

After a year of lull, tiger kills man near TATR

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A TIGER Thursday attacked and killed 30-year-old Gurum Shrirame at Murpar in Maharashtra's Chandrapur district — the sixth death in seven tiger attacks this year.

CLAWS OF **BLOOD**

25

Tiger kills in 2008

4

Tiger kills in 2009

“Shrirame had gone to forest to collect Mahua flowers. When he didn't return, villagers went searching for him. They found his partly devoured body,” said Divisional Forest Officer Sanjay Thavre.

After a lull in 2009, when tigers killed only four people as compared to 25 in 2008, the big cats have returned to terrorise people in this district. Last year's lull led people to suspect that all the tigers in the area had been killed by poachers. The fact that several abandoned cubs were rescued in the area only reinforced the suspicion. The fresh attacks, however, indicate that was not the case.

This year, February has been the bloodiest month — five persons were killed, four in Shivni range just outside the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) and one in Chimur range, about 40 km away. Of those killed in Shivni, three were killed on consecutive days, February 4, 5 and 6. A young adult male was suspected to have caused all the deaths. All attempts to tranquillise the animal failed. He is believed to have moved away from the area since. The Forest Department had started a Corridor Conservation Programme in these areas to mitigate the man-tiger conflict but the programme's area of operation has shrunk — from three ranges to one — for want of funds.

In 2006, *The Indian Express* first reported how Chandrapur forest adjoining the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve was emerging as the largest man-tiger conflict zone in the country. Since then tigers have killed 63 persons and leopards 5 in the area.