



Zoological Collection Centre for Western Ghats: Foundation Stone to Be Laid at Zoological Survey of India, Pune on 21 February 2026

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The foundation stone laying ceremony for the Western Ghats Zoological Collection Centre, Auditorium and Museum at the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), Western Regional Centre, Akurdi, Pune, is scheduled to be held on Saturday, 21 February 2026 at 11.00 a.m.

The ceremony will be performed by Dr. Dhriti Banerjee, Director, Zoological Survey of India.

The Western Ghats Zoological Collection Centre and Museum, being established at the Western Regional Centre, Pune, will be a state-of-the-art scientific collection and conservation facility dedicated to the documentation, preservation, and study of the rich and unique biodiversity of the Western Ghats.

The Centre is being constructed to safely preserve over one million animal specimens collected from the Western Ghats region. The collection will include representative specimens from various faunal groups, including insects, molluscs, fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals.

The facility will serve multiple purposes, including:

- Safe preservation of original specimens and newly discovered species
- Providing a strong foundation for taxonomy and systematics research
- Serving as reference material for biodiversity assessment and conservation policy formulation
- Offering educational and exhibition facilities for students, researchers, and the general public

This initiative will significantly contribute to the long-term conservation of the faunal diversity of the Western Ghats. It will support the scientific documentation of rare and endemic species, facilitate global access to information through the creation of a digital database, and enhance public awareness through museum-based science dissemination and conservation outreach.

The Western Ghats is one of the world's major biodiversity hotspots, home to numerous endemic and threatened species. The establishment of this zoological collection centre will strengthen national biodiversity documentation programmes, provide scientific evidence to support conservation planning, and promote collaboration with national and international institutions. It will also function as a regional hub for species identification and taxonomic expertise.

Harshal Akude/Parshuram Kor

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