

Claws lead forest officials to tiger poached a year ago

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Three tiger claws—that's what led forest officials to the poaching incident of a full-grown tiger, right in the heart of the Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR). That too, a full year after the poaching happened.

It was an accidental discovery that wildlife activists say raises vital questions about the department's seriousness regarding tiger conservation.

On Sunday, the territorial wing of the forest department arrested a man in Chimur on the fringes of TATR, a critical tiger habitat, and recovered the tiger claws from him.

The arrested man, Mangalsing Madavi, is from Jamni, a village inside TATR. He led forest officials to one Bhaurao Madavi of Kolsa village. Mangalsing told officials that he had got those claws from Bhaurao, who was picked up with four others on Monday evening.

It was Bhaurao and his four accomplices who spilled

60% of world's tigers in India



India is home to the largest number of wild tigers in the world and shelters approximately 60% of the world's wild tiger population. Project Tiger is the most famous wildlife conservation project in India and was

launched in 1972 to protect the diminishing population of Indian tigers. As recently as 1970, the hunting of tigers was legal in India and was hunted by the erstwhile royals and elite for pleasure and its beautiful skin. According to various estimates, during the 1950s and early 1960s, over 3,000 tigers lost their lives to trophy hunters

the beans, according to forest officials investigating the matter. They had actually laid a trap for a sambhar, but a tiger got ensnared in it last May, the arrested men told the officials, much to their chagrin.

Scared that they would be caught, the men said they left the place and returned ten days later. "We then removed the claws," they told investigators, "and left the decom-

posing carcass".

On the leads provided by the villagers, forest officials, on Tuesday, searched the spot where the tiger had been trapped last year and found its bones still lying in the snare. The case is now being handed over to TATR custodians, already stunned by the fact that they were clueless about the incident and the missing tiger for a good one year.