

GOA

Fractured Mandate

Goa, with only two parliamentary constituencies, divided its favours equally between the two main alliances in the 2004 elections. Though, and as previous trends also bear out, voting in Goa has generally been along community lines, this time other factors were at play too. Both constituencies showed widely varying patterns as regards campaign practices adopted by the contesting parties and also in terms of voter preferences. In North Goa, the anti-incumbency factor did not work against the sitting BJP MP, whereas in South Goa, the Congress was assisted to power by a united NCP-Congress campaign and by the church's appeals to the electorate.

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The state of Goa has two parliamentary constituencies (PC): Panaji and Mormugao. In all, the state has a total of 40 assembly constituencies (AC), 19 in Panaji PC and 21 in Mormugao PC.¹ Goa attained liberation from Portuguese colonial rule only in 1961 and participated in the national election process for the first time in 1963. The consequence of Portuguese rule has created a distinct social profile in the state. In order to illustrate this we have studied the state in two parts – Old Conquest and New Conquest.² Further to show parliamentary constituency details, we have sectioned the Old and New Conquests along a North-South divide³ resulting in further sectioning of the state into four parts; North Goa Old Conquests, North Goa New Conquests, South Goa Old Conquests and South Goa New Conquests. This provides us with a rough demarcation of the state along community, caste and economic lines. Consider for example, the community composition of the state. State's statistics⁴ indicate that Hindus comprise 65.8 per cent

of the population, Christians 26.7 per cent and Muslims 6.84 per cent. However, in the Old Conquests, the relative proportion of Christians is greater as compared to the New Conquests. Similarly, the relative proportion of Hindus is greater in the New Conquests. It is found that the population of the OBCs, SCs and STs in the state is larger in areas of New Conquest. Finally, it is found that on economic lines, the regions in the New Conquests are in relative terms less developed as compared to the regions in the Old Conquests. This sectioning is important in illustrating how identities play an important role in voter behaviour. From the very first elections in 1963 voting has been on the lines of caste and religious identities.⁵ Bearing in mind the social profile of each PC, Tables 1 and 2 show how the two parliamentary constituencies have voted from 1963 to 2004.

In the 1999 parliamentary elections both parliamentary seats had been won by the BJP. In the run up to the 2004 elections one major development was the attempt by the INC to forge some form of alliance with the NCP and the regional parties – the United Goans Democratic Party (UGDP) and Maharashtra Gomantak Party (MGP) in order to set up a common

front against the BJP. Although an alliance with the UGDP and MGP failed to materialise, an INC-NCP alliance⁶ was forged and it was subsequently decided that the North Goa seat would be contested by the NCP candidate Wilfred D'Souza and the South Goa seat be contested by the INC candidate Churchill Alemao. In the 2004 elections, seven and nine candidates contested the Panaji PC and Mormugao PC respectively. The total electorate in the state for this election was 9,32,439. The results of the elections were: BJP candidate Shripad Naik retained the North Goa (Panaji PC) seat, the South Goa (Mormugao PC) seat was won by the INC candidate Churchill Alemao, defeating sitting BJP MP Ramakant Angle. The results can be referred to in Table 1.

In analysing the 2004 verdict we used both the National Election Study 2004 (NES 2004) survey data along with the actual election results. The NES 2004 sample for the state of Goa secured a fairly good representation of the demographic profile of the state. In terms of religious composition, our sample contained 63 per cent Hindus, 26 per cent Christians and 7 per cent Muslims. The OBC and SC/ST put together comprised 34 per cent of the sample. We had a higher representation from South Goa than North Goa (54 per cent), a slightly higher representation of females than males (52 per cent) and on the basis of the Census of India (2001) a higher percentage of respondents from rural Goa than urban Goa (78 per cent). From Table 3 it can be inferred that the Goan voters voted along community lines in the 2004 elections. The survey shows that 81 per cent Christians voted for the Congress alliance, while 65 per cent of Hindus voted for the BJP. Although the survey shows that the Muslims in Goa as a whole were undecided between the two parties, the sample size of Muslims in the survey was too small to draw any robust conclusions.

