us move to politics. You have spoken strongly in recent years about the BJP leadership in Saligao. What exactly went wrong?**

**Dilip Parulekar:** I have been in BJP for more than three decades. I remained loyal even during difficult times. When ticket distribution happened earlier, many workers in Saligao were unhappy because outsiders were being promoted over old BJP karyakartas.

I openly told the leadership that the sentiments of grassroots workers should be respected. Many workers protested because they felt ignored. But despite everything, I never left BJP.

People approached me and suggested I should switch parties. I clearly refused. I said I would stay in BJP only.

**Q: There were rumours that you could join another party or contest independently.**

**Dilip Parulekar:** Rumours are always there in politics. During elections, photographs, meetings and social gatherings are blown out of proportion.

Someone clicks a picture with another politician and suddenly social media creates stories. But let me state clearly: I am in BJP and I will remain in BJP.

**Q: So you are confirming that you want to contest the 2027 Assembly election on a BJP ticket?**

**Dilip Parulekar:** Yes. I am a BJP loyalist. I have spent 32 to 33 years in the party. I believe the party will take the right decision and I am hopeful of contesting on a BJP ticket in 2027 and win on BJP ticket.

**Q: You still believe the BJP leadership trusts you despite past disagreements?**

**Dilip Parulekar:** Of course. Differences happen in

politics. But I never worked against the party. I continued meeting people and helping the public.

Even senior leaders told me not to take hasty decisions. They said politics requires patience. I respected that advice.

**Q: You mentioned development work earlier. What do you think has changed in Saligao after your tenure?**

**Dilip Parulekar:** People can judge for themselves. During my tenure, many projects were completed. Infrastructure work happened. Tourism projects were developed. Roads, public facilities, and several government initiatives reached Saligao.

Today, many roads are repeatedly dug up and repaired. People are frustrated. I meet residents daily and they tell me their problems directly.

Development is not just putting up boards with project costs. Real development means visible improvement in people's lives.

**Q: You sounded particularly upset about road conditions.**

**Dilip Parulekar:** Because it directly affects people. Roads are dug up repeatedly and not repaired properly. Accidents happen. People suffer damage to vehicles.

Sometimes citizens themselves spend money to temporarily repair stretches because authorities delay work. This should not happen.

**Q: Critics say your recent statements are aimed at building your political comeback.**

**Dilip Parulekar:** In politics, everyone will interpret things differently. But I speak openly. Whether it is about religious harmony or governance issues, I say what I feel is right.

People know my nature. I have always spoken directly.

**Q: There was also controversy over photographs of you with leaders from other political parties. What was the truth behind that?**

**Dilip Parulekar:**

Nothing serious. We attended public functions and anniversary programmes. Goa is a small place. Politicians from different parties meet socially all the time.

Someone took photographs and social media started creating narratives that I was switching sides. That is not true.

**Q: You were once considered one of BJP's strongest leaders in Saligao. Do you still have grassroots support?**

**Dilip Parulekar:** I believe so. Even today people contact me for help regarding hospitals, government work and local issues. Political positions come and go, but public connection matters most.

I never stopped meeting people after losing office.

**Q: Many believe issues around religion are deliberately amplified before elections. Do you think the same is happening now?**

**Dilip Parulekar:** Sometimes controversies become political tools. But leaders must behave responsibly. We should not create division for votes.

Goa's strength is unity among communities. Once that harmony is disturbed, everyone suffers.

**Q: What is your message to BJP workers and supporters in Saligao ahead of 2027?**

**Dilip Parulekar:** Remain united and disciplined. BJP workers should stay connected with people at the grassroots level. Elections are won through public trust, not social media noise. I will continue working for the people and for the party.

**Q: Finally, on your birthday, what are your hopes for Goa?**

**Dilip Parulekar:** I want Goa to maintain its identity and communal harmony. Development should happen without disturbing social peace. Politics should focus on people's issues, not hatred. That is the Goa we grew up in and that is the Goa we should preserve.

# Goan Short Film Unspoken Takes Mental Health Message to National Stage in Gujarat

## Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Unspoken, a short film created by Mapusa-based filmmakers Aarif Shaikh, Rameez Shaikh and Ismail Shaikh, was screened at the Mahatma Gandhi Prarthana Mandir Hall at the CES Performing Arts and Fine Arts Academy campus in Gujarat after being officially selected for the IMAGICA National Short Film Competition.

