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. 1. Katherine Routledge

- Katherine Maria Routledge was an English archaeologist and anthropologist who, in 1914, initiated and carried out much of the first true survey of Easter Island.

- Katherine Routledge and William Routledge went to live among the Kikuyu people of what was then British East Africa, and in 1910 jointly published a book of their research entitled *With A Prehistoric People*.

**Contributions / Findings:**

- In 1910 the Routledges decided to organize their own expedition to Easter Island.
- They interacted with the native tribes and recorded their lives.
- They excavated over 30 moai (monumental statues).
- They recorded clan names and territories and data on the enigmatic rongorongo script.
- Credited for primary role in assisting preservation of Rapa Nui's indigenous Polynesian culture.
- One of her findings was the cultural continuity between the statue carvers and the Polynesian Rapa Nui people resident on the island in her time; the designs carved on the backs of the statues she excavated included the same designs tattooed on the backs and posteriors of elderly islanders in the island's leper colony.
- As the tattooing tradition had been suppressed by missionaries in the 1860s this particular primary evidence was unavailable to later expeditions except through her records.

2. Barbara Freire-Marracco

- Barbara Freire-Marracco (1879–1967) was an English Anthropologist and folklorist. She was a member of the first class of anthropology students to graduate from Oxford in 1908.
- She researched 'the nature of authority of chiefs and kings in uncivilized society'.

- Her membership in the Folklore Society from 1926 was preceded by articles in its journal, for which she continued to contribute 'Scraps of English folklore', correspondence, and a 1959 study of "processes of localization and relocalization" of folklore.
The results of her fieldwork on the Pueblo people, collected in 1910 and 1913, was published by the authors of the Smithsonian's Ethnobotany of the Tewa Indians.

3. Maria Czaplicka

Maria Antonina Czaplicka was a Polish cultural anthropologist.

Works:

- She is best known for her ethnography of Siberian Shamanism.
- Czaplicka's research survives in three major works: her studies in *Aboriginal Siberia* (1914); a travelogue published as *My Siberian Year* (1916); and a set of lectures published as *The Turks of Central Asia* (1918). Curzon Press republished all three volumes, plus a fourth volume of articles and letters, in 1999.
- Czaplicka prepared several hundreds of photographs of people of Siberia, as well as countless notes on anthropometry and their customs.

Anthropometry:

*Anthropometry* refers to the measurement of the human individual. An early tool of physical anthropology, it has been used for identification, for the purposes of understanding human physical variation, in paleoanthropology and in various attempts to correlate physical with racial and psychological traits. Anthropometry involves the systematic measurement of the physical properties of the human body, primarily dimensional descriptors of body size and shape.

4. Beatrice Blackwood

Beatrice Blackwood was a British anthropologist, who ran the Pitt Rivers Museum.

Works:

- Blackwood was promoted to a University Demonstrator and Lecturer in Ethnology at Oxford.
- She worked in the Northern Solomon Islands.
- She gathered over 2,000 materials to add to the collections at the Pitt Rivers Museum.
5. Winifred Blackman

- **Winifred Susan Blackman** (1872-1950) was a British egyptologist, archaeologist and anthropologist. She was one of the first women to take up anthropology as a profession.
- Blackman spent much of the 1920s and 1930s living and working in Egypt. She and her brother Aylward often collaborated.

**Works:**
- She had a particular interest in "magico-religious" ideas and practices.
- She published *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt*, which became a standard work on the ethnography of the region.
- She focused on the habits, beliefs and customs of contemporary (rather than ancient) Egyptians.
- She collected an estimated 4,000 individual ethnographic objects between 1926 and 1933.

*Reference:*

https://preview.spectator.co.uk/article/working-remotely-five-formidable-female-anthropologists

6. Marshall D. Sahlins, Groundbreaking Anthropologist, dies at 90

- **Marshall David Sahlins** was an American Cultural anthropologist best known for his ethnographic work in the Pacific and for his contributions to anthropological theory.

