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## Project 'Sustainable Phansad' | Maharashtra | 19 Mar 2025

### Why in News?

The first honey harvest took place near **the Phansad Wildlife Sanctuary** in Raigad district of Maharashtra, marking a significant success and source of encouragement for [conservation experts](#), **naturalists, and tribal communities**.

### Key Points

- **Madhukosh:**
  - Under the **'Sustainable Phansad' project**, the **Madhukosh initiative** was introduced to support tribal livelihoods through honey production.
    - **Green Works Trust**, in partnership with **SBI Foundation**, launched this initiative.
  - By providing a stable income, the initiative reduces dependence on activities that may harm the sanctuary's ecosystem.
  - The presence of **bees enhances pollination, improving biodiversity** in Phansad Wildlife Sanctuary and surrounding areas.
- **Sustainable Honey Harvesting:**
  - The harvested honey represents a **fusion of traditional knowledge and modern [bee-keeping practices](#)**.
  - This initiative demonstrates that **human activity and nature can coexist** harmoniously, fostering a **sustainable future for the region**.
- **Expanding Conservation and Livelihood Efforts:**
  - Project 'Sustainable Phansad' aims to **expand the bee-keeping initiative and further strengthen community participation in conservation**.
  - In addition to Madhukosh, **Green Works Trust** and **SBI Foundation** run other initiatives:
    - **EcoBEES** - Provides **nature education in schools** and manages dry waste collection in villages.
    - **Training the Tribes** - Offers supplementary **education for tribal children**.
    - **Conserving Jatayu** - Works on **reviving the [vulture](#) population** in Phansad Wildlife Sanctuary.
    - **Biodiversity Counts** - Focuses on **monitoring birds and herpetofauna (reptiles and amphibians)** in collaboration with the Maharashtra Forest Department.

### Phansad Wildlife Sanctuary

- **Location and Significance:**
  - It is situated in the **Murud region of Raigad district**, Maharashtra.
  - It was established to **preserve the coastal woodland ecosystem** of [the Western Ghats](#).
  - It covers 17,250 acres of **forests, grasslands, and [wetlands](#)**.
- **Historical Background:**
  - The area was once **part of the hunting reserves of the princely state of Murud-Janjira**.
  - Features open grassland pockets known as "mals", scattered throughout the sanctuary.
- **Flora:**
  - The sanctuary hosts diverse plant species, including Ain, Kinjal, Teak, Hirda, Jamba, Mango,

Ficus, and many more.

▪ **Fauna:**

- Major mammal species found in the sanctuary include [Leopard](#), Hyena, Sambar, and Mouse Deer.
- Rich in avian biodiversity, with notable bird species such as:
  - [Malabar Pied Hornbill](#), Black Eagle, Yellow-Footed Green Pigeon, Pompadour Green Pigeon, and Forest Wagtail, [White-rumped Vulture](#).

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## Finance Commission Grants for Maharashtra | Maharashtra | 19 Mar 2025

### Why in News?

The Union Government has released [the Fifteenth Finance Commission \(XV FC\) Grants](#) for [Rural Local Bodies](#) in Maharashtra during the Financial Year 2024-25.

### Key Points

▪ **Grant Allocation:**

- **Second installment of Untied Grants** amounting to Rs 611.6913 crores.
- Withheld portion of the first installment of Untied Grants amounting to Rs 8.4282 crores.
- These funds have been allocated to various District, Block, and Gram Panchayats in the state.

▪ **Utilization of Untied and Tied Grants:**

◦ **Untied Grants:**

- [Panchayati Raj Institutions \(PRIs\)](#) can utilize these funds for location-specific felt needs under the 29 Subjects listed in [the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution](#).

- The funds **cannot be used for salaries or establishment costs**.

◦ **Tied Grants:**

- These grants support basic services, including:
  - **Sanitation and maintenance of ODF status**, covering household waste management, human excreta treatment, and fecal sludge management.
  - Drinking water supply, [rainwater harvesting](#), and water recycling to ensure water security in rural areas.

▪ **Grant Disbursement Process:**

- The Government of India, through **the Ministry of Panchayati Raj** and the [Ministry of Jal Shakti](#) (Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation), recommends the release of XV FC Grants.
- **The Ministry of Finance then disburses these grants** to states in two installments per Financial Year.

### 15th Finance Commission

- The **Finance Commission (FC)** is a **constitutional body** that determines the method and formula for **distributing the tax proceeds between the Centre and states**, and among the states as per the constitutional arrangement and present requirements.
- Under **Article 280 of the Constitution**, [the President of India](#) is required to constitute a Finance Commission at an interval of five years or earlier.
- The 15th Finance Commission was constituted by the President of India in November 2017, **under**

**the chairmanship of NK Singh.** Its recommendations **will cover a period of five years from the year 2021-22 to 2025-26.**

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