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. TRIBAL WELFARE

1. Incubation centre for tribal women entrepreneurs in Telangana

Context:

- Stating that the tribals are lagging behind the development, Minister for Tribal Welfare Satyavathi Rathod said that Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao was striving to support the tribal women to become entrepreneurs. She said the dream of tribal women which was considered unimaginable, was being realised with the establishment of the incubation centre in Warangal.
- The Minister has inaugurated an incubation centre for tribal women entrepreneurs at the YTC Building here on Friday.

Highlights:

- The incubation centre is being set up through Tricor in association with ITDAs and We-Hub to transform tribals into entrepreneurs through the CMST Entrepreneurship and Innovation Scheme.
- The tribal women should take advantage of this opportunity to grow up and bring good name to the Tribal Welfare department and the State.
- The Incubation Centre will provide a three-month training to 100 women entrepreneurs at a cost of Rs 40 lakh.
- On the other hand, 300 more women under the limits of ITDAs of Eturunagaram, Bhadrachalam, and Utnoor will be provided pre-incubation training.
- As many as 260 tribal women were already selected for the pre-incubation training.
- The ITDAs will provide a free transport facility, lunch, and accommodation for the women entrepreneurs.

Reference: 

2. Leveraging tech to foster tribal art forms

Context: Artisans of the Naikpod tribal community are all set to leverage technology to upgrade their skills and produce wooden miniature masks to foster their age-old art forms and tap a wider market for tribal handicrafts globally.

Highlights:

- Under the initiative of the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Bhadrachalam, a group of artisans of Naikpod tribal community formed Naikpod Tribal Arts & Crafts Society and set up a Computer Numerical Control (CNC) router with 90% financial assistance at the ITDA campus in Bhadrachalam recently.
- The Rs. 32-lakh CNC Router facilitates the production of miniature masks of wood in impressive designs to serve as decorative artefacts.
- The artisans of Nakipod community are famous for their centuries-old craft traditions of painting and hand carved wooden masks of replicas of various tribal deities and mythological characters of “pandavas”.
- They were wooden masks during occasions and festivals.
- “Lakshmi Devara” are the most revered by Nakipods.
- The CNC router will help the Nakipod Artisans preserve their traditions.

Reference:
https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/telangana/leveraging-tech-to-foster-art-forms/article34297401.ece

B. Biological Anthropology; Paleontology
1. Oldest specimens of Homo erectus

Context:
A new study verifies the age and origin of one of the oldest specimens of Homo erectus, a very successful early human who roamed the world for nearly 2 million years. In doing so, the researchers also found two new specimens—likely the earliest pieces of a Homo erectus skeleton yet discovered.

Highlights:
- Homo erectus is the first known early human that had a body very similar to that of modern humans. It had longer lower limbs than upper limbs, a torso shaped more like ours, and a larger cranial capacity than earlier hominids.
- In 1974, scientists in the East Turkana region of Kenya found one of the oldest pieces of evidence for H. erectus: a small skull fragment that dates to 1.9 million years.
- Within 50 meters of this reconstructed location, the researchers also found two new early-human fossils: a partial pelvis and a foot bone.
- The scientists also collected fossilized teeth from other vertebrates, mostly mammals, from the area.
- The new carbon isotope data from fossil enamel reveal that the mammals found in association with the Homo fossils in the area were all grazing on grasses.
- The evidence suggests that this early H. erectus lived with animals that preferred open areas to forests. It was probably near a stable body of water, as documented by freshwater sponges preserved in the rocks.

Reference:
2. **Amber Fossil**

   **Context:**
   An amber fossil of a Cretaceous beetle has shed some light on the diet of one of the earliest pollinators of flowering plants.

   **Highlights:**
   - An amber fossil of a Cretaceous beetle was unearthed by a team of scientists, geologists and paleontologists. Their study of the fossil fecal matter, which was composed solely of pollen, shed some light on the diet of one of the earliest pollinators of flowering plants.
   - Scientists named this fossil *Pelretes vivificus*. *P. vivificus* was a visitor of angiosperms – flowering plants. Scientists also found that *P. Vivificus* also fed on their pollen.
   - Cretaceous amber fossils provide an important source of evidence for understanding the biology of early angiosperms before they became the dominant group of plants on Earth. Amber is the fossil resin of ancient trees that often fortuitously trapped insects and other small organisms, preserving them with life-like fidelity.
   - The fossil is associated with beetle coprolites – fossil fecal pellets – that provide a very unusual but important insight into the diet of short-winged flower beetles in the Cretaceous.
   - The fossil faecal pellets are completely composed of pollen, the same type found in clusters surrounding the beetle and attached to its body.
   - It is thus established that *Pelretes* visited angiosperms to feed on their pollen. This finding provides a direct link between early flowering plants in the Cretaceous and their insect visitors; it shows that these insect fossils were not just incidentally co-preserved with pollen, but that there was a genuine biological association between the two.

   ![Image of Amber Fossil](image_url)

   **Reference:**
C. Archaeology
   1. Monumental Neolithic Tomb Discovered in Saudi Arabia

   ● The remains of a dog and 11 people have been found in a monumental tomb near the region of Al-Ula, which is located in northwestern Saudi Arabia.
   ● The tomb, dated to 4300 B.C., was discovered at a volcanic uplands site during a survey that employed satellite imagery and aerial photography. It is thought to have been in use for a period of at least 600 years. The dog remains evidence for dog domestication in the Arabian Peninsula for about 1,000 years.
   ● A leaf-shaped mother-of-pearl pendant was also recovered from the site.
   ● Rock art in the region depicts dogs assisting with the hunting of ibex and other animals. A second tomb, dated to the fourth millennium B.C., was found some 80 miles away in arid badlands.
   ● This tomb yielded a carnelian bead and would have also been a recognizable feature in the surrounding scenery.

   Reference:

D. Epidemiological Anthropology
   1. Nutritional psychiatry
Context: The sigh of contentment after a pleasant meal confirms a link between food and mood, but research in recent years is uncovering the nature of the relationship between diet and mental health.

Highlights:

- Sugar meets many of the criteria for a substance of abuse and could be potentially addictive in humans.
- A man with months of depression, profound agitation and insomnia whose symptoms completely resolved without medication on a ketogenic diet; a woman with lifelong attention deficit disorder who can forego stimulants when in ketosis; and a man with early Alzheimer’s disease who experiences greater mental clarity when in ketosis.
- Tryptophan is an essential amino acid that must be supplied in our diet. It is a key raw material and building block for neurotransmitters like serotonin, the main therapeutic target of most antidepressants and many anxiolytics.
- Gut microbes affect tryptophan supply. Gut bacteria are like little factories, processing the raw materials we consume through diet. Our gut microbes can directly and indirectly influence the fate of the tryptophan we consume and thus determine its availability as a building block for serotonin in the gut and the brain.

Reference:

UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:
1. Asian Homo Erectus (10 Marks - 2014)
2. Describe the culture related to Homo Erectus (15 Marks - 2018)
3. Radiometric methods of dating fossils (Short Note - 1996)

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. Explain the process of fossilisation. 15 marks
2. Commodification of tribal art. 15 marks