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from the Director's Desk

Cover: *Upupa epops* Linnaeus, 1758
Courtesy: ZSI/SRC, Chennai

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Dear Colleagues, Readers, Partners and Friends,

I am pleased to announce the successful launch of the January 2026 edition of the E-News of the Zoological Survey of India. This release exemplifies our persistent commitment to excellence, innovation, and discovery in the fields of faunal exploration and biodiversity research within India. The Zoological Survey of India has consistently been at the forefront of scientific exploration, documentation, and conservation initiatives, significantly enhancing our understanding of the country's diverse and abundant fauna. Our scientists and researchers persist in expanding the horizons of zoological knowledge through their dedicated fieldwork, taxonomic studies, and applied research endeavors that contribute to the goals of biodiversity conservation both nationally and globally. With each edition of this e-newsletter, we strive to share the most recent scientific advancements, research findings, and organizational insights. We firmly believe that this platform serves as an essential gateway for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and awareness, thereby strengthening our overarching mission of environmental sustainability and biodiversity conservation.

It is with also immense pride that ZSI inaugurated showcases exhibition marking 150 years of Vande Mataram and celebrate the 77th Republic Day of India in its headquarters and all the 16 regional centres. This event represents our nation's profound cultural heritage, democratic principles, and advancements in science. It is also delightful that ZSI announced the launch of the website for the Animal Taxonomy Summit 2026 (ATS 2026), which will act as an essential India's only mega event and platform for collaboration, knowledge exchange, and progress in faunal taxonomic research.

This month, scientists and researchers of ZSI identified a total of 1428 species covering various faunal communities across different ecosystems in India. This achievement encompasses the discovery of three new species, which include two new Apterygota species and one new Hymenoptera species. Additionally, one species of Platyhelminthes and one species of Chiroptera have been newly documented in India.

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all contributors, researchers, and staff whose combined efforts have culminated in the successful publication of this issue. I trust that this edition will continue to inspire.

Jai Hind,

Dr. Dhriti Banerjee
Director
5th February 2026
Kolkata

HEADQUARTERS, KOLKATA

Survey tours were conducted to Konkan & Malabar Coasts, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, West Bengal, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu. A total of 868 species of faunal communities belonging to Acanthocephala, Arachnida, Diptera, Hymenoptera, Orthoptera, Blattodea, Phasmida, Mollusca, Platyhelminthes, Coleoptera, Hemiptera, Collembola, and Nematelminthes were identified. Two species of Apterygota, and one species of Hymenoptera were described as new to science. One species of Platyhelminthes was recorded for the first time from the country. A total of 11 species of Nematelminthes, Hymenoptera, Platyhelminthes, and Apterygota were augmented to National Zoological Collections (NZCs). Apart from these, 48 species of archaeological specimens were identified. Paleontology hallway museum was inaugurated by the Director, ZSI on the occasion of the 77th Republic Day. Identification and Advisory services were rendered to Vidyasagar University, Aligarh Muslim University, Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Acharya N.G. Ranga Agricultural University, and Archaeological Survey of India. The inauguration of exhibition on Commemoration of 150 years of 'Vande Mataram', the 77th Republic Day and the ZSI Sports Day were celebrated on 21st, 26th, and 27th January 2026 respectively by all officers and staff members.



ZSI/HQ Family Photograph on 77th Republic Day celebration

NORTH EASTERN REGIONAL CENTRE, SHILLONG, MEGHALAYA

A total of 87 species of faunal communities belonging to Araneae, Amphibia, Hemiptera, Orthoptera, Odonata, Lepidoptera, Decapoda, Reptilia, and Pisces were identified. One bat species, *Kerivoula titania* Bates et al. 2007, was recorded for the first time from India. A mass

singing of 'Vande Mataram' was organised by the centre on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of 'Vande Mataram'. The 77th Republic Day was celebrated at the office premises on 26th January 2026.



Celebration of the 77th Republic day

WESTERN REGIONAL CENTRE, PUNE, MAHARASHTRA

Survey tour was conducted to Central West Coast of India from 11th December 2025 to 4th January 2026. A total of 65 species of faunal communities belonging to Blattodea, Crustacea, Coleoptera, Hymenoptera, Lepidoptera, Mollusca, and Pisces were identified. Two species of hymenoptera were described as new to science. A total of 10 DNA sequences have been submitted to NCBI. Identification and Advisory service was rendered to 05 institutions. A total of 151 people visited the museum of the centre. The centre was awarded with the second prize for excellent implementation of the official language by the Town Official Language Implementation Committee. 77th Republic Day and the Commemoration of 150 years of Vande Mataram were celebrated at the office premises.



Plicated mangrove crab, *Parasesarma plicatum* (Latreille, 1803) (Sesarmidae)



Mangrove area surveyed for sesarmid crabs near Kumta, Karnataka



Officers and staff attended the Flag Unfurling Ceremony on the 77th Republic Day

CENTRAL ZONE REGIONAL CENTRE, JABALPUR, MADHYA PRADESH

A total of 120 species of faunal communities including Lepidoptera, Orthoptera, Odonata, and Hemiptera were identified. A total of 267 visitors, including students and faculty members of Sri Ram College, Jabalpur, Satya Prakash Public School, Jabalpur, and G. D. Goenka International

School, Jabalpur, visited the museum of the centre. A mass singing of 'Vande Mataram' was organised by the centre on the 150th anniversary of 'Vande Mataram'. The 77th Republic Day was celebrated at the office premises on 26th January 2026.



