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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### UPSC ANTHROPOLOGY PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

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### PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PEER REVIEW

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*Note - For convenience, the respective reference links have been dropped at the end of every topic.*
1. Khasi Matriliny
● Over the years, a few groups have protested the system of property inheritance, saying it “disinherits” men, and pressed for equitable property distribution between all children in the family.
● A district autonomous council in Meghalaya announced that it would introduce the ‘Khasi Inheritance of Property Bill, 2021, aimed at “equitable distribution” of parental property among siblings in the Khasi community.
● In other words, children take the mother’s surname, the husband moves into his wife’s house, and the youngest daughter (khatduh) of the family is bequeathed the full share of the ancestral — or the clan’s — property.
● The main objective, according to the chief of the KHADC of the Bill, is “equitable distribution” of parental property among siblings — both male and female. Custom also dictates that the khatduh cannot sell the property, without permission of her mother’s brother (maternal uncle) — since he technically belongs to the mother’s clan, through which descent is traced.
● The khatduh becomes the “custodian” of the land, and assumes all responsibility associated with the land, including taking care of aged parents, unmarried or destitute siblings.
● Matrilineal society, also called matriliny, group adhering to a kinship system in which ancestral descent is traced through maternal instead of paternal lines (the latter being termed patrilineage or patriliny).
● This inheritance tradition applies only to ancestral or clan/community property, which has been with the family for years.
● In this traditional set-up, if a couple does not have any daughters, then the property goes to the wife’s elder sister, and her daughters.
● The three tribes of Meghalaya — Khasis, Jaintias, and Garos — practise a matrilineal system of inheritance. For one, custodianship is often misconstrued as ownership vested in just one person that is the youngest daughter.
● Moreover, the custodian cannot buy or sell the land, without taking permission from her maternal uncle.
● Women activists have often pointed out that the matrilineal system in Meghalaya rarely empowers women.
● The chief reasoned that property should be distributed equally. Sometimes, when a couple has no children, and there is no genuine heir, the clan takes over the property, as per custom.
● The third provision would prevent a sibling from getting parental property if they marry a non-Khasi and accept the spouse’s customs and culture. If the wife does not have sisters, then the clan usually takes over the property. On the other hand, self-acquired property can be distributed equally among siblings.
Reference:

2. Genetically Modified Food
● Genetically modified organisms (GMOs) can be defined as organisms (i.e. plants, animals or microorganisms) in which the genetic material (DNA) has been altered in a way that does not occur naturally by mating and/or natural recombination.
• The technology is often called “modern biotechnology” or “gene technology”, sometimes also “recombinant DNA technology” or “genetic engineering”.
• It allows selected individual genes to be transferred from one organism into another, also between non related species. Foods produced from or using GM organisms are often referred to as GM foods.
• One of the objectives for developing plants based on GM organisms is to improve crop protection.
• The GM crops currently on the market are mainly aimed at an increased level of crop protection through the introduction of resistance against plant diseases caused by insects or viruses or through increased tolerance towards herbicides.
• The safety assessment of GM foods generally focuses on: (a) direct health effects (toxicity), (b) potential to provoke allergic reaction (allergenicity); (c) specific components thought to have nutritional or toxic properties; (d) the stability of the inserted gene; (e) nutritional effects associated with genetic modification; and (f) any unintended effects which could result from the gene insertion.

WHO has been taking an active role in relation to GM foods, primarily for two reasons:
• on the grounds that public health could benefit from the potential of biotechnology, for example, from an increase in the nutrient content of foods, decreased allergenicity and more efficient and/or sustainable food production; and
• based on the need to examine the potential negative effects on human health of the consumption of food produced through genetic modification in order to protect public health. Modern technologies should be thoroughly evaluated if they are to constitute a true improvement in the way food is produced.

