ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS DIARY

(AND)

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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. BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

1. Dinosaurs, Mammals & Evolution

Context: Not Dinosaurs but Mammals Were Main Competitors Among Themselves During Evolution, Finds Study.

Highlights:

● Mammals in ancient times were the main competitors of their own kingdom before and after the mass extinction of dinosaurs, said a new study conducted by researchers from the University of Oxford and the University of Birmingham.

● The study answers why after the extinction of the non-bird dinosaurs, the mammals only seemed to diversify and explore new diets and ways of life. It suggests the competition between distinct mammal groups. The study also focuses on the importance of testing old and established ideas about evolution by using the latest statistical tools.

● With non-avian dinosaurs, most of these mammals became extinct. At that time, modern mammals started becoming large and explored new diets and ways of life.

● It was the earlier radiations of mammals that kept the modern mammals out of these exciting ecological roles by outcompeting them.

● The researchers identified the evolutionary “limits” placed on different groups of mammals. According to the researchers, evolutionary “limits” were placed on different groups of mammals showing where they were being excluded due to competition with other animals.

● The result of the study suggests that the biggest constraints on the ancestors of modern mammals may not have been placed by the dinosaurs, but their closest relatives.

● Since mammals were holding back each other, it was important for the success of modern mammals to let the other groups become extinct. Following the extinction of the dinosaurs, the smallest and largest mammals showed the same release from constraints, researchers found. It suggested that size made little difference to a mammal's success.

Reference:
2. **Biosynthesis of a New DNA Nucleobase**

**Context:** DNA is composed of nucleobases represented by the letters A, T, G and C. They form the basis of the genetic code and are present in all living beings. But in a bacteriophage, another base, represented by the letter Z, exists. This exception, the only one observed to date, has long remained a mystery. Scientists have now elucidated the biosynthesis pathway of this base.

**Highlight:**
- DNA, or deoxyribonucleic acid, is a molecule that serves as the medium for storing genetic information in all living organisms. It is a double helix characterized by alternating purine nucleobases (adenine and guanine) and pyrimidine nucleobases (cytidine and deoxycytidine).
- The bases of each DNA strand are located at the center of the helix and are bonded together, thereby linking the two DNA strands: adenine forms two hydrogen bonds with thymine (A-T), and guanine forms three hydrogen bonds with cytosine (G-C). This applies to all living beings, with one exception.
- Cyanophage S-2L is a bacteriophage, in other words a virus that infects bacteria. In this phage, adenine is completely replaced by another base, 2-aminoadenosine (represented by the letter Z).
- The new Z-T base pair and the discovery of the biosynthesis pathway show that new bases can be enzymatically incorporated into genetic material. This increases the number of coding bases in DNA, paving the way for the development of synthetic genetic biopolymers.

**Reference:**
[https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/05/210511123700.htm](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/05/210511123700.htm)

3. **Parkinson’s Disease**

**Context:** Scientists have made significant progress in the development of a nasal spray treatment for patients with Parkinson’s disease.

**Highlight:**
- Researchers have developed a new gel that can adhere to tissue inside the nose alongside the drug levodopa, helping deliver treatment directly to the brain.
- Levodopa is converted to dopamine in the brain, which makes up for the deficit of dopamine-producing cells in Parkinson’s patients, and helps treat the symptoms of the disease.
- The current drug used for Parkinson’s disease is effective to a point, but after a long period of use the body starts to break down the drug before it gets to the brain where it is most needed.
- This means increased dosage is necessary, and in later stages, sometimes, instead of tablets, the drug has to be injected.
- Investigations into nasal sprays have long been of interest as a more effective delivery because of its direct route to the brain via the nerves that service the nose, but the challenge...
here is to find a way of making it adhere to the nasal tissue long enough to release a good dosage of the drug.

- The team are now working to incorporate these materials in nasal spray devices to progress to clinical trials in humans. The approach may also be relevant to other neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's.

Reference:
https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/05/210524161714.htm

B. TRIBAL AFFAIRS

1. Tribal Welfare in Pune

Context:

Pune: NGO Helps 600 Families from Nomadic Tribes Get Food in Pandemic

- Amidst the Pandemic, everyone is doing their bit to take care of poor and resource less people. In one such gesture Manav Vikas Samshodhan Kendra, an NGO from Pune has helped to feed 600 families of nomadic tribes in and around Pune.
- Nomadic tribes generally do not stay at the same place for a long time and they have no set businesses as such, thus it became extremely difficult for these families to survive in this raging pandemic.
- Total apathy of the government and system has made the life of these communities very difficult.
- There is no course on income in the lockdown neither can they afford to go other places else as their rent is due for several months. With no facilities available, they have had to buy water to survive.
- These families were surveyed by the Manav Vikas Samdhodhan Kendra under the guidance of its President Bhalchandra Sawant and Professor Vinayak Lashkar. After that, the help came from various ways. Anubhuti Samstha of Thane along with social workers from Pune as well as Dr Ashwini Jadhav, Shweta Goswami, and Ankit Gupta helped to make this possible.
- The social media appeal of the NGO gathered attention as many people helped financially. In the next month, the NGO is going to provide these families with basic facilities to keep themselves safe in the rainy season. They are also planning to arrange a health camp and some educational activities.

Reference:

2. Maring Naga Tribe

- The tribes of Manipur have been known for their cultural and traditional vibrancy through their rich heritage of arts and crafts.
- Amongst the tribes of Manipur, Maring tribe possesses an eminent status for their traditional textiles and costumes. Maring tribe is one of the oldest ethnic groups among the Naga tribes in Manipur.
The literal meaning of the word Maring is derived from two roots Mi (Mee) meaning men and Ring meaning to live. Therefore, Maring means the living men.

Another interpretation is that Mi (corrupted to Ma) means fire and Ring means to kindle and combination of these roots make Maring equivalent to the user or kindler of fire.

The art of weaving began since time immemorial in Maring society. The women wove their clothes using hand spun raw cotton.

Cotton was widely grown in their fields which they harvested themselves for their weaving. White/off white and black were dominant colors used on their textiles. Colors such as yellow/orange, green and red were used for patterning and designing in their textiles.

Earlier, the tribe people used to practice the process of dyeing yarns for weaving and used bamboo stalks and cane for making their accessories. They collected the raw materials for dyeing from their surroundings. They used natural ingredients such as flower, leaves, bark of trees, roots of tree and creeper, mud and fruits etc. to dye their textiles and accessories.

The traditional textiles of Maring can be broadly divided into home textiles, unisex textiles, male (upper and lower) garments and female (upper and lower) garments. Home textiles such as Monchal and Ngoupong were commonly used as a blanket by aged persons in cold season. Monchal was woven in stripes longitudinally with two colors of cotton i.e. off white and light brown and Ngoupong/Ngoupun was woven in plain off white cotton.

Reference:
UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:

1. What is “Genetic Load “and what factors influence it?  
(15 Marks - 2012)

2. Forest and Tribal People  
(S.N - 1987)

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. Bring about the impact of Christianity on the North Eastern tribes of India with special reference to Nagas.  
(20 Marks)