Students from four educational institutes of Jabalpur visited the ZSI/CZRC Museum



Republic day celebration at DRC, Jodhpur

DESERT REGIONAL CENTRE, JODHPUR, RAJASTHAN


A total of 97 species of faunal communities belonging to Apterygota, Hemiptera, Hymenoptera, Lepidoptera, Coleoptera, Mollusca, and Pisces were identified. One species of Hymenoptera is described as new to science. Identification and Advisory service was rendered to AFRI, Jodhpur. A total of 75 visitors visited the museum of the centre. The 77th Republic Day and 150 years of Vande Mataram were celebrated at the office premises.



Plantation programme during 150 Years of 'Vande Mataram' celebration at DRC, Jodhpur

NORTHERN REGIONAL CENTRE, DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND

A total of 75 species of faunal communities belonging to Phthiraptera, Orthoptera, Lepidoptera, Odonata, Coleoptera, Diptera, Pisces, and Reptilia were identified. The Centre organized “Mission Life Programme- Save Water, Save Electricity, Cleanliness Drive” and “Ek Ped Maa Kae Naam Campaign”. Students and faculties of Government School Kaulagarh, Dehradun, Dolphin Institute, Dehradun and Sardar Bhagwan Singh University, Dehradun visited the museum of the centre during this month. The 77th Republic Day and 150 years of ‘Vande Mataram’ were celebrated at the office premises.



National Flag unfurling on Republic Day 2026



A Glimpse of Migratory Birds at Asan Conservation Reserve, Uttarakhand



Agasthyagama beddomii (Boulenger, 1885)

SOUTHERN REGIONAL CENTRE, CHENNAI, TAMIL NADU

A total of 190 species belonging to the faunal communities of Crustacea, Ephemeroptera, Hemiptera, Lepidoptera, Odonata, Orthoptera, Psocoptera, Mollusca, Pisces, Amphibia, Reptilia, Aves, and zooplankton were identified. An

internship training programme was conducted for five postgraduate Zoology students from Loyola College, Chennai. The 77th Republic Day and 150 years of 'Vande Mataram' were celebrated at the office premises.



Shola Forests in Aghastyamalai Hills

GANGETIC PLAINS REGIONAL CENTRE, PATNA, BIHAR

Survey tours were conducted to Nagi-Nakti wetlands and Kanwar Lake, Bihar from 12th to 23rd January 2026 and to Patratu Valley, Jharkhand from 4th to 9th January 2026. A total of 110 species of faunal communities belonging to Insecta, Mollusca, and Pisces were identified during this month. The 77th Republic Day and commemoration of 150 years of 'Vande Mataram' were celebrated at the centre during this month.



Coppersmith Barbet, *Psilopogon haemacephalus*
(Statius Müller, 1776)



Commemoration of 150 years of 'Vande Mataram' and Republic Day Celebrations

HIGH ALTITUDE REGIONAL CENTRE, SOLAN, HIMACHAL PRADESH

A total of 79 species of faunal communities belonging to Hemiptera, Lepidoptera, Coleoptera, Neuroptera, Trichoptera, Orthoptera, Hymenoptera, and Fishes were identified during this month. A total of four DNA sequences have been submitted to NCBI. Two Identification and Advisory Services were rendered to different institutions. Mass singing of national song 'Vande Mataram', Awareness rally and plantation drive were organized by the centre on 19th January 2026, 21st January 2026, and 23rd January 2026 respectively. 'National Voters Day' was celebrated at the centre on 25th January 2026 to create awareness among citizens of India about their right to vote. The 77th Republic Day was celebrated at the office premises on 26th January 2026.



National Flag unfurling on Republic Day 2026



ZSI/HARC, Solan, gave a farewell to Dr. Avtar Kaur Sidhu, Scientist-F, on her VRS on 23rd January 2026

MARINE BIOLOGY REGIONAL CENTRE, CHENNAI, TAMIL NADU

Survey tours were conducted at the fish-landing centres in Kollam, Kerala, from 12th to 21st January as part of the project '*Deep-Sea Chondrichthyans of India: Taxonomy, distribution, biology and current status*', and to the Lakshadweep islands under the study '*Lesser-known marine fauna of Lakshadweep*'. A total of 36 species from different faunal communities were identified. 150 students from Saveetha Engineering College, Tandalam, Chennai, visited the Aquarium and Museum of the centre on 6th and 8th January 2026.



A Goniopora colony observed in the Kavaratti lagoon, Lakshadweep



Students visiting the Marine Biology Museum

ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR REGIONAL CENTRE, SRI VIJAYA PURAM, ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

Two long-term surveys were conducted to Great Nicobar Island from 1st January 2026 to 31st January 2026 and to North and Middle Andaman from 27th January 2026 to 31st January 2026 to study the Marine and Terrestrial faunal diversity. Ten-days local surveys were also conducted in South Andaman. A total of 208 species of faunal communities belonging to Coleoptera, Diptera, Hemiptera, Lepidoptera, Odonata, Mammalia, Pisces, Reptilia, Aves, Annelida, Echinodermata, Mollusca, Actiniaria, and Porifera were identified. Dr. Jitendra Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister for Science & Technology, Ministry of Earth Sciences, MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, and Dr. M. Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India, visited the museum and laboratory of the centre on 18th January 2026. "National Bird Day" Was organized by the centre on 5th January 2026 with an engaging community (tourists, visitors, and local people) from the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Mass singing of 'Vande Matram' and a special tree plantation drive at Fish Landing

Centre, Panighat, were organized by the centre on 19th January 2026, as part of the celebration of 150 years of 'Vande Matram'. 74 students, accompanied by 5 teachers of Nirmala Senior Secondary School visited the museum of the centre on 24th January 2026.



