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 AFFAIRS

1. Tribal Healthcare
   
   **Context:** Superintendent of Police Dr Sangram Patil, who left behind his medical career to join the civil services, has used his medical prowess to help the members of the Gotti Koya tribal community gain better access to healthcare

   **Highlights:**
   
   - In 2015, Dr. Sangam Patil became an IPS officer and took charge as Superintendent of Police in Mulugu and Jayashankar-Bhupalpally districts of Telangana. However, little did he know that his expertise in medicine, combined with his position as an officer, would help him cater to the health needs of tribals, who had otherwise not accessed medical care for years.
   - Since 2019, Dr Sangram has helped over 5,000 Gotti Koya tribals from 100-odd hamlets in the district, address various complaints including those of nutrition deficiency, haemoglobin, skin, and other related ailments.
   - With the help of this officer, medicinal help worth Rs 7 lakh has reached the tribals so far.
   - Dr Sangram says the initiative to help the tribal community began after he noticed poor health conditions and a lack of medical support in the area.
   - As a part of routine patrolling, police officials are required to move around these remote parts of the district. The agency areas where these vulnerable communities live are non-accessible by vehicles and sometimes require walking for miles.
   - He roped in doctors from the Indian Medical Association, Warangal and health officers from the government district hospital and health centre for the cause. Along with Dr Sangram, around 20 such doctors systematically reached out to hamlets.
   - The funds for the initiative come from government provisions and other donations such as CSR.
   - Besides addressing health issues in these tribal hamlets, efforts are also on to bring students into mainstream education.

   **Reference:**

2. Tribal hamlets in Idukki bar outsiders

   - Tribal councils (Oorukoottom) at times land in controversy since they hand out punishments such as social boycott (Ooruvilakku) to families for violating the norms of the community.
   - However, a decision by the tribal council in Edamalakkudy, the only tribal grama panchayat in Kerala, has drawn attention since it has managed to keep COVID-19 at bay.
● When the pandemic broke out last year, the tribal council decided that outsiders would not be allowed to enter the hamlet. The residents too were asked not to leave the hamlet. No case has been reported from the grama panchayat till date.

● Emulating Edamalakkudy, other tribal hamlets in the district too have decided to ban outsiders.

● Hamlets under the forest division decided on Sunday to bar outsiders.

● An outbreak will go out of hand in tribal settlements due to their community living and high social interaction.

Reference:

B. BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Vertebrate Genome Project

Context: The Vertebrate Genome Project (VGP) today announces their flagship study and associated publications focused on genome assembly quality and standardization for the field of genomics.

Highlights:

● The study includes 16 diploid high-quality, near error-free, and near complete vertebrate reference genome assemblies for species across all taxa with backbones (i.e., mammals, amphibians, birds, reptiles, and fishes) from five years of piloting the first phase of the VGP project.

● The VGP details numerous technological improvements based on these 16 genome assemblies.

● In the flagship study, the VGP demonstrates the feasibility of setting and achieving high-quality reference genome quality metrics using their state-of-the-art automated approach of combining long-read and long-range chromosome scaffolding approaches with novel algorithms that put the pieces of the genome assembly puzzle together.

● The VGP is taking advantage of dramatic improvements in sequencing technologies in the last few years to begin production of high-quality reference genome assemblies for all ~70,000 living vertebrates.

● To date, the current VGP pipelines have led to the submission of 129 diploid assemblies representing the most complete and accurate versions of those species to date and is on the path to generating thousands of genome assemblies, demonstrating feasibility in not only quality standardization but also scale.

● The excellent quality of these genome assemblies enables unprecedented novel discoveries which have implications for characterizing biodiversity for all life, conservation, and human health and disease.
Reference:

2. Duck Billed Dinosaur Discovered
Context: An international team of paleontologists has identified a new genus and species of hadrosaur or duck-billed dinosaur, Yamatosaurus izanagii, on one of Japan’s southern islands.

Highlights:
● The fossilized discovery yields new information about hadrosaur migration, suggesting that the herbivores migrated from Asia to North America instead of vice versa.
● The discovery also illustrates an evolutionary step as the giant creatures evolved from walking upright to walking on all fours.
● Most of all, the discovery provides new information and asks new questions about dinosaurs in Japan.
● Hadrosaurs, known for their broad, flattened snouts, are the most commonly found of all dinosaurs.
● The plant-eating dinosaurs lived in the Late Cretaceous period more than 65 million years ago and their fossilized remains have been found in North America, Europe, Africa and Asia.
● Uniquely adapted to chewing, hadrosaurs had hundreds of closely spaced teeth in their cheeks.
● As their teeth wore down and fell out, new teeth in the dental battery, or rows of teeth below existing teeth, grew in as replacements. Hadrosaurs' efficient ability to chew vegetation is among the factors that led to its diversity, abundance and widespread population, researchers say.
● Unlike other hadrosaurs, the new hadrosaur has just one functional tooth in several battery positions and no branched ridges on the chewing surfaces, suggesting that it evolved to devour different types of vegetation than other hadrosaurs.
● Yamatosaurus also is distinguished by the development of its shoulder and forelimbs, an evolutionary step in hadrosaurids Yamatosaurus is the second new species of hadrosaurid that Kobayashi and Fiorillo have identified in Japan.
● In 2019 they reported the discovery of the largest dinosaur skeleton found in Japan, another hadrosaurid, Kamuysaurus, discovered on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido.
C. ARCHAEOLOGY

