ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS DIARY

(AND)

08.04.2021

FOR UPSC CSE MAINS

This series provides compilation of daily CURRENT AFFAIRS of Anthropology.

It is aimed at addressing the requirement of aspirants to add contemporary aspects of the subject to the answers.

It also helps in understanding the trends of anthropology across India and the world.

NOTE: Please attempt the questions given at the end of the document and can upload on the telegram channel: Sosin for Anthropology Q&A, for peer review
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Note - For convenience, the respective reference links have been dropped at the end of every topic.
A) SOCIO - CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Ethnic cleansing of Tigrayans

Context:
A political campaign in Ethiopia has turned into a campaign against minority Tigrayans. There has been an official attempt of “Ethnic cleansing”, trying to eliminate all the traces of Tigrayans.

Ethnic Cleansing:

- Ethnic cleansing is the systematic forced removal or extermination of ethnic, racial and/or religious groups from a given area, often with the intent of making a region ethnically homogeneous.
- Direct Removal - population transfer, deportation.
- Indirect Removal - aimed at coercing the victim group to flee and preventing its return, such as murder, rape, and property destruction.

Highlights:
Issues -

- The minority Tigrayans in Ethiopia, have been severely abused, killed, beaten up, sexually assaulted, their crops have been destroyed, all in the name of “Ethnic Cleansing”.
- For months, Tigray has been largely sealed off from the world with no access to internet communication, leaving them with little to no support.
- Some Tigrayans were forced to change their identities to “Amhara”.
- Starvation.


B) BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY; ARCHAEOLOGY

1. Homo Sapiens and Neanderthal ancestry

Context:
The latest genome studies clarify the relationships between Europe’s first modern humans, later Homo sapiens and Neanderthals.

Highlights:

- Scientists have sequenced the oldest Homo sapiens DNA on record, showing that many of Europe’s first humans had Neanderthals in their family trees.
- The individuals are not related to later Europeans, according to two genome studies of remains dating back more than 45,000 years from caves in Bulgaria and the Czech Republic.
- The research adds to growing evidence that modern humans mixed regularly with Neanderthals and other extinct relatives.
- The fact that several humans from Bacho Kiro had very recent Neanderthal relatives suggests that the groups mixed routinely in Europe.
• Stone tools and other artefacts common to the Initial Upper Palaeolithic — and distinct from typical Neanderthal and later human toolkits — could be a product of cultural exchanges or even mixed populations.


Highlights:
• Paleontologists have discovered two new species of mammal-like, burrowing animals that lived about 120 million years ago in what is now northeastern China.
• The new species are distantly related but independently evolved traits to support their digging lifestyle.
• They represent the first ‘scratch-diggers’ discovered in this ecosystem.
• The fossils of the two distantly related species belong to a reptilian, mammal-like creature called a tritylodon and to a eutriconodontan, which is a distant relative of modern marsupials and placental mammals.
• Both species examined in the study had numerous, more pronounced thoracic vertebrae bones. They also had shorter hind limbs and short tails that enhanced their fossorial lifestyles, and broad forelimbs with powerful, sharp claws.
• The scratch-diggers’ fossils represent the first of their kind to be discovered from this ecosystem, according to the study published in the journal Nature.


Reference: https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/04/210407135726.htm

c) Tribe in News
1. Thadou tribes of Manipur celebrate “Hun festival”

Context:
The Thadou tribe of Manipur celebrated the “Hun 2021” festival, also called the Spring festival.

Highlights:
• The theme of the festival was “ My Culture, My identity “.
• Major attractions included dance performances, beauty pageants and live performances from the artists.

Thadou tribe:
• Thadou people are an indigenous ethnic group inhabiting North-east India, Chin state in Burma and eastern Bangladesh.
● In Manipur, the Thadous are found in all the districts. They are the second largest in terms of population in Manipur.
● A great majority of the Thadou people are Christians.


UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:
1. Homo Sapiens - Neanderthalensis  
   (Short Note - 1994)
2. Compare the fossil remains of Progressive and Classical Neanderthal men for anatomical characteristics and spatial distribution. Examine  
   (1993)
3. Neanderthal man  
   (2011)

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTION/S FOR MAINS 2021.
Pl do not forget to upload your answer sheet for a peer review on the telegram channel: Sosin for Anthropology Q&A
1. Tribal quest for identity.  
   (20 marks)
2. Explain how the cultural aspects of Neaderthal man are different from Homo erectus.  
   (20 marks)