

CMFRI researchers claim to have photographed coral colonies having resemblance to tricolour

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Coral researchers at the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) here claimed to have photographed a natural coral assemblage beneath the sea with a resemblance to the Indian tricolour.

The underwater image captured during a marine mammal survey from Minicoy, Lakshadweep, showed two coral colonies appearing in tricolour.

The species were identified as *Lobophyllia corymbosa* with its vibrant orange



A natural coral assemblage beneath the sea having resemblance to the Indian tricolour.

colour, and *Lobophyllia radians* in white and green colours, according to a communication.

The image captured by research scholar Alvin Anto

provided insights into the contrasting response of corals to environmental stress. While one *Lobophyllia radians* colony underwent bleaching after losing

its symbiotic algae, its neighbouring colony remained healthy despite growing in close proximity. While one colony of the coral species bleached due to rising sea temperatures, its direct neighbour of the same species remained healthy. The variation in thermal stress tolerance offers insights for the ongoing reef restoration and climate adaptation research, said CMFRI Director Grinson George. CMFRI is scaling up the deployment of artificial reefs along coastal waters, the communication said.