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. ARCHAEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
1. Iranian Plateau in Pleistocene .................................................................03
2. 6 Indian Places - UNESCO’S Tentative list of Heritage Sites .....................04
3. 13,000 YO war Victims Unearthed in Sudan ...........................................05

B. ANTHROPOLOGISTS IN NEWS
1. L.K. Mahapatra ..........................................................................................06
2. Jane Goodall ................................................................................................07

UPSC ANTHROPOLOGY PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS.....................................09
PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PEER REVIEW.....................................................09

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

1. Iranian Plateau in Pleistocene Context:

A new study reinforces a hypothesis that the Iranian plateau was like a bridge between East and West during the Pleistocene epoch, which began about 2.6 million years ago and lasted until about 11,700 years ago.

**Highlights:**

- Increasing Paleolithic finds in this region and neighboring countries (Pakistan and Afghanistan) reinforces the hypothesis that the Iranian Plateau has been used as a human migratory pathway in the Pleistocene linking East and West.
- The results of the archaeological survey we presented here emphasized the great potential and the importance of south-eastern Iran in general and southern margins of Lut Desert in particular, for the understanding of the Pleistocene cultural history of this region.
- The survey was conducted in parts of the Fahraj-Rigan area in Kerman province, believing that new Paleolithic localities bear great potential for this region for understanding the dynamics of Pleistocene hominin populations in south-eastern Iran.
- The surveyed area with a semi-arid to the arid climate has a mean elevation of 700 meters above sea level and is limited to the northwest, south, west, and east by volcanic mountains.
- Alluvial sedimentary deposits of Quaternary origin have covered the region between these mountains. All of the recorded sites are located either along the low-height hills of Quaternary river terraces or flat alluvial deposits.
- The researchers found that the abundance and relatively large size of the available raw material blocks in the region demonstrate easy access to primary and secondary sources of raw material.
- Among collected stone artifacts, core-tool/core-chopper and Levallois core and flakes are the most frequent types. A large unifacial point and heavily retouched flake are between the collected pieces.
- All of the stone artifacts that the researchers studied were covered with a natural post-depositional surface alteration called gloss patina, which caused smoothness, pronounced luster and reduction of surface topography of stone artifacts.
- Throughout history, the big and sprawling Kerman region has been something of a cultural melting pot, blending various regional cultures over time. It is bounded by the modern provinces of Fars on the west, Yazd on the north, South Khorasan on the northeast, Sistan-Baluchestan on the east, and Hormozgan on the south.
Reference:

2. 6 Indian Places - UNESCO’s Tentative List of Heritage Sites

Context:
Six Indian sites, including the temples of Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu, the Ganga ghats in Varanasi, and the Satpura Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh, have been added to the tentative list of UNESCO’s world heritage sites, the Ministry of Culture, recently announced.

Highlights:
- The six sites are namely Satpura Tiger Reserve, Iconic riverfront of the historic city of Varanasi, Megalithic site of Hire Benkal, Maratha Military Architecture in Maharashtra, Bhedaghat-Lameta Ghat in Narmada Valley-Jabalpur, and temples of Kanchipuram.
- As per Operational Guidelines, 2019, it is mandatory to put any monument/site on the Tentative List (TL) before it is considered for the final nomination dossier. India has 48 sites in the TL as of now. As per rules, any country can submit the nomination dossier after one year of it being on the TL.
- Located in Madhya Pradesh, the Satpura National Park is home to 26 species of the Himalayan region including reptiles, and 42 species of Nilgiri areas. It is the largest tiger-occupied forest and also has the largest tiger population.
- The 2,800-years-old megalithic site of Hire Benkal in Karnataka has made it to the tentative list owing to the fact that it is one of the largest prehistoric megalithic settlements where some funerary monuments are still intact.
• The Ganga river with its riverfront ghats also fulfill the criteria of Cultural Landscapes as designated in Article 1 of the Convention and specifically that of a cultural landscape.
• Another iconic site from Madhya Pradesh, Bhedaghat, is a town in the Jabalpur district, around 25 kms from Jabalpur. It is known for its marble rocks and their various morphological forms on either side of the Narmada river which flows through the gorge.
• Several dinosaur fossils have been found in the Narmada valley, particularly in the Bhedaghat-Lameta Ghat area of Jabalpur.
• Synonymous with spirituality, serenity, and silk, the temple town of Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu, is dotted with ancient temples that are architectural marvels and a visual treat.

Reference:

3. 13,000 YO war Victims Unearthed in Sudan
• Even tens of millennia ago, humanity struggled with the impacts and ravages of war, and this has been exemplified once again recently as archaeological excavations revealed battered bodies buried in a cemetery at one of the world's oldest sites showing human warfare, proving all was not well among the peoples who inhabited the east bank of the Nile River in northern Sudan some 13,400 years ago.
• A re-examination of remains from the Jebel Sahaba cemetery excavated in the 1960s provides new insight into this prehistoric bloodshed, including evidence that there had been a succession of violent encounters rather than a single deadly showdown as previously believed.
Of the skeletal remains of 61 men, women and children, 41 bore signs of at least one injury, mainly from projectile weapons including spears and arrows. Some wounds had healed, indicating the person survived the fighting.

