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. ARCHAEOLOGY

1. Bronze Age Civilizations in Europe

Context:
Ancient DNA reveals origin of first Bronze Age civilizations in Europe

Highlights:

- The first civilisations to build monumental palaces and urban centres in Europe are more genetically homogenous than expected, according to genomes gathered from archaeological sites around the Aegean.
- Individuals from the northern Aegean were considerably different by the Middle Bronze Age, sharing half their ancestry with people from the Pontic-Caspian steppe. These populations were highly similar to present-day Greeks. This supports theories that Proto-Greek and Indo-European languages originated in Anatolia or the Pontic-Caspian Steppe region.
- Despite marked differences in burial customs, architecture, and art, the Minoan civilization in Crete, the Helladic civilization in mainland Greece and the Cycladic civilization in the Cycladic islands in the middle of the Aegean Sea, were genetically similar during the Early Bronze age (5000 years ago).
- The findings are important because it suggests that critical innovations such as the development of urban centres, metal use and intensive trade made during the transition from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age were not just due to mass immigration from east of the Aegean as previously thought, but also from the cultural continuity of local Neolithic groups.
- The study also finds that by the Middle Bronze Age (4000-4,600 years ago), individuals from the northern Aegean were considerably different compared to those in the Early Bronze Age.
- These individuals shared half their ancestry with people from the Pontic-Caspian steppe, a large geographic region stretching between the Danube and the Ural rivers and north of the Black Sea, and were highly similar to present-day Greeks.
- The findings suggest that migration waves from herders from the Pontic-Caspian steppe, or populations north of the Aegean that bear Pontic-Caspian Steppe like ancestry, shaped present-day Greece.
- These potential migration waves all predate the appearance of the earliest documented form of Greek, supporting theories explaining the emergence of Proto-Greek and the evolution of Indo-European languages in either Anatolia or the Pontic-Caspian Steppe region.
- Future studies could investigate whole genomes between the Mesolithic and Bronze Age in the Armenian and Caucasus to help further pinpoint the origins of migration into the Aegean, and to better integrate the genomic data with the existing archaeological and linguistic evidence.

Reference:
https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/05/210505102025.htm
2. Earliest Evidence of Human Ecosystems Changing with Fire

- A new study provides the earliest evidence to date of ancient humans significantly altering entire ecosystems with flames.
- The study combines archaeological evidence -- dense clusters of stone artifacts dating as far back as 92,000 years ago -- with paleoenvironmental data on the northern shores of Lake Malawi in eastern Africa to document that early humans were ecosystem engineers.
- "This is the earliest evidence I have seen of humans fundamentally transforming their ecosystem with fire," said Jessica Thompson, assistant professor of anthropology in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the paper’s lead author. "It suggests that by the Late Pleistocene, humans were learning to use fire in truly novel ways. In this case, their burning caused replacement of the region's forests with the open woodlands you see today."
- The artifacts examined by the researchers are of the type produced across Africa in the Middle Stone Age, a period dating back at least 315,000 years.
- The earliest modern humans made their appearance during this period, with the African archaeological record showing significant advances in cognitive and social complexity.
- Lake Malawi’s water levels have fluctuated drastically over the ages. During the lake’s driest periods, the last of which ended about 85,000 years ago, it diminished into two small, saline bodies of water. The lake recovered from these arid stretches and its levels have remained high ever since, according to the study.
- According to the researchers, the data revealed that a spike in charcoal accumulation occurred shortly before the flattening of the region's species richness -- the number of distinct species inhabiting it.
- Despite the consistently high lake levels, which imply greater stability in the ecosystem, the species richness went flat following the last arid period based on information from fossilized pollen sampled from the lakebed, the study found.
- The increase in archaeological sites after the last arid period, paired with the spike in charcoal and absence of forest, suggests that people were manipulating the ecosystem with fire, the researchers conclude.
- The scale of their environmental impact over the long term is something typically associated with farmers and herders, rather than hunter-gatherers.
- This suggests early ecological manipulation on par with modern people and may also explain why the archaeological record formed.

Reference:
https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/05/210505145542.htm

3. Archaeologists uncover Carolingian treasure hoard

Context:
Archaeologists conducting excavations near the town of Biskupiec in Poland have discovered a silver treasure hoard from the 9th century AD.

Highlights:
- The hoard consists of 118 silver denarii coins and their fragments, depicting the Carolingian King/Emperors: Louis the Pious who ruled from AD 814 to 840, and Charles the Bald who ruled from AD 840 to 877.
During the 9th century AD, the vicinity of Biskupiec was inhabited by Prussian tribes which mainly used Arabic coins as currency, with only a few single Carolingian coins having previously been discovered from that period.

