

Foundation Stone Laid for the Western Ghats Faunal Repository, Museum and Auditorium at the Zoological Survey of India, Western Regional Centre, Pune

A faunal diversity hub in the making in Pune

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The foundation stone for the Western Ghats Faunal Repository, Museum and Auditorium was laid today at the Western Regional Centre, Pune, by Dr. Dhriti Banerjee, Director, Zoological Survey of India (ZSI).



The upcoming “Western Ghats Faunal Repository and Auditorium” will be a state-of-the-art scientific infrastructure dedicated to the documentation, conservation, and study of the rich and unique biodiversity of the Western Ghats—one of the world’s globally recognized biodiversity hotspots.



About the Repository

The repository is being constructed to safely preserve lakhs of invaluable animal specimens collected from the Western Ghats region. It will house representative specimens from diverse faunal groups, including: Insects, Molluscs, Fishes, Amphibians, Reptiles, Birds, Mammals etc. “It is to be designed with modern preservation facilities, the repository will ensure long-term conservation of original specimens, which serve as the backbone for taxonomy and systematic research” said Dr Dhriti Banerjee, Director, ZSI. She further added that the new infrastructure is planned in such a way that it will become a Faunal diversity hub for students who want to take up their education and career in the Faunal diversity related studies.



Scientific and Educational Significance of the repository

The Western Ghats Faunal Repository will be useful to: 1. Provide a strong foundation for taxonomic and systematic research; 2. It will serve as a reference centre for biodiversity assessments and conservation policy formulation; 3. It will facilitate the scientific documentation of rare, endemic, and threatened species; 4. Develop a comprehensive digital database for global accessibility of faunal information; 5. It will offer educational and exhibition facilities for students, researchers, and the general public and 6. It will promote science communication, awareness, and biodiversity conservation through museum specimens.



The Western Ghats, recognized as one of the world's major biodiversity hotspots, are home to numerous endemic and threatened species. "This faunal repository will significantly strengthen national biodiversity documentation programmes and provide robust scientific evidence for conservation planning" said Dr Basudev Tripathy, Scientist-E and Officer-in-Charge, ZSI, WRC, Pune. The centre will also function as a Wildlife Forensic Support Facility, offering identification and advisory services on various confiscated wildlife animals/their material to support wildlife law enforcement and conservation actions. It will assist enforcement agencies such as: Maharashtra Police, Forest Department, Customs Department, etc.

By integrating research, conservation, education, and forensic expertise under one roof, the Western Ghats Faunal Repository will significantly enhance India's biodiversity documentation and conservation efforts.

With this initiative, Pune is poised to emerge as a leading centre for faunal diversity research and scientific excellence, reinforcing the nation's commitment to protecting its natural heritage for generations to come.

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Old Museum and Building of Zoological Survey of India, Western Regional Centre, Pune

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