Visit of Dr. Jitendra Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India



Mass singing of 'Vande Mataram'

SUNDERBAN REGIONAL CENTRE, CANNING, WEST BENGAL

Survey tour was conducted under annual programme of research “*Fishes of Sundarban*” from 30th December 2025 to 8th January 2026. A total of 63 species of faunal communities belonging to Arthropoda, Mollusca, and Chordata were identified. A mass singing of

‘*Vande Mataram*’ was organised by the centre on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of ‘*Vande Mataram*’ on 19th January 2026. The 77th Republic Day was celebrated at the office premises on 26th January 2026.



Survey Conducted under annual programme of research “*Fishes of Sundarban*”



Coracias benghalensis (Linnaeus, 1758)

FRESHWATER BIOLOGY REGIONAL CENTRE, HYDERABAD, TELANGANA

Survey tours were conducted to Eturunagaram, Pranahita and Shivaram Wildlife Sanctuaries, Telangana from 13th to 30th January 2026 and to the banks of Krishna River from 19th to 31st January 2026. A total of 130 species of faunal communities belonging to Rotifera, Fishes, Aquatic Coleoptera, Aquatic Hemiptera, Branchiopoda, Mantodea, and Mollusca were identified during this month. A total of 22 DNA sequences have been submitted to NCBI. 'Mission Life' and 'Swachhta Hi Seva Special Campaign 5.0' were conducted to generate awareness among people on the occasion of 150 years of 'Vande Mataram'.



Canis aureus Linnaeus, 1758

WESTERN GHATS REGIONAL CENTRE, KOZHIKODE, KERALA

Survey tour was conducted under the Annual programme of Research “*Testate amoebae (Tubulinea) of India*” to Gujarat and to Aralam Butterfly Sanctuary, Kannur district, Kerala from 16th January 2026 to 18th January 2026. A total of 120 species of faunal communities belonging to Testate Amoeba, Coleoptera, Hymenoptera, Lepidoptera, and Odonata were identified. The Centre has participated in a science exhibition titled PRAVEGA conducted at the IHRD College of Applied Sciences, Kozhikode, on 14th to 15th January 2026. Identification and Advisory service was rendered to College of Horticulture and Forestry, VCSG, UUHF, Bharsar, Uttarakhand, Govt. Ooty College, and Department of Zoology, Shivaji University, Kolhapur, Maharashtra. A total of 1174 people visited the museum of the centre. A mass singing of ‘Vande Mataram’ and sapling plantation were organised by the centre on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of ‘Vande Mataram’ on 20th January 2026 and 21st January 2026 respectively. The 77th Republic Day was celebrated at the office premises on 26th January 2026.



The 77th Republic Day celebration



‘Hindi Diwas’ celebration

ARUNACHAL PRADESH REGIONAL CENTRE, ITANAGAR, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

A total of 94 species of faunal communities belonging to Orthoptera, Blattodea, Lepidoptera, Hemiptera, Hymenoptera, Pisces, and Mammals were identified. A mass singing of 'Vande Mataram' and pledge-taking activities were organised by the centre under Phase II (19th –26th January 2026) of the 150th anniversary of 'Vande Mataram' on 19th January 2026. The 77th Republic Day was observed at the office premises on 26th January 2026.



The 77th Republic Day celebration



With His Excellency Lt. Gen. Kaiwalya Triviram Parnaik (Retd.) and Hon'ble Chief Minister, Shri. Pema Khandu during the booklet release.

MARINE AQUARIUM AND REGIONAL CENTRE, DIGHA, WEST BENGAL

Survey tour was conducted to Odisha coasts from 2nd to 8th January 2026. A total of 63 species of faunal communities belonging to Nematoda, Mollusca, Foraminifera, Crustacea and Pisces were identified. Identification and Advisory Services were rendered to two educational institutions. 2992 visitors including students from different educational institutions visited the museum of the centre. The 77th Republic Day and 150 years of 'Vande Mataram' were celebrated at the office premises.



Celebration of the 77th Republic Day at the office premises



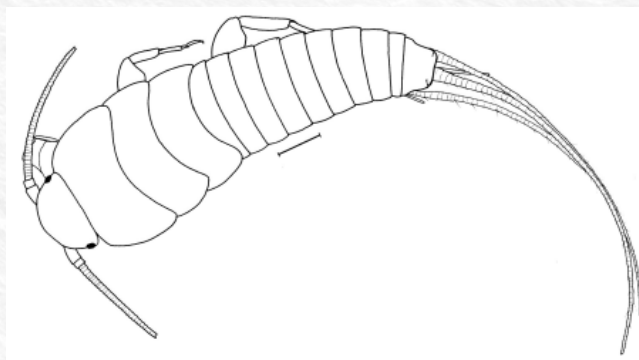
Celebration of 150 years of 'Vande Mataram' at the office

NEW DISCOVERIES

NEW SPECIES



Lepidocyrtus cyaneuropygus Mazumdar, Mandal & Mandal, 2026 to Gujarat



Ctenolepisma (Ctenolepisma) tredecimum Jana, Hazra, Baltanas, Mazumdar & Mandal, 2026

NEW RECORDS



Kerivoula titania Bates et al. 2007

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8. Nair, A., Sidhu, A.K. and Dhar, A. 2026. Insecta: Lepidoptera (Heterocera). Pp. 97–104. In: *Faunal Resources of Sangla Valley, district Kinnaur (Himachal Pradesh), Himalayan Ecosystem Series*. Published by the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata.
9. Rameshkumar, A., Anand, N. and Kazmi, S.I. 2026. Insecta: Hymenoptera: Chalcidoidea: Encyrtidae, Mymaridae. Pp. 173–183. In: Dubey, A.K. and Banerjee, D. (Eds.), *Entomofaunal diversity of Andaman Group of Islands, India*. Published by the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata.

