

Operation Olivia

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Operation Olivia Latest News

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 recently.

About Operation Olivia

- It is an important initiative of the **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)** conducted **annually from November to May**.
- It is aimed at **ensuring safe nesting grounds for Olive Ridley turtles, particularly at Gahirmatha Beach and surrounding coastal areas of Odisha**.
- The operation involves **round-the-clock patrolling, aerial surveillance, and close coordination with local stakeholders** to protect the turtles during their breeding season.
- Since the inception of the operation, the ICG has conducted over 5,387 surface patrol sorties and 1,768 aerial surveillance missions.
- These measures have led to a significant decline in threats such as illegal fishing and habitat disruption.

- In addition to enforcement, the Coast Guard has actively collaborated with coastal communities, **promoting the use of Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) in fishing nets** and signing Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with NGOs to support conservation education and sustainable fishing practices.
- This integrated approach has played a pivotal role in creating a safer and more sustainable environment for Olive Ridley turtles, whose conservation is key to maintaining marine biodiversity along India's eastern coast.

Key Facts about Olive Ridley Turtles

- This species is **among the smallest**, but the **most widespread and abundant of the world's sea turtles**.
- It gets its **name from the olive green color of its heart-shaped shell**.
- These turtles, along with their cousin the Kemp's ridley turtle, are best **known for their unique mass nesting called Arribada**, where thousands of females come together on the same beach to lay eggs.

Olive Ridley Turtles Distribution

- They are found throughout the world, primarily in the **tropical regions of the Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic oceans**.
- **Odisha's Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary** is known as the **world's largest rookery** (a colony of breeding animals) of sea turtles.

Olive Ridley Turtles Features

- They grow to about 2 feet in length, and 50 kg in weight.
- They are **omnivorous**, meaning they feed on both plants and animals.
- They are **solitary**, preferring the open ocean.
- These turtles **spend their entire lives in the ocean**, and **migrate thousands of kilometers** between feeding and mating grounds in the course of a year.

Olive Ridley Turtles Conservation Status

- **IUCN Red List: Vulnerable**
- Wildlife Protection Act, 1972: Schedule 1
- CITES: Appendix I

Operation Olivia FAQs

Q1: What is Operation Olivia?

Ans: Operation Olivia is an important initiative of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) aimed at ensuring safe nesting grounds for Olive Ridley turtles.

Q2: What is the IUCN status of Olive Ridley turtle?

Ans: Vulnerable

Q3: What do you mean by arribada?

Ans: It specifically refers to the mass nesting of sea turtles, especially olive ridley turtles, on specific beaches at the same time.

Source: NDTV

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/operation-olivia/>

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