Tables 4 and 5 show the number of votes that accrued to either the BJP or the Congress within the framework of the four Conquests. This raises some interesting questions: Hindus are a majority in both the PCs but if voting was on community lines how did the INC win in South Goa? And in North Goa New Conquests (NN) where Christians are only 5 per cent how did Wilfred D'Souza secure more than 20,000 votes? We found that though voting in Goa is generally along community lines, in this election there were many other factors at play that shaped the final verdict.

The two PCs seem to have voted differently and further the respective parties have won by significant margins. We have looked at each of the PCs separately to explain their respective verdicts. Panaji has had a Hindu candidate right from 1967. Similarly Mormugao PC has always had a Christian representative. This changed when a BJP candidate Ramakant Angle won the Mormugao seat in 1999. One must understand that the 1999 elections came at the end of a decade, which was marked by instability, corruption and factionalism in the Congress Party. A 2001 good governance survey⁷ conducted in Goa, revealed that 83 per cent of the respondents were either unhappy or disgusted with political defections.⁸ The 1999 election witnessed a significantly poor voter turnout (45.09 per cent) and the BJP victory was largely the result of an anti-Congress vote. One of the reasons for the BJP's victory in 1999 was the split in votes between the NCP and the INC who were then not in alliance.⁹ This was also because both NCP and INC fielded Christian candidates that split the Christian votes. Also, the BJP candidate, Ramakant Angle had gained some goodwill from the people of South Goa by giving assurances that he would look into an alleged polluting project caused by the Meta Strips factory located at Sancoale in South Goa.

Coming to the 2004 elections, the voter turnout was 58.60 per cent. Shripad Naik,

the BJP candidate in North Goa, won by a margin of 55,706 over the NCP candidate Wilfred D'Souza. The BJP victory in the North can be explained by indicating a number of factors that worked in the party's favour:

Shripad Naik was seen as a popular candidate. Our survey showed that approximately 70 per cent of the people interviewed in North Goa were either fully satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the work done by Shripad Naik as their MP. On the other hand, the North Goa Congress alliance candidate Wilfred D'Souza, whose popularity has been on the decline as shown by the results in his own assembly constituency of Saligao, proved to be a liability to the Congress Party. Wilfred D'Souza's campaign began on the wrong foot because among other factors he comes from the minority community. INC leaders like Pratap Singh Rane and Ravi Naik from the majority community would have made better candidates.⁹ Ravi Naik declined the

Table 3: Goa Voting Patterns along Religious Lines

	Congress Alliance	BJP	N
Hindu	29	65	202
Christians	81	10	100
Muslims	43	43	28

Note: All figures in percentage points.

Source: National Election Study – 2004, weighted data set.

Table 1: Goa Lok Sabha Elections 2004

Parliamentary Constituency	BJP		INC-NCP Alliance #	
	2004	Change from 1999	2004	Change from 1999
Panaji	56.8	+1.9	34.8	-3.5
Mormugao	38.3	-10.2	55.2	+8.5
Total	46.8	-4.7	45.8	+3.0

Note: All figures in percentage points.

INC and NCP 2004 alliance. Comparison is made between Congress alliance vote share in 2004 and INC and NCP vote share in 1999.

Source: CSDS Data Unit.

Table 2: Goa State Representatives to the Lok Sabha, 1963 to 2004

Year	Panaji Constituency	Party	Mormugao Constituency	Party
1963	Peter Alvares	PSP	Mukund Shinkre	MGP
1967	Janardhan Shinkre	MGP	Erasmus de Sequeira	UGP
1971	Purushottam Kakodkar	Congress(I)	Erasmus de Sequeira	UGP
1977	Amrut Kansar	MGP	Eduardo Faleiro	INC
1980	Sanyogita Rane	MGP	Eduardo Faleiro	INC(U)
1984	Shantaram Naik	INC	Eduardo Faleiro	INC
1989	Gopal Mayenkar	MGP	Eduardo Faleiro	INC
1991	Harish Zantye	INC	Eduardo Faleiro	INC
1996	Ramakant Khalap	MGP	Churchill Alemao	UGDP
1998	Ravi S Naik	INC	Francisco Sardinha	INC
1999	Shripad Naik	BJP	Ramakant Angle	BJP
2004	Shripad Naik	BJP	Churchill Alemao	INC#

Note: # INC and NCP alliance.