10. Saha, P.C., Hasan, M.E., Banerjee, D., Dash, S., Dubey, A.K. and Mandal, R. 2026. Insecta: Hemiptera: Auchenorrhyncha. Pp. 76–102. **In:** Dubey, A.K. and Banerjee, D. (Eds.), *Entomofaunal diversity of Andaman Group of Islands, India*. Published by the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata.
11. Saha, P.C., Hasan, M.E., Banerjee, D., Dash, S., Khanra, S., Dubey, A.K., Das, R. Pal, A. and Mondal, R. 2026. Insecta: Hemiptera: Heteroptera. Pp. 114–157. **In:** Dubey, A.K. and Banerjee, D. (Eds.), *Entomofaunal diversity of Andaman Group of Islands, India*. Published by the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata.
12. Sheela, S., Basak, N., Mandi, A. and Mondal, P. 2026. Insecta: Hymenoptera: Formicidae. Pp. 185–197. **In:** Dubey, A.K. and Banerjee, D. (Eds.), *Entomofaunal diversity of Andaman Group of Islands, India*. Published by the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata.
13. Sidhu, A.K., Nair, A. and Kubendran, T. 2026. Insecta: Lepidoptera (Papilionoidea). Pp. 77–95. **In:** *Faunal Resources of Sangla Valley, district Kinnaur (Himachal Pradesh), Himalayan Ecosystem Series*. Published by the Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata.

POPULAR ARTICLES

1. Gurumyum, S. D., Khongsai L. S., and Mayi, Y. 2025. *Recent Zoological Discoveries from Arunachal Pradesh- 2024 Updates: 01-49*. (Published by Director, Zoological Survey of India).
2. Palot, M. J. 2026. Keralathile Uruga Jeevikal. (Reptiles of Kerala). *Sahyadri Prakritheeyam*, a digital magazine of the Sahyadri Natural History Society, Thiruvananthapuram. **1**(1): 11–12.

MEETINGS ATTENDED

1. Dr. Dhriti Banerjee, Director, ZSI, was invited to grace the 60th Foundation Day of Berhampur University on 2nd January 2026 as a Chief Guest; was invited to the 43rd Meeting of the Central Zoo Authority at

Darjeeling under the Chairmanship of the Chairperson of Central Zoo Authority and Hon'ble Minister (EF&CC) on 5th January 2026; attended the Meeting regarding budget related matters of BSI (Botanical Survey of India) and ZSI (Zoological Survey of India) on 8th January 2026; attended the Megnadh Saha Science Fair (8th year), as a chief guest, organised by South Kolkata Megnadh Saha Science Fair Managing Committee, Paschim Banga Vigyan Mancha on 9th January 2026; attended the 4th meeting of the High Powered Steering Committee (HPSC) of the National Institute for Research and Application of Natural Resources to Transform, Adapt and Build Resilience (NIRANTAR) under the Chairmanship of the Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change at New Delhi on 12th January 2026; attended the Establishment Day of Asiatic Society at Kolkata on 15th January 2026 and also delivered a speech; was invited to attend the Valediction Ceremony of 49th Eastern India Science Fair (for school students) and the 23rd Science and Engineering Fair (for college students) Birla Industrial & Technological Museum (BITM), Kolkata on 16th January 2026; was cordially invited for arranging a mass awareness stall on 21st Konnagar Science Fair, organised by Juktiman Kala o Bignan Kendra by Dr. Dipankar Roy (Konnagar High School Ground), Konnagar, Hoogly on 16th to 18th January 2026; graced the opening ceremony of Science Fair 2026 as the Chief Guest of Budge Budge St. Thomas Memorial School, Kolkata as a part of silver jubilee celebration on 17th January 2026 and delivered an encouraging speech for fostering scientific temper among the students at the Science Fair; was invited to Participate in the 5-Day National Proteomic Workshop (19th to 23rd January 2026), organised by ICMR- National Institute of Occupational Health, aiming the capacity building of the country towards the ambitious goal of Viksit Bharat; attended the Hindi Salahkar Samiti Meeting held on 20th January 2026 under the Chairmanship of the Hon'ble Minister for Environment,

Forest and Climate Change at MoEFCC, New Delhi; delivered the Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis Memorial Lecture during the 8th Regional Science and Technology Congress at Debra Thana Sahid Kshudiram Smriti Mahavidyalaya; led the 77th Republic Day celebration by unfurling the National Flag at the Kolkata headquarters on 26th January 2026 in the gracious presence of the esteemed guests including Dr. J.R.B. Alfred, Former Director, ZSI; Shri Sanjay Kumar Das, WBCS (Executive Officer), Additional Secretary, DST (Science & Technology & Bio Technology Department) & State Information Security Officer; Mr. Ayaz Ahmed Shafi, Principal, Precept Human Capital, Ghana: Coach & Learning Facilitator, Professor of Practice at United World School of Business, Kolkata; Dr. Aparna Baruah, Consultant Radiologist and Director of Training, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Australia; inaugurated the Paleontology Museum Hallway at ZSI Headquarters, Kolkata, released four ZSI publications and launched the Animal Taxonomy Summit (ATS 4.0) 2026 website marking another step forward in Scientific Collaboration and ecology sharing on the same day; delivered special address on the occasion of the Republic Day, emphasizing on ZSI's 110-year legacy and the use of technology for conservation and the pro-active and responsible participation of people for preservation and evolution of the rich Biodiversity Heritage; celebrated the Annual Sports Day of ZSI on 27th January 2026 at the Rabindra Sarovar Stadium, Kolkata to adopt a healthy lifestyle; was invited to grace the Day 2 of "Agri Vision 2026: An International Conference on Sustainable Agriculture for Food Security" on 29th January 2026 organized by Society for Agricultural Research and Management (SARM) at ICAR-IHR-CHES, Bhubaneswar, Odisha as Guest of Honor, under the theme "Challenges to the food security & nutrition: New age technologies to address them"; attended the Meeting of 6th Administrative Committee of National Institute for Research and Application of

