ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS DIARY

(AND)

10.11.2021

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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UPSC ANTHROPOLOGY PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PEER REVIEW

*Note* - *For convenience, the respective reference links have been dropped at the end of every topic.*
1. Homo Erectus & Running

- Nariokotome Boy and Turkana Boy - All of his bones except for his feet and a few other small pieces were discovered in 1985 by Mary & Richard Leakey in Kenya’s Lake Turkana Basin.
- He was about 5’3” and probably weighed about 103 pounds.
- His molars were just coming in, a developmental stage that matches those of modern 11-year-old humans, though his bone growth suggests that he may have been anywhere between 7 and 15 years old.
- Nariokotome Boy lived during a time approximately halfway between that of modern humans and Lucy, the 3.2-million-year-old *Australopithecus afarensis* specimen found in 1974 in the Afar desert of Ethiopia.
- Far more closely than did Nariokotome Boy, Lucy resembled modern great apes. Her enormous upper body strength suggests that she was built for life in trees.
- Nariokotome Boy had long, strong legs and relatively short arms. He also had a thin waist that would have allowed his torso to swivel and keep him in balance while running. Built like that, he could hunt, scavenge, and escape predators—all while carrying a weapon.
- For Nariokotome Boy, it would have required the ability to sweat, and that would have required his skin to be covered with nothing thicker than a light fuzz of hair. (Lucy was furry.) According to Dr. Roberts, from a distance Nariokotome Boy would have looked very much like a modern human.
- Scientists consider *Homo erectus*, *Australopithecus afarensis*, and *Homo sapiens* to be three distinct species that environmental forces shaped in similar ways. The first two species overlapped in time. *H. sapiens* is the only one of the three to have survived to the modern era.

*Reference:*
2. The tribal Soul Of India

- Home to an amazing 533 living tribes, India’s tribal population is the largest in the world.
- Despite encroaching urbanisation, habitat loss and dwindling livelihoods, many tribal communities continue to practice their traditions and to conserve the ancient wisdom handed down by their ancestors.
- The Konyaks, once infamous for headhunting, are the largest of the tribes in the north-eastern state of Nagaland. Remarkably, a handful of elders are old enough to have participated in the practice.
- These fearless warriors with distinct facial tattoos would mercilessly behead their enemies and carry home their decapitated heads as ostentatious displays of their bravado.
- The dry, deciduous forests of Gujarat, in western India, are shared by Asiatic lions, leopards and the Dangs, a collective term applied to the Bhil, Kunbi, Warli and other indigenous tribes of the Dang region.
- When night falls in the deep north-east of India and silence engulfs tiger and leopard territory in the densely forested state of Arunachal Pradesh, the shamans of the animist Galo tribe begin chanting and communicating with the spirits that abound in nature.
- Extremely tall with enviably sharp features, the Brokpa tribe of the Trans-Himalayan region of Ladakh believe in an Epicurean way of life, marked by music, dancing, home-brewed wine, silver jewels and extravagant headwear adorned with feathers and coins.

Reference:

3. Systemic Racism

- Glenn Harris, president of Race Forward and publisher of Colorlines, defined it as "the complex interaction of culture, policy and institutions that holds in place the outcomes we see in our lives."
- Structural racism prevents or makes it more challenging for people of color to participate in society and in the economy. While structural racism manifests itself in what appears to be separate institutions, Harris emphasized that factors like housing insecurity, the racial wealth gap, education and policing are intimately connected.
- Systemic racism is a nebulous excuse for the bigotry of low expectations.
- Redlining refers to the system used by banks and the real estate industry in the 20th century to determine which neighborhoods would get loans to buy homes, and neighborhoods where people of color lived — outlined in red ink — were deemed the riskiest to invest in.
- This practice prevented Black families from amassing and maintaining wealth in the same way that white families could, resulting in the growth of the racial wealth gap and housing insecurity which persists today.
- There is only intentional and willful speech and action that is racist in nature, a deliberate sin, not some straw man and hand-waved “systemic racism” that is to blame for what is wrong in the modern world.

Reference:
4. Neolithic Chalk Art
Context:
Researchers from Wessex Archaeology have shed light on previously unseen artistic elements used during the ‘golden age’ of Neolithic chalk art on plaques from the Stonehenge area.

Highlights:
- The plaques are considered to be among the finest examples of Prehistoric engraved chalk in Britain. They were discovered between 1968 and 2017 within 5km of one another, in a cluster around Stonehenge, with the most notable examples discovered during the widening of the A303 in a site called the Chalk Plaque Pit.
- Four of the plaques were subject to non-invasive Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI) technology that highlighted a range of artistic abilities in the predominantly geometric designs on each plaque, demonstrating not only deliberate, staged composition, execution and detail, but also providing an insight into the inspiration of the Neolithic artists.
- Previously, the chalk plaques were documented using hand-drawn illustrations and were difficult to reconstruct due to erosion. However, the advancement of revolutionary technology has made it possible to reveal previously unseen features of the plaques, which help us to understand the creative process of these Prehistoric artists.
- Chalk has provided an attractive material for engraving for countless generations. It offers surfaces that can be smoothed, allowing designs to be sketched, reworked, altered or erased accordingly. Engraved chalk plaques were an important cultural marker in the Neolithic period.
- Utilising the advancement of photographic techniques, it is possible to suggest that Neolithic artists used objects known to them in the real world as inspiration for their artistic expression.

Reference:

5. ADHD and dementia
Context:
A large study has found a link between ADHD and dementia across generations. The study shows that parents and grandparents of individuals with ADHD were at higher risk of dementia than those with children and grandchildren without ADHD.

Highlights:
- The findings suggest that there are common genetic and/or environmental contributions to the association between ADHD and dementia.
ADHD (attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by inattention, impulsiveness and hyperactivity. It affects an estimated 3 percent of adults worldwide.

The number of new ADHD diagnoses has increased dramatically in the last decades amid increasing awareness and knowledge about the disorder.

However, since the diagnosis is still relatively new, there has only been a limited number of small studies on the development of dementia in people with ADHD, often with conflicting results.

In the current study, the researchers wanted to overcome this by examining to what extent older generations to individuals with ADHD were diagnosed with dementia.

The researchers found that parents of individuals with ADHD had 34 percent higher risk of dementia than parents of individuals without ADHD.

The risk of Alzheimer’s disease, the most common type of dementia, was 55 percent higher in parents of individuals with ADHD. Individuals with ADHD were more likely to have parents with early-onset dementia than late-onset.

The researchers note that the absolute risk of dementia was low for the parent cohort; only 0.17 percent of the parents were diagnosed with dementia during the follow-up period.

The association was lower for second-degree relatives of individuals with ADHD, i.e. grandparents and uncles and aunts. For example, grandparents of individuals with ADHD had 10 percent increased risk of dementia compared to grandparents of individuals without ADHD.

Reference:
https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/09/210909123905.htm