Source: CSDS Data Unit.

offer to contest the elections for reasons best known to him. It could have been that he did not want to alienate his fellow bhandari, Shripad Naik. A BJP victory in North Goa was almost certain following the wrong choice of candidate by the Congress alliance.

The Congress alliance's lacklustre performance can also be attributed to the fact that the NCP candidate, Wilfred D'Souza, hardly carried out any campaign worth the name. A basic attempt to educate the voters and familiarising them with the NCP symbol – the 'NCP Clock' instead of the 'INC Hand', was not taken seriously. Another major let-down for the alliance defeat was the INC MLAs failure to campaign effectively for Wilfred D'Souza. In Pernem, Aldona, Mayem and Poriem assembly segments that are represented by Congress MLAs, the BJP candidate managed to secure more votes than the Congress candidate: 3,747, 1,600, 4,940 and 4,997 votes respectively in these segments.

The South Goa verdict reveals another interesting feature. Here the INC candidate Churchill Alemao won by securing 50,524 votes over the sitting BJP candidate Ramakant Angle. One of the most obvious reasons for the INC-NCP alliance victory was the formation of the alliance itself, which prevented the splitting of votes as had happened in 1999.

Another interesting reason behind the victory of the Congress alliance was a significantly higher voter turnout in South Goa in the 2004 elections as compared to the 1999 elections. A closer look at Table 5 will show that there was a higher voter turnout in South Goa Old Conquest, the reason for which may lie in the role played by the catholic church. The church has always exhorted people to exercise their franchise and elect responsible people. This time the church questioned the BJP's 'India Shinning' promise to Indians living below the poverty line and the BJP government's commitment to social justice. A group called Lok Shakti,¹⁰ which emerged a few days before the election, gave a shot in the arm for the Congress alliance as it openly campaigned against what they claimed to be the BJP's corrupt and communal practices. It was also held that the vote against the BJP in the South was an anti-incumbency vote against Ramakant Angle. Our survey shows that approximately 54 per cent of those interviewed in south Goa were either fully dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied with the work done by Ramakant Angle as their MP.

Table 4: A Comparison between 1999 and 2004 Parliamentary Elections Panaji Parliamentary Constituency

Assembly Constituency		Congress Alliance#		BJP	
Name	Change in Voter Turnout from 1999 to 2004	Votes 2004	Change in Vote Share from 1999 to 2004	Votes 2004	Change in Vote Share from 1999 to 2004
<i>North Goa New Conquest (NN)</i>					
Mandrem	+26	33.3	-14.3	56.1	+11.1
Pernem	+30	29.1	-10.1	61.8	+8.7
Dhargalim	+30	9.9	-29.8	79.2	+27.8
Bicholim	+59	15.0	-20.1	74.8	-10.1
Maem	+23	21.1	+2.5	67.6	-5.3
Pale	+26	18.8	-6.5	71.3	+10.7
Poriem	+16	22.2	-15.2	64.8	+12.6
Valpoi	+17	28.7	-7.9	59.8	+5.9
Total	+29	22.3	-13.1	67	+6.5
Religious Composition of NN: Hindus 91 per cent, Christians 5 per cent					
<i>North Goa Old Conquest (NO)</i>					
Tivim	+45	39.4	+1.1	53.3	-1.0
Mapusa	+44	32.3	-6.6	58.1	+1.8
Siolim	+32	38.6	-2.6	53.4	-1.1
Calangute	+27	49.4	-3.5	44.7	+1.7
Saligao	+42	49.2	+5.7	44.2	-7.8
Aldona	+34	42.2	+3.4	51.2	-6.1
Panaji	+30	32.9	+1.4	62.4	-3.9
Taleigao	+60	38.3	-0.6	54.4	-2.8
Santa Cruz	+55	48.6	+3.2	45.0	-3.9
Santa Andre	+58	55.7	+7.2	38.5	-7.8
Cumbarjua	+30	35.8	+2.1	55.3	-5.5
Total	+41	42.1	+4.3	50.83	-3.3
Religious Composition of NO: Hindus 62 per cent, Christians 33 per cent					

Notes: All figures in percentage points.
INC and NCP 2004 alliance. Comparison is made between Congress alliance vote share in 2004 and INC and NCP vote share in 1999.
Source: Election Commission of India.