- Natural Resources to Transform, Adapt and Build Resilience (NIRANTAR) held on 29th January 2026 at MoEF&CC, New Delhi under the chairmanship of Secretary (EF&CC).
2. Dr. C. Raghunathan, Scientist- F, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, attended 4th meeting of the High Powered Steering Committee meeting of NIRANTAR chaired by Hon'ble Minister, MoEFCC held on 12th January 2026 at MoEFCC, New Delhi; attended National Validation Workshop on India's Seventh National Report (NR 7) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held at MoEFCC, New Delhi on 21st January 2026; provided the ZSI inputs for National Biodiversity Target No. 21 of India's Seventh National Report (NR 7) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and submitted to the Ministry on 22nd January 2026; reviewed a manuscript on coral *Cladocopium thermophilum* to the journal Ecology and Evolution on 25th January 2026; reply to provisionally Admitted Unstarred Question for the Lok Sabha [Diary No. 612] Impact of Climate Change on Coral Reefs in the Country and submitted to Ministry on 27th January 2026; Attended meeting with International Cooperation Division of MoEFCC chaired by the Additional Secretary, MoEFCC on 28th January 2026 virtually; attended the Administrative Committee meeting of NIRANTAR chaired by the Secretary, MoEFCC on 29th January 2026 at MoEFCC, New Delhi.
 3. Dr. C. Sivaperuman, Scientist- F, ZSI/ANRC, Sri Vijaya Puram, attended meeting with Dr. Chandra Bhushan Kumar, IAS, Chief Secretary, Andaman and Nicobar Islands on 15th January 2026 in connection with the GSDP certificate courses; attended meeting with Ms. Purva Garg, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, South Andaman on 20th January 2026 in connection with the GSDP certificate courses & capacity building training courses of EIACP Centre on Island Biodiversity; attended the Passing Board meeting of the Department of Management, Pondicherry University, Port Blair campus

- on 20th January 2026; attended the Doctoral Committee Meeting at the Department of Ocean Studies and Marine Biology, Pondicherry University, Port Blair campus on 27th January 2026.
4. Dr. Gaurav Sharma, Scientist- F, ZSI/NRC, Dehradun, participated in the “22nd Uttarakhand Board of Wildlife Meeting” held under the Chairmanship of Hon’ble Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Shri Pushkar Singh Dhammi at Secretariat, Government of Uttarakhand, Dehradun on 06th January 2026; participated as External Expert Member of Project Review Meeting under its Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) for evaluation of ongoing and completed projects organized and held at Uttarakhand State Council for Science and Technology (UCOST), Department of Science and Technology, Government of Uttarakhand on 08th and 09th January 2026; participated in the “Wildlife Board Meeting of UT Chandigarh” held under the Chairmanship of Hon’ble Governor of UT Chandigarh Shri Gulab Chand Kataria at Lok Bhawan, UT Chandigarh on 19th January 2026; participated in the “Land issue of ZSI, NRC, Dehradun” along with The Director ZSI, The Director BSI, The Officer-in-Charge, BSI, NRC, Dehradun along with MoEF&CC (CS-II Division) staff held under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary Shri Ved Prakash Mishra held at MoEF&CC, New Delhi on 20th January 2026.
 5. Dr. S.D.Gurumayum, Scientist- E, ZSI/APRC, Itanagar, attended the at Home programme on the occasion of Republic Day celebration on 26th January 2026 and released a booklet titled “Recent Zoological Discoveries from Arunachal Pradesh-2024 Updates” by His Excellency Lt. Gen. Kaiwalya Triviram Parnaik (Retd.) and Hon’ble Chief Minister, Shri. Pema Khandu.
 6. Dr. P. S. Bhatnagar, Scientist- E, ZSI/CZRC, Jabalpur, attended the review Committee Meeting in Connection with the review of cases of Govt. Servants who attained 50/55 years of age or have completed 30 years of qualifying Govt. service at Survey of India, Madhya Pradesh Geo-Spatial Data Centre, Jabalpur on 23rd January 2026.
 7. Dr. S. D. Paunikar, Scientist- E, ZSI/CZRC, Jabalpur, represented the Zoological Survey of India, Central Zone Regional Centre, Jabalpur, at the Joint Regional Official Language Conference of the Central, Western and South-Western Regions, held on 20th January 2026 at Devi Ahilya University, Indore, Madhya Pradesh.
 8. Dr. Ranjana, Scientist- E, ZSI/SRC, Chennai, attended Research Institutions meeting at University of Madras on 23rd January 2026.
 9. Dr. A.S. Kalawate, Scientist- E, ZSI/WRC, Pune, attended academic Project Evaluation meeting of MSBB as an Animal Committee expert and evaluated projects on 8th January 2026; participated in a one-day Official Language Conference held at the College of Agricultural Banking, Reserve Bank of India, Pune on 8th January 2026.
 10. Dr. R. H. Raina, Scientist- E, ZSI/DRC, Jodhpur, participated in the Meeting of Inter- Ministerial Group on Environmental-Economic Accounting and Environment Statistics- India under the chairmanship of Director General (Central Statistics) through online mode on 21st January 2026; attended 15th meeting of the State Board of Wildlife of the Union Territory of Ladakh under the Chairmanship of Hon’ble Lieutenant Governor Shri Kavinder Gupta on 29th January 2026 through virtual mode.
 11. Dr. Anil Kumar Dubey, Scientist- E, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, attended the 69th Meeting of the Central Insecticides Board (CIB) on virtual mode, under the chairpersonship of Dr. Sunita Sharma, Director General of Health Services (DGHS), on 20th January 2026 in Nirman Bhawan/ Kartabya Bhavan, New Delhi.
 12. Dr. Souvik Sen, Scientist- E, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, attended an online meeting organized by International Cooperation Division of MoEF&CC under the chairmanship of

