

# DECCAN Chronicle

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NOVEL INITIATIVE

## Buoy to measure weather data

S. SUJATHA | DC  
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In a first of its kind initiative, the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) has installed a moored data buoy at Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park in Andaman to measure weather and marine parameters.

The NIOT-designed data buoy is a floating platform equipped with sensors to provide various data including rise in water temperatures, which has been affecting the coral reefs in that region.

While coral reefs provide a favourable marine environment for growth and reproduction of fish, the abundant availability of fish helps the livelihood of fishermen and provides food security. But a rise in sea temperature leads to blea-



The moored data buoy floats in water at the Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park in the Andamans. — DC

ching of corals which affects the availability of fishes in the waters.

Dr Senthil Kumar Sampath, Deputy Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) and director, Science and Technology, Andaman and Nicobar administration told this ne-

wspaper that in 2010, there was bleaching of coral reefs from Thailand to the Gulf countries affecting the Andaman waters on the way.

"While 90 per cent bleaching of coral reefs happen due to rise in temperatures, there are also possibilities

of the marine environment getting affected due to pollution and release of fertiliser-loaded waters into the sea. The data buoy will keep tab of weather and marine conditions and help us know the root cause for the bleaching," he added.

While Dr Sampath noted that bleaching of coral reefs was a natural process and the reefs would rejuvenate in time, he added that the loss due to unorganised activities on land should be stopped. "When we learn that the temperature levels are normal during bleaching of coral reefs, we can take alternate measures on land to avoid polluting the water," he added.

In India, coral reefs are mainly found in the Andamans, Rameswaram, Gulf of Mannar, Gulf of Kutch and near Andhra Pradesh and Orissa coasts.