Table 5: A Comparison between 1999 and 2004 Parliamentary Elections in Mormugao PC

Assembly Constituency		Congress Alliance#		BJP	
Name	Change in Voter Turnout from 1999 to 2004	Votes 2004	Change in Vote Share from 1999 to 2004	Votes 2004	Change in Vote Share from 1999 to 2004
<i>South Goa New Conquest (SN)</i>					
Ponda†	+32	49.4	+20.5	45.7	-21.3
Priol	+25	26.0	+8.1	62.0	-12.9
Marcaim	+15	41.3	+21.9	50.4	-24.5
Shiroda	+25	54.4	+21.6	39.9	-21.5
Sanvordem	+24	35.1	+5.6	54.2	-9.1
Sanguem	+13	41.1	+3.6	51.1	-5.7
Curchorem	+28	49.1	+5.7	45.5	-6.3
Quepem	+39	49.5	+4.2	42.4	+3.6
Canacona	+31	49.2	+5.8	44.6	-7.2
Poinguinim	+28	42.5	+6.5	50.7	-7.1
Total	+26	44.0	+10.0	48.4	-11.7
Religious Composition of SN: Hindus 78 per cent, Christians 18 per cent					
<i>South Goa Old Conquest (SO)</i>					
Mormugao	+22	55.9	+16.4	38.3	-17.9
Vasco Da Gama	+26	55.9	+16.7	39.3	-18.3
Cortalim	+55	59.3	+8.5	26.5	-15.4
Loutolim	+52	82.8	+7.7	11.3	-8.4
Benaulim	+47	73.8	-10.3	21.9	+8.9
Fatorda	+53	56.2	+10.1	39.9	-11.8
Margao	+34	42.4	+1.6	54.1	-2.2
Curtorim	+61	80	+1.1	16.6	-2.1
Navelim	+39	72.6	-1.5	23.4	+0.6
Velim	+66	70.8	-6.4	23.2	+4.7
Cuncolim	+61	66.3	+6.7	29.5	-7.1
Total	+45	64.7	+5.7	29.6	-7.6
Religious Composition of SO: Hindus 40 per cent, Christians 52 per cent					

Notes: All figures in percentage points.
† Actually NN but has been included as SN because Ponda falls within the Mormugao constituency for parliamentary elections.
INC and NCP 2004 alliance. Comparison is made between Congress alliance vote share in 2004 and INC and NCP vote share in 1999.
Source: Election Commission of India.

However, the above explanations including the minority factor does not alone explain the number of votes garnered by Churchill Alemao in key assembly constituencies in South Goa, New Conquests. Table 5 shows that these include Ponda, Shiroda, Curchorem, Quepem and Canacona. One of the reasons for this swing in votes may be attributed to the solidarity of the Congress MLAs who worked for Alemao's success. Particularly, the Congress victory in the assembly constituencies of Ponda and Shiroda, which had gone to BJP in the 1999 elections, may be attributed to the work of MLAs, Ravi Naik and Subhash Shirodkar.

When the respondents were asked what mattered most in the 2004 parliamentary elections 46 per cent indicated that it was the work done by the central government, whereas 47 per cent of the respondents indicated that it was the work done by the state government. On the NDA's economic policies, 41 per cent stated that the government's policies had benefited only the rich. When asked to indicate their levels of satisfaction with respect to certain issues of governance in the state, the respondents by and large gave a good or fair assessment. An overwhelming majority (76 per cent) of the respondents indicated that the condition of roads had improved in Goa. However, 31 per cent of respondents also indicated that the government has failed to ensure employment. These results can be referred to in Table 6. On the whole, the survey has shown that 56 per cent of the respondents are either fully satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the performance of the Goa government. However, in South Goa this failed to convert into a mandate for the BJP.

