

**PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU (DEFENCE WING)
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

‘हर काम देश के नाम’

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**Indian Coast Guard rescues 182 pilgrims stranded on a grounded ferry off
Kakdwip, West Bengal**

In a swift operation, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) rescued 182 pilgrims stranded on a grounded ferry off Kakdwip in West Bengal on January 16, 2024. Merchant Vessel ‘Swasthya Sathi’ was ferrying about 400 pilgrims from Ganga Sagar Mela at Sagar Island to Kakdwip when it ran aground due to extremely poor visibility.

After receiving a message from District Magistrate, South 24 Parganas in the wee hours, the operations team of the ICG swung into action immediately and dispatched two Air Cushion Vehicles (Hovercrafts) from Haldia and Sagar island to provide assistance. The hovercrafts evacuated 182 pilgrims before guiding the boat with the remaining pilgrims to a safe destination.

To ensure the safety of people during the annual mela, the ICG had already deployed sea borne units at various strategic locations. A rapid lifesaving action team of divers, with a gemini boat, is positioned at the Mela site for any eventuality. In addition, an officer from ICG Ship Frazerganj is positioned at Sagar Island for coordination with the state administration and supervision of seafront safety aspects.

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