Reference:  
https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/food-genetically-modified

3. Pig to Human Kidney Transplant

• US surgeons say they have successfully given a pig's kidney to a person in a transplant breakthrough they hope could ultimately solve donor organ shortages.
• If found compatible in the long run, this process of Xenotransplantation, or transplanting organs between different species, could help provide an alternative and additional supply of organs for people facing life-threatening diseases.
• The meaning they were already on artificial life support with no prospect of recovering.
• The kidney came from a pig that had been genetically modified to stop the organ being recognised by the body as "foreign" and being rejected. Experts say it is the most advanced experiment in the field so far.
• Using pigs for transplants is not a new idea though. Pig heart valves are already widely used in humans. And their organs are a good match for people when it comes to size.
• During the two-hour operation at the New York University Langone Health medical centre, the surgeons connected the donor pig kidney to the blood vessels of the brain-dead recipient to see if it would function normally once plumbed in, or be rejected.
• The transplant conducted, used a kidney that was obtained from a pig that had undergone editing to knock out a gene that codes for a sugar molecule called Alpha-gal. Alpha-gal is not normally found in humans and this molecule can elicit a devastating immune response in humans. The pigs with this gene alteration are called GalSafe pigs and have been FDA
approved for human use for those who have pork allergies and also for use in pharmacology. These pigs have been well studied and have passed various levels of regulatory scrutiny.

- Dr Montgomery added that more studies are needed for a longer duration to fully understand the compatibility in the long run. But he is confident that we can see a pig to living human kidney transplant within a couple of years. He adds that in about 10 years we will be ready to transplant heart, lung, and liver from pigs.

Reference:
https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-how-surgeons-gave-a-pig-kidney-to-a-human-7584506/

4. The Bhils

- The Bhils, India’s second largest tribal community, live in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. Here, we look at the Bhils of Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh and Choti Undri and Badi Undri near Udaipur in Rajasthan, focusing on the Bhil artists who tell their story through paintings.
- Some of the Bhils trace their ancestry to Eklavya, who was more skilled as an archer than Arjuna, the hero of Mahabharata. Some scholars have said that Valmiki, who chronicled the Ramayana was actually a Bhil, Valia.
- About the term Bhil, there is much speculation. While some scholars think it is the Dravidian word for “bow”, others say it is derived from the Tamil word bhilawar or “bowman”. Since “bow” was used by other tribal communities, “Bhil” was adopted as a generic term, which failed to take note of the subtle differences between each tribal community and the beauty of their plural world.
- Even between the Bhils of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, there are differences in their deities, songs, dances and stories.
- Both communities erect pillars in memory of their ancestors, but have different names for them. Where in Madhya Pradesh, the memory pillars are called gatlas – in Rajasthan pillars honouring men are cheera and those of the women are known as matlok.

Reference:
https://ignca.gov.in/divisionss/janapada-sampada/tribal-art-culture/adivasi-art-culture/the-bhils/

5. Pre-Matric Scholarship Scheme
This is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented through States/UTs who are responsible for Inviting applications from students online through State Portal or National Scholarship Portal, check eligibility verification and disbursement of scholarship to eligible ST students directly to their bank accounts through DBT. Funds are released by this Ministry to the State Governments/UTs based on their proposal consisting of Statement of Expenditure, Furnishing of Utilization Certificate and Uploading of beneficiary data on DBT Portal.
The main features of the scheme are as under:
- Applicable to students who are studying in Classes IX – X.
- Parental income from all sources should not exceed Rs.2.50 lakhs per annum.
- Scholarships are paid @ Rs.225/- per month for Day Scholars and @ Rs.525/- per month for Hostellers, for a period of 10 months in a year.
• Funds are shared at the ratio of 75:25 between the Centre and State Governments/UT and in ratio of 90:10 for NE and Specially Category States/UTs (UT of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand). For UT without legislature 100% grant is given by the Centre.

Reference:
https://dbttribal.gov.in/

UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:

1. Applications of Anthropology in the field of medicine. (S.N. - 2000)
2. Tribal Developmental Programmes. (LQ - 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. Contemporary Matrilinal Societies in India. (20 Marks)