The hoard was placed in the basin of the Osa and Drwęca Rivers, tributaries of the River Vistula that connects to the Vistula Lagoon where the major Viking settlement of Truso had emerged on the banks of the Nogat delta branch.

The Viking settlement in Truso and the related activity of the Vikings likely indicates how the treasure reached the territory of ancient Prussia.

In the 9th century, a clear increase in the threat posed by the Vikings taking part in the invasions of Western Europe was noticed.

Paris is besieged in AD 845, and at the same time the Scandinavians are actively trading in the Baltic regions.

Reference:
https://www.heritagedaily.com/2021/05/archaeologists-uncover-carolingian-treasure-hoard/138900

B. TRIBAL AFFAIRS

1. Telehealth

Tribal communities across the US country often turn to telehealth to access care, but they still face challenges using the technology and addressing gaps in care.

That’s the take-away from a report prepared by the eHealth Initiative and Foundation (eHI) following a recent roundtable discussion with representatives from the Indian Health Service (IHS).

Telehealth is used in tribal communities across the country, with telehealth visits making up 60 percent to 70 percent of their healthcare services.

Telehealth use has especially climbed in these communities during the coronavirus pandemic, with providers wanting to limit in-person contact. The IHS serves 574 federally recognized tribes and is a key player in helping to provide telehealth services.
• The community was quick to turn to telehealth visits when the pandemic hit, Eric Ritchie, PhD, clinical director of the Chinle Service Unit, said during the roundtable discussion.
• The Chinle Service Unit offered audio-visual telehealth visits through many of their clinics to treat sick patients while avoiding the risk of COVID-19 transmission.
• Despite these telehealth success stories, there are still roadblocks. Many Tribal communities are in rural and isolated locations and, like Chinle, face challenges in telehealth delivery. Access to adequate cellular coverage and internet connectivity is scarce, according to Ritchie. Less than 1 percent of Apache County has access to high-speed internet.
• Without reliable internet connectivity, telehealth visits can be interrupted and unproductive for patients and providers. In communities with crowded households, there are limits to privacy for patients who want to discuss health issues with caregivers.
• The roundtable and the report it produced serve to highlight the challenges faced by underserved populations in accessing and benefitting from connected health services. The potential is there and the successful use cases are evident, Bordenick and her colleagues point out, but the journey to full telehealth adoption is by no means complete.

Reference:

2. Tribal Hunting laws
• Forest rights in India reflect correlative duties of tribal communities to preserve wildlife and it is in consonance to the fundamental duty under Article 51 A(g)
• A recent news report published by Down to Earth revealed the killing of over 200 wild animals in West Bengal’s Junglemahal forest area by the local tribal population.
• The animals were killed as part of the centuries-old annual hunting season observed by Adivasis known as Shikar Utsav. There are two opposing views on the issue — while one part supports it as a traditional customary ritual of indigenous people, others oppose it in the name of wildlife conservation and animal rights.
• Hunting has been a core part of human civilization since the beginning. It became deeply embedded in human cultures along with agriculture, fishing and gathering. Some of the oldest cave paintings also depict scenes of hunting.
• Moving ahead to the Middle Ages and the colonial period, hunting has been depicted in many paintings and later in photographs.
• In India, Mughal paintings often depicted kings going out for hunting tours. The Akbarnama has several scenes of Akbar’s hunting expeditions, often assisted by his pet cheetahs. It was a symbol of power.
• The traditional right to hunt wild animals has been recognised by many legal systems across the globe.
However, when we deal with the Indian laws, we have a different scenario. Section 3(l) of The Scheduled Tribes & Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 or Forest Rights Act (FRA) excludes the traditional right of hunting or trapping or extracting a part of the body of any species of wild animal. But the community right to hunt is prevalent in many tribal and traditional forest-dwelling communities.

The traditional community rights associated with hunting are not immune from the criticism that they draw from conservation perspectives.

For several tribal and other traditional forest-dwelling communities, reliance on a property-based framework instead of a regulatory one is significant to enforce their community rights to wildlife and forest resources.

These communities cannot extend the horizon of their environmental prerogatives in a regulatory frame to attain the wide multitude of human-based and human-caused reasons for wildlife mortality.

The native conservation servitude associated with wildlife in and around the protected areas draws its genesis way back to the long history of their existence.

However, with changing times, laws and their interpretations have also opined and opened the corridors of balancing arrangements, where the conflicting native rights of such communities and concerns of forest and wildlife conservationists do collide to finally come to a settlement.

Reference:

UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:
1. Forest Rights Act - 2006 (15 Marks - 2011)
2. Linguistic elements in Indian Population (10 Marks - 2017)

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. How did the Forest policies and acts impact the tribal hunting rights and practices? (20 Marks)