- Additional Secretary, on 28th January 2026; attended the 6th Meeting of Administrative Committee of NIRANTAR under the chairmanship of the Secretary, EF&CC at MoEFCC, New Delhi on 29th January 2026.
13. Dr. P.C. Tudu, Scientist- D, ZSI/MARC, Digha, attended ICAR-CMFRI, Digha as the chief guest at Distribution of Implements to SC Beneficiaries for Livelihood Enhancement, under project Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) on 7th January 2026.
 14. Dr. Tamal Mondal, Scientist- D, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, provided replies on Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha questions; attended a meeting on Activities and Implementing Partners for the projects funded by MoEFCC under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary, MoEFCC on 23rd January 2026 virtually; attended a meeting on International Cooperation under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary, MoEFCC in presence of Director, ZSI on 28th January 2026 virtually; attended 2nd Meeting with Expert Institutions on the Deep Sea Discharge Study under the National Coastal Mission (NCM) Scheme at the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai on 30th January 2026.
 15. Ms. Debashree Dam, Scientist- C, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, attended a collaborative meeting along with Dr. Dola Roy, Scientist- B, at National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management (NCSCM), Chennai on 9th January 2026; attended the 243rd Foundation Day program of Asiatic Society at Science City Auditorium on 15th January 2026; attended a Science Fair and seminar as part of the Silver jubilee celebrations at St. Thomas memorial School, Budge Budge, Kolkata on 17th January 2026; attended the Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis Memorial lecture, delivered by Dr. Dhrit Banerjee, Director, ZSI during the 8th Regional Science and Technology Congress at Debra Thana Sahid Kshudiram Smriti Mahavidyalay, Debra on 21st January 2026.
 16. Dr. Kamal Saini, Scientist-B, ZSI/HARC, Solan, attended an online seminar on the topic entitled "*Plight of the Caribbean Endemics:*

Case of the Grenada Dove" on 22nd January 2026 organized by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Birds of the World (BOW), New York.

17. Scientists of ZSI/HQ and Regional Centres attended an online meeting with MoEFCC regarding Phase 2 of the Commemoration of 150 Years of Rashtriya Geet, Vande Mataram on 16th January 2026.

TRAININGS ORGANIZED

1. ZSI/MARC, Digha, organized one-day training programme entitled "*Marine fauna diversity and conservation*" as part of a 7-day Refresher Training Course on FR and DR/FR, a team of ten Forest Department trainees from the state Forest Training Institute, Hijili, Kharagpur on 8th January 2026.
2. Arachnida Section, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata, organized a hands-on training programme from 19th to 22nd January 2026 for two Ph.D. scholars from the Department of Bio-Sciences, Himachal Pradesh University.
3. ZSI/ANRC, Sri Vijaya Puram, organized one-day capacity building programme exclusively for 125 enthusiastic students and 4 dedicated teachers from Sagaritara School in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands on 17th January 2026.
4. ZSI/NRC, Dehradun, organized a One Day Capacity Building Hands-on-Training Workshop on topic entitled "*Studies on Faunal Diversity in India*" to 20 students of Sardar Bhagwan Singh University, Dehradun and also visit of participants to Fauna Museum, National Zoological Collection Laboratories, DNA Molecular Systematic Laboratory of the centre on 27th January 2026.

TRAININGS ATTENDED

1. Dr. S.D.Gurumayum, Scientist- E, ZSI/APRC, Itanagar, along with Dr. Vikram Delu, Scientist- B, ZSI/APRC, Itanagar, attended a two-day regional '*workshop on Conservation and the wise use of wetlands*', organised by the State Wetland Authority, Government of

- Arunachal Pradesh on 9th and 10th January 2026.
2. Dr. Uttam Saikia, Scientist-D, ZSI/NERC, Shillong, attended a two-day regional workshop on Conservation and wise use of wetlands under Sahabagita Mission, organised by the MoEFCC at Itanagar on 9th and 10th January 2026.
 3. Dr. Vasantha Kumar D, Scientist-B, ZSI/NRC, Dehradun, participated in the “Hands-on-Training on DNA Isolation, PCR amplification and analysis of sequence” at the Molecular Systematics Laboratory, ZSI/FBRC, Hyderabad from 03rd to 10th January 2026.

