

**1000 KGS OF ENDANGERED SEA CUCUMBER WORTH RS. 5 CR**  
**SEIZED BY INDIAN COAST GUARD IN AN**  
**ANTI-SMUGGLING OPERATION IN GULF OF MANNAR**

On 29 Aug 20, based on a reliable information, Indian Coast Guard in a swift sea-air coordination had apprehended an Indian Fishing Boat along with three crew members at seas off Gulf of Mannar and recovered approx. 1000 kgs of Sea-Cucumbers worth INR Five Crores. The consignment was intended to be smuggled across International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) between India and Sri Lanka. The apprehended boat and crew have been brought to Tuticorin for further investigation.

Gulf of Mannar, situated between India and Sri Lanka, is the first Marine Biosphere Reserve in the South and South East Asia and is considered one of world's richest region from marine biodiversity perspective. The Sea-cucumbers are an endangered and protected species, and are listed under Schedule 1 of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The main reason for the smuggling of sea-cucumbers is the high price it fetches in the international market and its high demand in South East Asia for preparing culinary delicacies and traditional Chinese medicines.

The aforesaid successful operation reiterates the Indian Coast Guard's resolve for ensuring safe seas in the region through extensive surveillance for monitoring suspicious activities at Sea. Also, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been established between the Coast Guards of India and Sri Lanka in 2018, which facilitates quick exchange of information and active cooperation to suppress and prevent transnational illegal activities at sea.

