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
INDEX

A. ARCHAEOLOGY
   1. Seasonal Water Resource on Indus.................................................................03
   2. Early Neolithic Settlements ........................................................................03

B. TRIBAL / COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
   1. Tribal dialects preservation .........................................................................04
   2. Transgender community Fund Raising........................................................05
   3. Tribal lifestyle amidst Covid........................................................................06

C. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
   1. Asthma & Genetics.......................................................................................07

UPSC ANTHROPOLOGY PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS........................................08
PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PEER REVIEW.............................................................08

Note - For convenience, the respective reference links have been dropped at the end of every topic.
A. ARCHAEOLOGY

1. Seasonal Water Resource on Indus

**Abstract:** Seasonally occurring fields of aufeis (icing) constitute an important resource for the water supply of the local population in the Upper Indus Basin. Geographers have now examined the spreading of aufeis and, for the first time, created a full inventory of these more than 3,700 aufeis fields. They are important for these high mountain areas between South and Central Asia, particularly with respect to hydrology and climatology.

**Highlights:**
- In the semi-arid Himalaya regions of India and Pakistan, meltwater from snow and glaciers plays an essential role for irrigation in local agriculture and hydropower generation.
- Aufeis appears as thin sheet-like layers of ice that form through successive freezing of water and can be several meters thick.
- This phenomenon occurs on a seasonal basis below springsheds, along rivulets or streams under conditions of frequent freeze-thaw cycles.
- The Heidelberg geographers have now compiled an inventory of these fields for the whole Upper Indus Basin and, in this context, also analysed the role of topographical parameters such as altitude and slope.
- The basis were several field campaigns spent in the region along with the evaluation of almost 8,300 Landsat satellite images taken between 2010 and 2020.
- With this imagery, the scientists were able to record the characteristic seasonal formation of aufeis and map the annually recurring bodies of ice.
- They detected over 3,700 aufeis fields, covering a total area of approximately 300 square kilometers.
- The majority of the aufeis fields lie in the Trans-Himalaya of Ladakh and on the Tibetan Plateau. In contrast, they hardly occur at all in the western part of the Upper Indus region.
- The participating scientists are studying the effectiveness of the different types of ice reservoirs and whether they function efficiently on a seasonal basis.
- The findings may contribute to identifying suitable locations for ice reservoirs that can improve seasonal water availability for local farming.

**Reference:**
https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/04/210428132957.htm

2. Early Neolithic Settlements

**Context:** The discovery of a huge prehistoric quernstone is the latest evidence of an Early Neolithic settlement on the outskirts of Kirkwall, Orkney.

**Highlights:**
- Ploughing near Saverock, St Ola, uncovered the saddle quern, which was spotted by archaeologist Chris Gee, who has walked the site, after spring ploughing, since 2014.
Mr Gee has previously identified spreads of large building stones around a low mound in the field and recovered a wealth of Neolithic artefacts, including stone and flint tools, pottery, a stone bead and an arrowhead.

The style of the pottery and the arrowhead suggests an Early Neolithic date (c3600-3200BC) for the Saverock settlement.

Measuring 87cm long, 60cm wide and 46cm thick, it is estimated to weigh over 200kg. Beneath it were more shards of Early Neolithic pottery.

It is hoped that charcoal found under the quernstone can be radiocarbon dated, allowing archaeologists to see where the Saverock site fits in with the three other known Early Neolithic settlements clustered around the lower slopes of Wideford Hill.

As the quern is such a huge object it probably hasn’t moved too far and chances are it is quite near to a prehistoric house.

Reference:

B. TRIBAL / COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

1. Tribal dialects preservation

Context: ITANAGAR: Pasighat East MLA Kaling Moyong has passionately appealed to the Tangsa community to protect and promote their dialects saying that many dialects in the State are on the verge of extinction mainly because of the young generations who do not use them in their day-to-day life.

Highlights:

- While extending Moh-Mol festival greetings to the people, the Tangsas were appreciated for preserving and promoting their traditional costumes and rich culture.
● Most of the festivals in Arunachal Pradesh are related to agriculture and the spirit of celebration is the same though names are different.

● The Tangsa artisans and weavers were urged to participate at Trade Fairs inside and outside the State.

● Secretary General of Arunachal Chambers of Commerce and Industries (ACCI) Toko Tatung described Jairampur and Nampong as a mini India.

● While appreciating the local MLA Laisam Simai for the unprecedented development he had ushered in the region with his unstinted effort and meticulous planning, Tatung requested the people not to depend only on government jobs which are hard to come by, instead engage in gainful business entrepreneurship to sustain their livelihood.

● The Tangsas are spread across Changlang district and also in upper Assam and Myanmar.

