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. Returning lands; Nature Protection

Context:
From California to Maine, land is being given back to Native American tribes who are committing to managing it for conservation. Some tribes are using traditional knowledge, from how to support wildlife to the use of prescribed fires, to protect their ancestral grounds.

Highlights:
- In 1908 the U.S. government seized some 18,000 acres of land from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes to create the National Bison Range in the heart of their reservation in the mountain-ringed Mission Valley of western Montana.
- While the goal of protecting the remnants of America’s once-plentiful bison was worthy, for the last century the federal facility has been a symbol to the tribes here of the injustices forced upon them by the government, and they have long fought to get the bison range returned.
- President Donald Trump signed legislation that began the process of returning the range to the Salish and Kootenai.
- The tribes, recognize the importance of bison family groups and have allowed them to stay together.
- Throughout the United States, land has been or is being transferred to tribes or is being co-managed with their help. In California, a land trust recently transferred 1,199 acres of redwood forest and prairie to the Esselen tribe, and in Maine, the Five Tribes of the Wabanaki Confederacy recently reacquired a 150-acre island with the help of land trusts.
- The Nature Conservancy, for example, one of the world’s largest conservation organizations, has institutionalized the transfer of ecologically important land with its Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities Program in both the U.S. and globally.

Reference:
https://e360.yale.edu/features/how-returning-lands-to-native-tribes-is-helping-protect-nature

2. Rajasthan Nomads’ Vaccination issues

Context:
Rajasthan: Nomads miss out on Covid vaccination due to lack of Aadhaar & identity proof

Highlights:
- While Covid vaccination drive is in progress across the state, there are many who are not able to avail the vaccine due to lack of identity proof.
- Most people, belonging to denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes in the state, can hardly produce an Aadhaar card or any other ID proof to get themselves inoculated.
- According to Gopal Keshawat, former chairman, denotified tribes, nomadic and semi-nomadic welfare board of Rajasthan, of the 80-90 lakh population of denotified, nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes in the state, only 3-4 per cent people have Aadhaar or any identity document.
- According to the draft list of denotified tribes, nomadic tribes and semi-nomadic tribes of India, there are 80 such communities in Rajasthan.
- Less than one per cent of the whole nomadic tribes community has been vaccinated so far.
- The state’s art and culture department had launched the Mukhya Mantri Lok Kalakar Protsahan Yojana to provide financial support of Rs. 2,500 to folk artistes during the first wave of Covid pandemic last year.
- There are around 1 lakh artistes in Rajasthan who belong to Kalbeliya, Bhopa, Mirasi, Langa Manganiyar communities. The other communities include Sansi, Gadiya Lohar, Banjara, Naik, Rabari, Bhat, Kanjar and others.

Reference:
https://www.google.co.in/amp/s/m.timesofindia.com/city/jaipur/nomadic-tribes-deprived-of-vaccine-in-state/amp_articleshow/83267880.cms

3. Disappearing Dialects
Context:
Languages of the Great Andamanese people are dead but that of other tribes of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands can still be saved.

Highlights:
- The Great Andamanese are amongst the earliest people in the world. They are believed to be living on the Andaman group of islands for more than 60,000 years. Today, they are on the verge of extinction — with their population dwindling from about 5,000 at the turn of 19th century to merely around 50 today.
- While just a century and a half ago, the tribes lorded over large parts of the Great Andamans, today, these are herded together in Strait Island, about 50 km away from Port Blair.
- Once hunter-gatherers, they now depend upon rations provided by the administration.
- Their dietary habits have changed and they hardly have any memory of their traditions and culture left. More importantly, the Great Andamanese tribes have lost their languages.
- Each tribe had its distinct language in earlier times. Most of these languages had become extinct over time and a mixed language was spoken by the Great Andamanese.
- Even this mixed language is now out of use. The few tribals who knew the Aka-Kora, Aka-Jeru and Aka-Bo languages died by 2010. With the death of an old lady named Lichu in April 2020, the last speaker of the Aka Cari language was lost.
● The Great Andamanese speak only Hindi today. The languages of the Jarawa and the Onge tribes may meet the same fate in the near future.
● The language of the Sentinelese tribe is not known to anyone since this tribe has resisted outsiders' attempts to contact them. In the Nicobar group of Islands, the Shompen tribe live in relative isolation. Their language too is under threat.
● Languages keep alive the collective memory, mythology, knowledge, and culture of an entire community or tribe. It is for these reasons as well as for ethical ones that languages of all sections need to be preserved. Indigenous languages are dying out rapidly everywhere in the world.
● Many linguists, anthropologists and activists have taken up the cause for indigenous languages.
● Language rights of indigenous people are today guaranteed by the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples as well as the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention.
● The UN General Assembly had proclaimed the year 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages to highlight the loss of indigenous languages and the need to take action for preserving, revitalizing and promoting the same.
● The United Nations has now declared the decade 2022-2032 as the International Decade of the Indigenous Languages.

Reference:
http://www.millenniumpost.in/sundaypost/inland/disappearing-dialects-442406

B. BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY
1. Women’s Genetic Health
● Women are more prone to some health conditions through genetics.
● Chromosomal aneuploidy in babies of expecting mothers: A condition in which a cell has an incorrect number of chromosomes. If there is an error in the normal processes of fertilization, there can be changes to the number or structures of chromosomes which can lead to an offspring with birth defects due to the abnormal structure or number.
● The most commonly seen type of defect is an extra chromosome 21 called trisomy 21 or Down syndrome. Genetic screening and diagnostic tests are available with pre-test and post-test counselling which can identify these changes in the foetal state.
● X-linked inherited disorders: Some disorders are X-linked, which means a female with 2X chromosomes will be a carrier, but if she passes this to her male offspring, it will be affected since males only inherit one X chromosome from their mother, the other being a Y chromosome inherited from the father.
● Hematological disorder screening: Couples have to be screened if they are carriers for common hematological disorders such as thalassemia and sickle cell disease. Consanguinity increases the risk of having any recessive genetic disorder by approximately 25 per cent.
Reference:
https://www.google.co.in/amp/s/indianexpress.com/article/lifestyle/health/genetic-health-options-every-woman-should-know-about-7339318/lite/

2. DNA repair

Context:
ARI scientists identify proteins that help hydra to repair damaged DNA

Highlights:
- Researchers at Agharkar Research Institute (ARI) have identified a protein-based pathway, used by hydra – a primitive organism – which could potentially hold some clues in understanding evolution of organisms and pointing towards specific genes that help the organisms survive very long.
- DNA, which is the building block of any organism that determines its growth, functionality and life, faces constant threat of getting damaged — both from internal and external agents — like chemicals, pollutants, ultraviolet rays present in sunlight and other sources.
- ARI has been studying DNA damage and repair in hydra, which is considered as one of the oldest living multi-cellular organisms found in freshwater bodies. The laboratory, one-of-its-kind in the world, carries out research in this area of specialisation for years now.
- Accumulation of damaged DNA is one of the contributing factors for which any organism shows signs of aging. But in the case of hydra, which shows no signs of aging, the ARI researchers reported the inherent presence of a robust mechanism of DNA repair.
- Hydra XPA contains a conserved nuclear localisation signal, which marks proteins to be sent to the nucleus. The predicted structure of a part of the hydra XPA protein has very high similarity with the human XPA.
- More studies of DNA repairs in hydra could offer clues in understanding the aging in humans.

Reference:

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UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:
1. Genome study (15 Marks - 2011)
2. Themes of Linguistic Anthropology (10 Marks - 1999)

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. Feminist anthropology (20 Marks)