

Operation Olivia: ICG protects over 6.98 lakh Olive Ridley Turtles along the Odisha Coastline

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In a major boost to marine conservation, the Indian Coast Guard's (ICG) annual mission 'Operation Olivia' helped protect a record of over 6.98 lakh Olive Ridley turtles nested at the Rushikulya river mouth in Odisha during February 2025. Conducted annually from November to May, Operation Olivia is an important initiative of the ICG aimed at ensuring safe nesting grounds for Olive Ridley turtles particularly at Gahirmatha Beach and surrounding coastal areas of Odisha, which see the arrival of over eight lakh turtles each year. The record mass nesting at the Rushikulya river mouth in Odisha stands as a testament to the ICG's sustained efforts in safeguarding the endangered species through rigorous patrolling, aerial surveillance, and community engagement.

Since the inception of Operation Olivia, ICG has carried out over 5,387 surface patrol sorties & 1,768 aerial surveillance missions, significantly reducing threats such as illegal fishing and habitat disruption. During this period, 366 boats involved in illegal fishing were detained, reaffirming the ICG's strong enforcement role in protecting marine life. Apart from surveillance, ICG has actively worked with local fishing communities by promoting the use of Turtle Excluder Devices and partnering with NGOs through formal MoUs to support sustainable fishing practices and conservation education.

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