LECTURES DELIVERED

1. Dr. C. Sivaperuman, Scientist- F, ZSI/ANRC, Sri Vijaya Puram, delivered a talk on ‘An overview of Biodiversity of A & N Islands with special reference to scheduled animals’ to the National Disasters Response Force (NDRF) on 10th January 2026; delivered three talks on ‘An overview of Biodiversity of A & N Islands’, ‘Ecosystems of India and Ecosystem Services’, and ‘An overview of avifauna of A & N Islands’ in the three months certificate courses on Junior Para-taxonomist & Nature Educator cum Ecotourism guide under the Green Skill Development Programme on 22nd, and 23rd January 2026; delivered talk on ‘An overview of Biodiversity of A & N Islands and sustainable conservation’ in the State Level Training Programme on The Role of Gram Panchayat in Promoting Ecological Balance, Biodiversity conservation & sustainable management held on 27th January 2026 at Directorate of RD, PRIs, & ULBs, South Andaman.
2. Dr. Gaurav Sharma, Scientist-F, ZSI/NRC, Dehradun, delivered lecture on topic entitled “Status of Faunal Diversity and on importance of National Song of India- Vande Mataram” to 40 students, and two faculty members of Dolphin Institute, Dehradun, and Government Inter School Kaulagarh, Dehradun on 22nd January 2026; delivered a lecture on the topic entitled “Status of Faunal Diversity and efforts on their conservation in India” to 20 students and 02 faculty members of Sardar Bhagwan Singh University, Dehradun held at Conference Hall of ZSI/NRC, Dehradun on 27th January 2026.
3. Dr. K. A. Subramanian, Scientist- F, ZSI/SRC, Chennai, delivered a lecture on “Aquatic Insect Diversity of India and Conservation Challenges” at Women’s Christian College, Chennai on 21st January 2026.
4. Dr. A.S. Kalawate, Scientist- E, ZSI/WRC, Pune, delivered a lecture at Department of Entomology, Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, Coimbatore on “Coleoptera: the backbone of terrestrial ecosystem” for the UG, PG and PhD students of Agricultural Entomology on 27th January 2026.
5. Dr. J. S. Yogesh Kumar, Scientist-E, ZSI/SbRC, Canning, delivered a lecture and provided hands-on training on “Gorgonian Corals (Octocorallia)” under the National Workshop on Deep-Sea Octocorals Taxonomy: A capacity building initiative under the Deep Ocean Mission on 20th and 21st January 2026.
6. Dr. Bineesh K. K., Scientist- E, ZSI/MBRC, Chennai, delivered a talk at the ‘International Conference on Animal Biology: Challenges and Opportunities (ICAB 2026)’, held from 29th to 31st January 2026 at the Department of Zoology, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi.
7. Dr. Vasantha Kumar D, Scientist-B, ZSI/NRC, Dehradun, delivered lecture through virtual mode on the topic entitled “Taxonomy and Biology of Gall midges (Diptera: Cecidomyiidae)” to the participants of ICAR sponsored short term course on ‘Biosystematics of Diptera-2026’ conducted by University of Agricultural Sciences, GKVK, Bengaluru on 13th January 2026.
8. Dr. P.C. Tudu, Scientist- D, ZSI/MARC, Digha, delivered a lecture in the marine conservation awareness program for local fisherfolk at ICAR-CMFRI, Digha on 7th January 2026.
9. Dr. V M Sathish Kumar, Scientist- C, ZSI/GPRC, Patna, delivered an awareness lecture on “Objectives, Priorities & Achievements of Zoological Survey of India” during faunal

- survey to the State Forest Officials, Bihar and General Public at Nagi Bird Sanctuary on 13th January 2026; delivered an awareness lecture on “*Biodiversity Conservation: Safeguarding Life on Earth*” during faunal survey to the State Forest Officials, Bihar and General Public at Garhi Dam site on 14th January 2026.
10. Dr. Muhamed Jafer Palot, Scientist-C, ZSI/WGRC, Pune, participated in the National Seminar titled “*Bridging Belief and Biodiversity: The Future of Sacred Groves*” held on 8th January 2026, and delivered a talk on “Faunal Diversity of Sacred Groves in Kerala: An Ecological Overview.” Organized jointly by Kerala State Biodiversity Board and Christ College, Irinjalakuda; participated in the “*Wetland Restoration and Conservation Workshop*” at the KCSTE–Malabar Botanical Garden, Olavanna, Kozhikode, on 11th January 2026, and delivered a talk on ‘*Mangrove Faunal Diversity of Kerala*’; participated in the *Sahyadri Environment Summit* held at Uravu Bamboo Grove, Trikipetta, Wayanad, from 24th to 25th January 2026 and delivered a talk on ‘*Environmental Importance of Midland laterite hillocks of Kerala*’; participated in the Birding Workshop for the public at MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), Puthoorvayal, Wayanad, from 23rd to 24th January 2026 and delivered a talk on ‘*An introduction to Bird watching*’.
 11. Dr. R. Chandran, Scientist- C, ZSI/HQ, Kolkata delivered a talk on soft coral taxonomy at the National Workshop on Deep Sea Octocorals (Indian Ocean) at CMLRE, Cochin, during 20th and 21st January 2026, and also served as a tutor for the same.

PHOTO GALLERY



Special address by DZSI on the occasion of the 77th Republic Day Celebration 2026



Release of ZSI publication on 26th January 2026



DZSI with the winners of the painting competition under the theme "Vande Mataram: My India, My Pride"



DZSI was felicitated by the Debra College Authority



DZSI delivering the Prof. Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis Memorial Lecture during the 8th Regional Science and Technology Congress organized at Debra Thana Sahid Kshudiram Smriti Mahavidyalaya



Inauguration of Paleontology Museum Hallway at ZSI Headquarters, Kolkata



Opening Ceremony of Silver Jubilee ceremony of Budge Budge St. Thomas Memorial School, Kolkata



Glimpses of Inauguration of Paleontology Museum Hallway at ZSI Headquarters, Kolkata



DZSI delivering speech at the Silver Jubilee celebration



DZSI graced the Silver Jubilee celebration of St. Thomas Memorial School as the Chief Guest



Glimpses of ZSI Annual Sports Day 2026



Mr. Sujan Roy, Fitness Coach was felicitated by DZSI on the occasion of Sports Day

A Tribute to Dr. Benoy Krishna Tikader: A Visionary in the Temple of Taxonomy

by

Dr. K. Venkataraman

Former Director, ZSI; Former Secretary, NBA; Former Member Secretary LoEA

To the young scientists of the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI), the corridors you walk today and the laboratories where you peer through microscopes are not merely physical structures; they are the culmination of a century of tireless ambition. As you embark on your journey to document the faunal wealth of our vast subcontinent especially India, it is essential to look back at the giants upon whose shoulders you stand today. Chief among these titans is Dr. Benoy Krishna Tikader, the 11th Director of the ZSI, whose leadership from 1981 to 1986 heralded what many consider the “Golden Era” of Indian Zoology.