Conclusion

The study found that in the 2004 elections, factors like the popularity of Shripad Naik and, conversely, the unpopularity of Wilfred D'Souza together with ineffective campaigning by the rank and file of the

Congress alliance led to the BJP's victory in the North. A high voter turnout in South Goa, the solidarity and commitment of the Congress leaders and the role played by the church led to the BJP's defeat in the south. Goa has never had any blatant communal conflict although whilst voting, the tendency has been to vote on communal lines, but again this is not a cardinal rule. Clearly the Congress victory in the south would not have been possible if there had not been cross voting.

When asked to indicate whom the people would prefer as their next chief minister, 37 per cent of the respondents maintained that they would prefer the present chief minister Manohar Parrikar to continue. Of the remaining, it was found that respondents' choices varied with 26 per cent uncertain of their choice of chief minister. Although the BJP government remains popular, the party still lost its Mormugao seat by a margin of 50,000 votes. We have seen the forces that helped to determine the verdict. Complementary to the factors already stated, we can only speculate that the verdict had also to do with the mass base of Shripad Naik and Churchill Alemao against the elitist backgrounds of Wilfred D'Souza and Ramakant Angle. The NES 2004 perhaps gives an insight into the complex psyche of the Goan voter who on one hand is faced between a dilemma of political alternatives and on the other the reality of his/her own identity. [17]

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Notes

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- 1 The two parliamentary constituencies of Panaji and Mormugao are also referred to as the North Goa and South Goa parliamentary constituencies respectively.
- 2 Old Conquest and New Conquest is a terminology used by the Portuguese to designate those areas of the state that came under their rule before the 17th Century and after the 17th century respectively, i.e., the Portuguese used a method of breaking up the state into regions where the Portuguese rule extended for more than 400 years, these became known as Old Conquest, the regions which came under the Portuguese colonial rule for less than 200 years, became known as New Conquest.
- 3 We have used the parliamentary constituency delimitation line to construct the North-South divide of the Old and New Conquests.
- 4 Census of India, 2001.
- 5 After liberation two regional political parties emerged, the MGP (Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party) and the UGP (United Goans Party), both propagated divergent ideologies. The MGP propagated the cause of merger with Maharashtra, their main argument being that unless merger with Maharashtra takes place the domination by Christians and Hindu upper castes would continue as was during the Portuguese colonial rule. They also referred to the land reforms that were taking place in Maharashtra and argued that the language of Goa was Marathi and Konkani was only its dialect. The UGP on the other hand propagated the cause that Goa represented a 'separate identity'; separate from Maharashtra and that Konkani was the language of the state. The two parties appealed to two different social bases. The MGP's social base therefore, largely constituted of the Bahujan Samaj whereas the UGP came to be identified with the Christian community who were opposed to the merger. Many Hindu saraswat brahmins were also its members.
- 6 We have referred to the INC-NCP alliance as the Congress alliance.
- 7 The Survey on Good Governance was conducted in 2001 by Forum for Good Governance – New Delhi.
- 8 The period from 1989 up to 1999 saw only two assembly elections but eleven chief ministers.
- 9 Our survey regarding the popularity of Congress alliance leaders indicate that 51 per cent perceive Pratapsing Rane as being either good or very good as a leader, 33 per cent indicated the same about Ravi Naik compared to 27 per cent who said the same about Wilfred D'Souza.
- 10 Lok Shakti is a political front comprising of professionals, businessmen and prominent citizens, the conveyor of the Lok Shakti is Datta Naik a prominent saraswat leader and businessman.

Table 6: People's Assessment of Goa State Government on Important Issues

	Improved	Same as before	Deteriorated	No Opinion	N
Law and order	45	29	12	14	388
Condition of roads	75	14	3	8	388
Medical facilities	43	31	12	15	388
Educational facilities	56	24	3	17	388
Employment	26	25	34	15	388
Relations between communities	35	45	7	14	388

Note: All figures in percentage points.

Source: National Election Study – 2004, weighted data set.