1. Neolithic Farmers

Context: Early Neolithic farmers modified the reproductive cycle of sheep

Highlights:

- Over 7,500 years ago early farmers set down the foundations of livestock strategies that persist today.
- The results, exceptional first time evidence of how early flocks of domesticated sheep fed and reproduced within the Iberian Peninsula, are currently the first example of the modification of sheep’s seasonal reproductive rhythms with the aim of adapting them to human needs.
- The project includes technical approaches based on stable isotope analysis and dental microwear of animal remains from more than 7,500 years ago found in the Neolithic Chaves cave site in Huesca, in the central Pyrenean region of Spain.
- The alteration of seasonal breeding rhythms in livestock represented a huge milestone for prehistoric societies, making it possible to have access to meat and milk throughout the year, and this in turn had a huge impact on diet, on the economy and on the social organisation of the first farming communities, and set down the bases for farming strategies which continue to be carried out now.
- Until very recently, animal husbandry in the Neolithic period was thought to be in its initial stages, although new possibilities in biogeochemical analyses used in this study have revealed husbandry practices that were fully consolidated since the beginning of the Neolithic.
- The selective pressures applied on the species were artificial, they pursued specific objectives and were well defined. This new evidence represents a turning point in the research into animal domestication and the origins of animal husbandry.
- The research focused on the study of sheep rearing in the Neolithic Chaves cave (5600-5300 BCE) in the Pyrenean foothills, a site that is spectacular for the quality and number of remains recovered.
- When compared to Neolithic levels of fauna, its 12,754 recognisable remains are at least threefold of what is found in other Neolithic sites on the peninsula, with domesticated sheep and goats being the most numerous species, and with the largest presence of pigs of all the Neolithic sites.
- The study also demonstrates that this greater control and selective pressure also had an effect on the diet and movement of the species.
- The results obtained on the breeding and feeding of sheep of the Chaves cave are key for the discovery of economic systems in early farming societies of the Iberian Peninsula.
The new methodology applied in this study will no doubt be fundamental in further studying animal husbandry in prehistoric times.

Reference:

2. Egyptian Discovery
Context: The discovery of a 3,400-year-old industrial metropolis will offer vital clues about domestic and urban life in Ancient Egypt.

Highlights:
- An almost 3,400-year-old industrial, royal metropolis, “the Dazzling Aten”, has been found on the west bank of the Nile near the modern-day city of Luxor.
- Announced by the famed Egyptian archaeologist Dr Zahi Hawass, the find has been compared in importance to the discovery of Tutankhamen’s tomb almost a century earlier.
- Built by Amenhotep III and then used by his grandson Tutankhamen, the ruins of the city were an accidental discovery.
- Hidden under the sands for almost three-and-a-half millennia, was found the Dazzling Aten, believed to be the largest city discovered in Egypt and, importantly, dated to the height of Egyptian civilisation.
- Hawass’ excavations have unearthed rooms filled with tools and objects of daily life such as pottery and jewellery, a large bakery, kitchens and a cemetery.
- The city also includes workshops and industrial, administrative and residential areas, as well as, to date, three palaces.
- Ancient Egypt has been called the “Civilisation without Cities”. What we know about it comes mostly from tombs and temples, whilst other great civilisations of the Bronze Age, such as Mesopotamia, are famous for their great cities.
- The Nile did not support the urban lifestyle in the same way as the rivers of other great civilisations. It had a reliable flood pattern and thus the second longest river in the world could be easily tamed, allowing for simple methods of irrigation that did not require complex engineering and large groups of workers to maintain. This meant the population did not necessarily need to cluster in organised cities.
- Just like cities today, the first great cities provided public infrastructure and roads, and often access to sanitation, education, health care and welfare. Their residents specialised in particular professions, paid taxes and had to obey laws.

Reference:
https://scroll.in/article/992469/in-egypt-archaeologists-have-made-a-discovery-as-important-as-the-finding-of-tutankhamens-tomb
UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:

1. Explain the contributions of tribal cultures to Indian Civilization. (20 Marks - 2018)
2. Discuss the relevance of Art & Craft Traditions in the understanding of Indian Archaeology. (15 Marks - 2017)

DAILY PRACTICE QUESTION/S FOR MAINS 2021.

Please do not forget to upload your answer sheet for a peer review on the telegram channel: Sosin for Anthropology Q&A

1. Neolithic agricultural revolution. (20 Marks)
2. Need of genome studies in Anthropology. (20 Marks)