Born in 1928 in the rural district of Khulna, his childhood was defined by the seasonal rhythms of an agricultural landscape. It was here, amidst the butterflies and moths of the countryside, that a keen naturalist was born. He turned his passion into a distinguished academic career, eventually joining the ZSI in 1956 as an Assistant Zoologist. This humble beginning was the start of a transformative era that would modernize the way India looks at its wildlife.



The Architect of Modernity: Prani Vigyan Bhawan

For decades, the ZSI was a wanderer within its own city. Originally housed within the Indian Museum building in Calcutta and later shifting through various temporary premises like “Jabakusum House” and rented rooms on Shashi Bhushan Dey Street, the institution’s rapidly growing collections faced immense pressure. The need for a dedicated, world-class headquarters was not just a matter of prestige but of survival for the millions of specimens in the National Zoological Collections.

Under Dr. Tikader’s bold leadership, the dream of a permanent home for Indian zoology finally moved toward reality. He devoted himself to the duties of his office with a “remarkable zeal and boldness,” recognizing that the time had arrived to secure the proper co-ordination of the institution. It was during his tenure that the ten-storeyed

building at ‘M’ Block, New Alipore, known today as “*Prani Vigyan Bhawan*”, reached its critical phase of construction. By the time he relinquished charge in June 1986, eight storeys were already completed.

The move to this new home in early 1987 was a monumental feat of logistics. It involved the transfer of the largest natural history collections in the country, a task that required “considerable powers of organization” to ensure the safety of irreplaceable primary type specimens. While Dr. Tikader had retired by the final inauguration, it was his “prodigious capacity for work” and his ability to overcome obstacles that ensured the ZSI finally had a modern, state-of-the-art headquarters to meet the growing demands of the future.

The Expansion of an Empire: Regional Centres

Dr. Tikader understood that to study India's fauna, the ZSI could not remain confined to Calcutta. He believed that scientists must be close to the ecosystems they serve. Building on the work of his predecessors like Dr. Ananthakrishnan, who established four regional centres based on ecology, Tikader pushed for a massive physical expansion of the Survey.

During this Golden Era, the ZSI's footprint grew to cover the most diverse and fragile habitats of the nation. Under his influence and planning:

- » The Eastern Regional Station at Shillong moved into its own constructed building, the first regional centre to do so.
- » Capital outlays were approved and buildings moved forward for stations in Pune, Itanagar, Solan, and Port Blair.
- » The Marine Biological Station at Madras and the Northern Regional Station at Dehradun moved into their own dedicated facilities.
- » Specialized units like the Sundarbans Field Station and the Andaman and Nicobar Regional Station were prioritized to monitor "fragile island and marine ecosystems".

To you, the young scientists of ZSI, these centres represent more than just offices; they are the front lines of conservation. Whether it is the High Altitude Zoology Field Station in Solan or the Freshwater Biological Station in Hyderabad, these outposts exist because leaders like Tikader refused to let the ZSI be "confined to the chair".

A Prolific Scientific Legacy

Dr. Tikader was not merely an administrator; he was a scientist of "astonishing" output. He was the world's authority on Indian Arachnids, discovering numerous new species of spiders and scorpions. His bibliography is a testament to his industry, including over 350 scientific papers and landmark volumes in the *Fauna of India* series, such as those on *Araneae* (Spiders) and *Scorpionida* (Scorpions).

Perhaps his most significant contribution to national awareness was his beautifully illustrated book, *Threatened Animals of India*. Released in 1983 by the late Prime Minister, Smt. Indira Gandhi, this book was a call to action for a nation beginning to understand the fragility of its natural heritage. Tikader used his position to implement wildlife conservation ideas, focusing on animals that were "struggling hard for their survival".

He also had a flair for public engagement. In 1983, he inspired the creation of a ZSI National Calendar featuring the birds of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. This was not just a piece of stationery; it was a tool for public awareness that was "warmly accepted" by both the government and the general public, highlighting the "magnificent wealth of wildlife" in India's remote corners.

Modernization and International Collaboration

The Tikader era was also an era of modernization. He was a pioneer in transitioning the ZSI from manual record-keeping to the digital age. It was at his instance that primary type specimens were segregated into separate registers, leading to a comprehensive scheme to computerize the holdings of the "Types". He laid the groundwork for the computerized Data Bank on Fauna, which aimed to provide a "quicker and more efficient system of data storage and retrieval".

His vision was global. In January 1984, the ZSI organized the First International Workshop on Management of Zoological Collections in collaboration with the Carnegie Museum of Natural History (USA). This workshop brought together participants from 14 countries to discuss modern curatorial techniques, ensuring that the ZSI met international standards for the "stimulation of ideas and techniques developed in cognate disciplines".

The animals "struggling hard for their survival" depend on your research. The "fragile island and marine ecosystems" depend on your monitoring. And the legacy of the Golden Era depends on your commitment to the "Animal We Never Catch". Onward, with the zeal of Dr. Tikader, into the vast, unexplored wonders of the Indian fauna.

We the ZSI scientists join together remember his contributions to ZSI and pray for his soul rest in peace.

We the ZSI Scientists always remember you Sir with love and admiration.