The film, which focuses on mental health and emotional isolation, presents a sensitive and thought-provoking narrative led by actors Ismail Shaikh and Rameez Shaikh. Carrying the tagline, "You don't have to go through it alone," Unspoken aims to encourage conversations around emotional struggles,



**Mapusa filmmakers Aarif, Rameez and Ismail Shaikh earn national recognition at the IMAGICA National Short Film Competition**

first ventured into short filmmaking out of passion, inspiring his younger brothers to pursue storytelling through cinema.

Rameez Shaikh has since directed several award-winning short films, including The Awakening, Imagine If It Was You, and Smokes and Mirrors, while also taking on acting roles in various projects. Aarif Shaikh, the youngest of the trio, has begun contributing to their growing creative journey.

The IMAGICA National



Short Film Competition brought together filmmakers from across the country, showcasing a diverse range of short films that explored emotional narratives, social issues and experimental storytelling. Organisers described the event as a platform where stories inspire meaningful conversations and emerging talent receives national visibility.

The selection of Unspoken marks another milestone for Goan cinema on the national stage. From Mapusa to

Gujarat, the film not only highlights local talent but also reflects the growing influence of regional voices in shaping socially relevant cinema across India. Through films like Unspoken, Goan filmmakers continue to expand their reach beyond state borders, carrying stories that resonate with wider audiences while addressing important contemporary issues such as mental health and emotional well-being.

mounting burnout and the importance of support systems. Starring Ismail Shaikh in the lead role, the film follows the journey of a young man grappling with unemployment after losing his job. As he confronts burnout and mental distress, he struggles to make himself heard in a world that seems unwilling to listen. The Shaikh brothers from Mapusa have steadily built a reputation as emerging voices in independent filmmaking. Ismail Shaikh, the eldest,

## Clube Tennis de Gaspar Dias Unveils Centenary Coffee Table Book to Mark Historic 100-Year Journey



## Team Goemkarponn

**Panaji:** Goa's iconic club, Clube Tennis de Gaspar Dias, marked the formal conclusion of its centenary year celebrations with the unveiling of a commemorative coffee table book at a special function held on Friday (May 1) at the club's premises in Miramar. The publication, an engaging compilation of photographs and write-ups, traces the institution's rich hundred-year history while documenting the wide range of activities organised during its centenary year from April 2025 to March 2026.

Founded in 1926, Clube Tennis de Gaspar Dias is among Goa's most

recognised social and sporting institutions. Over the decades, the club has grown into a vibrant community space while preserving its traditions of sport, fellowship and public engagement. The coffee table book has been conceived as a tribute to that journey and as a lasting record of the centenary celebrations.

The publication was unveiled in the presence of committee members, including the club's secretary Tanmay Kholkar and other prominent members, namely Manoj Caculo and Sanjeev Sardesai, who anchored the extensive centenary activities. The coffee table book showcases archival material, milestones

from the club's history and highlights from the centenary calendar, which brought together members and the wider community through lectures, competitions, sporting events and cultural programmes.

A key feature of the centenary year events was the lecture series, through which the club hosted several talks by distinguished speakers from varied fields. Subjects ranged from ecology, heritage and technology to finance, fashion, leadership and sport. Expert speakers included Dr M. R. Ramesh Kumar, Dr Derek Monteiro, Sanjeev Sardesai, SP Sunita Sawant, Mir Ayaz

Kanth, Santosh Kenkre, Walter Mascarenhas, Rochelle Pinto, Simran Dhond, Akhil Kulkarni, Parag Rangnekar and Yash Fadte, who spoke on a variety of subjects including environment, lifestyle, policing, food, finance and leadership, among others. The club also organised several events aimed at engaging different age groups. These included the 'Monsoon Magic with the Family' photography competition, a handwriting contest for senior citizens with more than 90 participants, a centenary quiz for Higher Secondary students, Children's Day activities in collaboration with the Udant Foundation and Sarvesh Fitness &

The commemorative publication captures the iconic club's legacy and documents landmark centenary celebrations held through the year.

The coffee table book launch ceremony was held at the club's premises in Miramar.

Dance Academy, and an International Yoga Day session themed 'Yoga for One Earth, One Health'.

Secretary Shri Tanmay Kholkar said the centenary year had been both memorable and meaningful.

"To serve the club during its hundredth year has been a privilege. This book captures our heritage and the enthusiasm with which we now look towards the next century." Looking back at anchoring the club's centenary activities, Sardesai said: "Our effort was to curate a calendar that reflected the many dimensions of the club's legacy through lectures, culture, sport, community engagement and member participation. We wanted every generation to find a

place in the celebrations, while also honouring the institution's hundred-year journey and values."

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