**Work:**

- Sahlins is known for theorizing the interaction of structure and agency, his critiques of reductive theories of human nature (economic and biological, in particular), and his demonstrations of the power that culture has to shape people's perceptions and actions. Although his focus has been the entire Pacific, Sahlins has done most of his research in Fiji and Hawaii.
- Sahlins's training under Leslie White, a proponent of materialist and evolutionary anthropology at the University of Michigan, is reflected in his early work.
- In his *Evolution and Culture* (1960), he touched on the areas of cultural evolution and neoevolutionism. He divided the evolution of societies into "general" and "specific".
B. BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY - HEALTH & DISEASE.

1. Genetic Testing

Context:
As per the Organization of Rare diseases in India (ORDI), 1 in 20 Indians is affected by a rare disorder. More than 7,000 rare diseases are known and reported worldwide; from these approximately 80 per cent are known to have a genetic predisposition.

Genetic Testing:
- Genetic testing is a type of medical test that identifies changes in chromosomes, genes, or proteins. The results of a genetic test can confirm or rule out a suspected genetic condition or help determine a person’s chance of developing or passing on a genetic disorder.
- Genetic tests are performed on a sample of blood, hair, skin, amniotic fluid (the fluid that surrounds a fetus during pregnancy), or other tissue.
- For example, a procedure called a buccal smear uses a small brush or cotton swab to collect a sample of cells from the inside surface of the cheek. The sample is sent to a laboratory where technicians look for specific changes in chromosomes, DNA, or proteins, depending on the suspected disorder. The laboratory reports the test results in writing to a person’s doctor or genetic counselor, or directly to the patient if requested.

What useful information can genetic testing provide?
- Genetic testing can provide clarity on the results, guide therapy selection and monitoring, and allow disease risk profiling
- Family health history tells you which diseases run in your family
- Identify risks due to shared genes
- Understand better what lifestyle and environmental factors you share with your family
- Understand how healthy lifestyle choices can reduce your risk of developing a disease

Reference:
2. Parkinson’s disease
Parkinson’s disease is a brain disorder that leads to shaking, stiffness, and difficulty with walking, balance, and coordination. Parkinson’s symptoms usually begin gradually and get worse over time. As the disease progresses, people may have difficulty walking and talking.

- Though Parkinson's disease causes slowing of overall body movements, mental health issues are quite common (70-80 per cent) in such patients.
- Not often the disease manifests with mental disorders (anxiety, depression) rather than physical slowing.
- These mental disorders have a greater impact on the overall quality of life than the physical disability.
- Depression is the commonest mental disorder presenting as reduced interest and motivation along with fear of socialising among Parkinson’s disease victims.

Debunking Myths:

Myth 1: ‘Parkinson’s means only shaking hands’
Fact: Tremor is common in PD, but 10-15 percent of patients may not have tremors at all. These patients may instead have slowness, stiffness of their body parts, walking difficulty and loss of balance as their main problems.

Myth 2: There is no good treatment for Parkinson’s’
Fact: There are several treatments that allow patients to live much better, and even near-normal lives, when properly used by PD specialist doctors such as movement disorders neurologists. Dopamine-altering medications of various types, physiotherapy and lifestyle modification all play an important role.

Myth 3: ‘There is no good treatment for Parkinson’s’
Fact: There are several treatments that allow patients to live much better, and even near-normal lives, when properly used by PD specialist doctors such as movement disorders neurologists. Dopamine-altering medications of various types, physiotherapy and lifestyle modification all play an important role.

Reference:
https://indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/parkinsons-disease-symptoms-causes-treatment-7266090/

UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:
1. Briefly describe the various methods used in genetic study of a man. (20 Marks - 2017)
2. Epidemiological Anthropology (10 Marks - 2014; 15 Marks - 2010)

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. What is Anthropometry? Explain its applications. (20 Marks)
2. Explain the contributions of Marshall Sahlins to Anthropology? (20 Marks)