● The Tangsas are striving hard to preserve their rich and varied culture irrespective of professing different faiths. He urged the community members especially, the youths to travel the proverbial extra mile to safeguard their dialects, costumes, folk songs, folk dances and other rich legacies inherited from their great ancestors.

Reference:

2. Transgender community Fund Raising

Context: Transgender persons in Chennai raise funds to support people in need.

Highlights:

● The pandemic has left many members of the third gender community, Narikuravas and other tribal communities without any income and many are struggling for food. To help people in need in Chengalpattu and Kancheepuram districts, two transgender persons -- a nurse and a graduate -- have started a crowdfunding initiative.
M. Nila is the founder and director of Pharm Foundation that works towards education, employment and healthcare for the needy. She and her team started a campaign on Milaap.org and raised over ₹11 lakh. This will be used to provide groceries worth ₹1,000 each for 1,000 transgender persons in Chengalpattu and Kancheepuram districts. Volunteers from the community will distribute the dry rations.

- The team will start another campaign for procuring oxygen cylinders soon.
- Crowd funding campaign has been initiated to raise funds for transgender persons, Narikuravas and other tribal community members
- Apart from providing groceries, Ms. Nila has also embarked upon a COVID-19 awareness campaign.

Reference:

2. Tribal lifestyle amidst Covid

Context: Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu encouraged Indians to adopt the good habits of Odisha's tribal communities 'to keep Covid-19 at bay'

Highlights:
- The tribal population in Odisha was largely untouched by the Covid-19 pandemic and their unique customary practices and traditions have helped them keep the infection at bay, Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu said in Bhubaneswar while citing a study.
- The report by Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI) noted that by habit, the tribal people maintain a reasonable distance from one another when they walk
- Such safe distancing and hygiene norms, rooted in the tribal culture coupled with the natural food, have helped them stay safe during the pandemic.
- Odisha is home to 62 tribal communities constituting 23 per cent of the state's total population.
- Institutions like Utkal University were urged to take up research on issues faced by tribal people and actively contribute to policy formation for their development and well-being.
- Talking about the rich culture and history of Odisha, the Vice President said the great land of Kalinga taught the lesson of peace to Emperor Ashoka. He also lauded the daring seafaring merchants of Kalinga, who established trade links with various countries.

Reference:
C. EPIDEMIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Asthma & Genetics

- Asthma is a chronic (lifelong) lung condition that often runs in families.
- While there are strong links between asthma and genetics, not everyone with a family history of asthma will develop this complex illness.
- Genetic predisposition is one of the strongest risk factors for developing asthma.
- One study on twins with asthma found that 66 percent of cases were linked to environmental factors, while the other 34 percent were genetic. Another 2019 review states that the risk of twins developing asthma because of their genes ranges between 55 and 90 percent.
- Since Asthma is one of the leading chronic diseases, researchers continue to expand their work in different aspects of genetics.
- Future Clinical Research may go beyond individual families and look specifically at ancestry.
- Asthma is not caused by a single mutation in one gene, and therefore the transmission of the disease through generations does not follow simple Mendelian inheritance typical of classic monogenic diseases, such as Huntington's disease (autosomal dominant) or sickle-cell disease (autosomal recessive). Rather, asthma is a polygenic, multifactorial disorder, which means that many factors contribute to its development. These factors are both genetic and environmental; accordingly, the combined action of several genes interacting with one another and with environmental factors causes the condition.
- There are different experimental approaches to establishing a connection between a gene and a disease such as asthma. The two main options are genetic linkage analysis and genetic (allelic) association analysis.
- Linkage analysis is useful for encircling larger genomic regions within which a susceptibility gene is likely to reside, whereas association analysis can be used to identify specific genotypes, for example, single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), that are directly associated with the risk of disease.
- Further studies on asthma with the genomics data and tools, to map, identify the specific gene/s, and phenotype specific SNPs will help to unravel the pathways involved in asthma aetiology and employ pharmacogenomics to design better drugs for an individualized treatment plan.
- Thus with a fruitful interaction among researchers involved in pathophysiology, epidemiology, clinical research and genetics of asthma, this century holds promise for a better understanding of the pathology, diagnosis, prevention, treatment and management of asthma.

Reference:
https://www.healthline.com/health/asthma/is-asthma-genetic#takeaway
UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:
1. Comment in Detail on the Socio - Cultural life of the people of Indus Valley Civilization. (30 Marks - 2010)

2. Linguistic elements in Indian Population (10 Marks - 2016)

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. Comment on the initiatives of Govt of India for the protection of tribal dialects. (20 Marks)

2. Scope of epidemiological anthropology. (15 Marks)