Sixteen of them had both healed and unhealed wounds, indicating they survived one fight only to die in another.

A microscopic examination identified wounds with remnants of stone weapons embedded in the bone.

While spears and arrows can be delivered from a distance, there also was evidence of close combat with numerous instances of parry fractures, blows to the forearm sustained when the arm is raised to protect the head, and broken hand bones.

Hunter-gatherers lived in the Nile Valley at the time, before the advent of agriculture. They hunted mammals such as antelope, caught fish and collected plants and roots.

What is certain is that acts of violence have been recorded since hundreds of thousands of years ago, and are not restricted to our species, for example, also Neanderthals. But their motives are probably as complex and varied as one can imagine.


B. ANTHROPOLOGISTS IN NEWS

1. L.K. Mahapatra

Mahapatra, who was born in 1929, had a brilliant student career, having stood second in the state in matriculation in 1946.

He was a topper at Calcutta University, where the academic study of anthropology started in India. He also taught at the new bastions of anthropology in Lucknow and Dharwad.

He did much to expand the horizons of anthropology in India, which he feared had been caught in a trap of being perceived merely as tribal studies. Rather, he saw it as a comparative social science and as a comparative historical discipline that had great relevance for the present and the future. Hence, he ensured that research in the department was conducted on diverse areas such as temples and monasteries of Bhubaneswar and Puri, Hindu princes and princedoms, the caste system and mobility in the caste system, ritual kinship and kinship systems and urban slums as well as village life.

In an attempt to prove that Indian anthropologists were as good as their counterparts in the rest of the world, he was keen to break the practice of Indian anthropologists being limited to research in their own region – unlike western anthropologists, who would study other cultures.

He was the pioneer in India in conducting research in South East Asia and its cultural linkages with India.
• Mahapatra conducted extensive fieldwork in South-East Asia, starting out as a Director of a UNESCO research project on swidden or shifting cultivation in Asia in 1979-’80.
• Shifting cultivation was for him, a sustainable tribal practice and was an example of what was lost, when, in many cases, Adivasis were forcibly displaced from their lands due to development projects. Research on displacement and subsequent resettlement and rehabilitation of tribals was another field of enquiry he pioneered in the country.
• He went beyond most thinkers in forcing scholars and administrators in thinking about and addressing questions of inter-generational equity, about replacement costs (of trees on the land, for instance) and not just land.

Reference:
https://scroll.in/article/996282/development-for-whom-remembering-the-concerns-that-drove-activist-anthropologist-lk-mahapatra

2. Jane Goodall

Context:
Jane Goodall, the conservationist renowned for her expertise on chimpanzees and her globe-spanning advocacy of environmental causes, was named as this year’s winner of the prestigious Templeton Prize, honoring individuals whose life’s work embodies a fusion of science and spirituality.

Highlights:
• Jane Goodall is a British ethologist, known for her exceptionally detailed and long-term research on the chimpanzees of Gombe Stream National Park in Tanzania.
• In Africa, Goodall began assisting paleontologist and anthropologist Louis Leakey.
• Her association with Leakey led eventually to her establishment in June 1960 of a camp in the Gombe Stream Game Reserve (now a national park) so that she could observe the behaviour of chimpanzees in the region.
In 1960 Jane Goodall pioneered the study of chimpanzees in the wild, showing the world how similar chimpanzee behavior is to that of humans, and helping to demonstrate the close evolutionary relationship of the two species.

Over the years Goodall was able to correct a number of misunderstandings about chimpanzees. She found, for example, that the animals are omnivorous, not vegetarian; that they are capable of making and using tools; and, in short, that they have a set of hitherto unrecognized complex and highly developed social behaviours.

She also acknowledged that in certain circumstances, such as competition for food, sex, or territory, or under emotions of jealousy, fear, or revenge, their behavior proved as dark and troubling as that seen in humans.

At the same time chimpanzees often demonstrated mutual sharing, helping, and compassion. Mothers, children, and siblings developed deep ties, often assisting each other throughout their lifetimes.

Some primatologists have criticized Goodall’s methods, especially her use of bananas in feeding stations to attract chimps. They claim that the food causes higher levels of aggression and conflict, distorting normal behavior. But other research has shown similar levels of conflict without feeding stations.

She summarized her years of observation in *The Chimpanzees of Gombe: Patterns of Behavior* (1986). Goodall continued to write and lecture about environmental and conservation issues into the early 21st century. In 2002 she became a UN Messenger of Peace.

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

2. Neanderthal Man (15 Marks - 2011)

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. Contributions of LK Mahapatra to Indian anthropology (15 Marks)