ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS DIARY

(DAND)

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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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Note - For convenience, the respective reference links have been dropped at the end of every topic.
1. Theory of Tribal Culture

- Culture is often described as social rather than individual, local rather than universal, learned rather than instinctive, historical rather than biological, evolved rather than planned, distributed rather than centralized, and cultivated rather than coarse.
- Scholars distinguish between cultural expressions and their foundations.
- Expressions include activities such as singing, dancing, dressing, and artistry—the usual media representations of Indians.
- The foundations include marrying, child-rearing, socializing, worshipping, governing, and working.
- In American Indian communities, culture often distinguishes insiders from outsiders. People vigorously debate what “Hopi” is really or what is “Indian” and what is “white.”
- Besides affecting pride and human relationships, the debate can affect subsidies, grants, school curricula, and jobs.
- Culture is an indispensable concept like “society,” but it is also vague and contested. Loose criteria control the word in speech and the concept in thought.
- Any scholarly attempt to find culture’s “essence” or “true meaning” is inevitably too narrow. Rather than trying to define culture, we are exploring causes connecting tribal culture and economic development.
- Early contact with non-Indians caused American Indian cultures to flourish in some ways and to atrophy in others.
- Non-Indians supplied steel chisels and paint to Northwestern tribes for totem pole art, the loom and colored threads to Southwestern tribes for weaving, and the horse to Great Plains tribes for buffalo hunting. Non-Indians also brought new diseases, warfare, and brutal subjugation that disrupted tribal life.

Reference:

2. Homo Sapiens Sapiens

- Homo sapiens sapiens is the sub-species that stems from Homo sapiens. This subspecies consists of only modern humans. Homo sapiens sapiens is the scientific name for humans.
- This subspecies was first distinguished about 160,000 years ago in Africa. Then, based on archeological findings, they apparently migrated to other continents, such as Asia, Europe, and the Americas. However, there are archaic Homo sapiens who date back as far as 300,000 years ago.
- Homo sapiens sapiens is a subspecies of Homo Sapiens where modern human beings belong and are the only extant species of the Homo genus. Some of the early modern human remains are the Cro-Magnon in Europe, Omo in south-western Ethiopia, and Skhul/Qafzeh hominids in Israel.
- These specimens are regarded as early modern humans because they still have some archaic features, such as prominent brow ridges and projecting faces.
- Homo sapiens sapiens (H. sapiens sapiens) is the only subspecies of H. sapiens that exists. This is because there are some key physical features and facts that cause H. sapiens sapiens to heavily differ from the other H. sapiens.
The early H. sapiens sapiens like the archaic H. sapiens were quite short. They usually have long limbs and truncated bodies. Now, the modern human is on average 160cm and 175cm for females and males, respectively.

The brains of H. sapiens sapiens make up about 2.2% of their body weight, making it one of the largest brains to body ratios of all the Homo sapiens.

Homo sapiens sapiens were also heavily researched and studied because of their advancements in technology over the years. Their use of fire, tools, clothing and even the levels of development in their settlements and art have distinctly differentiated them from the other H. sapiens.

The modern human, unlike the oldest known human ancestors, now has a diet of both plants and meat. Before, the oldest human would eat mainly plants and herbs, which of course due to their built took much longer to digest and in turn, would require a longer digestive tract.

As we developed into H. sapiens sapiens, we evolved and began to have a diet containing more meat and cooking food as the fire was discovered. This resulted in the H. sapiens sapiens body developing a shorter alimentary canal that would process these foods easily and in a short time span.

Homo sapiens sapiens have also had a massive impact on the world today. We have taken animals captive and domesticated them both for consumption and as protection and company. Now, about one-quarter of the earth’s land is used to do agriculture. With a growing population, humans are expected to be at least nine billion in number by 2042.

Reference:
https://www.biologyonline.com/dictionary/homo-sapiens-sapiens

3. Chie Nakane

Chie Nakane (中根 千枝, Nakane Chie, November 30, 1926 – October 12, 2021) was a Japanese anthropologist and Professor Emerita of Social Anthropology at the University of Tokyo.

Nakane, professor emeritus at the University of Tokyo, was the first woman to become assistant, lecturer, assistant professor and professor at the prestigious national university.

Nakane conducted her research in remote hinterlands in India and Tibet. She also studied at the University of London.
• She is widely known for her analysis of Japanese society compared with its Indian, Chinese and Western counterparts, terming it a vertical society characterized by mentality prizing seniority and close bonds among community members.

• Nakane's work focuses on cross-cultural comparisons of social structures in Asia, notably Japan, India, and China. She is internationally known for her bestselling book, Japanese Society, which has been translated into 13 languages. In this book, Nakane characterizes Japan as "a vertical society" where human relations are based on "place" (shared space) instead of "attribute" (qualification).

Reference:

4. Scheme of Girls & Boys Hostels for STs

• Under the scheme, Central assistance is given to States/UTs/Universities for construction of new hostel buildings and/or extension of existing hostels. The scheme has been revised w.e.f. 1.4.2008.

• Under the revised scheme, State Governments are eligible for 100% central share for construction of all Girls’ hostel and also for construction of Boys’ hostel in naxal affected areas (identified by Ministry of Home Affairs from time to time).

• The funding pattern for the other Boys’ Hostel to State Governments is on 50:50 basis. In case of UTs, the Central Government bears the entire cost of construction of both Boys’ and Girls’ hostels.

• Hostels for Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) for ST Girls and Boys are funded on the same criteria as other hostels.

• Members of Parliament could also provide funds as a substitute of State share from their MPLAD scheme for this purpose. Maintenance of the hostel is the responsibility of the concerned States/UTs.

• The hostels may be for middle, secondary, college or university level education. It has been decided to discontinue the Scheme from 2018-19 and the intervention is to be subsumed under the Scheme Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme (SCA to TSS).

Reference:
5. Transeurasian languages

Context:
By triangulating data from linguistics, archaeology and genetics, a new study by an international team of researchers proposes a 'Farming Hypothesis' for the spread of Transeurasian languages, tracing the origins of Japonic, Koreanic, Tungusic, Mongolic and Turkic to the movements of Neolithic millet farmers from the region of the West Liao River.

Highlights:
● A new paper published in the journal Nature by an international team that includes researchers from Asia, Europe, New Zealand, Russia and the United States provides interdisciplinary support for the farming "Farming Hypothesis" of language dispersal, tracing the Transeurasian languages back to the first farmers moving across Northeast Asia beginning in the Early Neolithic. Using newly sequenced genomes, an extensive archaeological database, and a new dataset of vocabulary concepts for 98 languages, they triangulate the time-depth, location and dispersal routes of ancestral Transeurasian speech communities.
● The evidence from linguistic, archeological and genetic sources indicates that the origins of the Transeurasian languages can be traced back to the beginning of millet cultivation and the early Amur gene pool in the region of the West Liao River. During the Late Neolithic, millet farmers with Amur-related genes spread into contiguous regions across Northeast Asia.
● In the millennia that followed, speakers of the daughter branches of Proto-Transeurasian admixed with Yellow River, western Eurasian and Jomon populations, adding rice agriculture, western Eurasian crops and pastoralist lifeways to the Transeurasian package.
● The linguistic evidence used to triangulate came from a new dataset of more than 3,000 cognate sets representing over 250 concepts in nearly 100 Transeurasian languages. From this, researchers were able to construct a phylogenetic tree which shows the roots of the Proto-Transeurasian family reaching back 9,181 years before the present to millet farmers living in the region of the West Liao River.
● A small core of inherited words related to land cultivation, millets and millet agriculture and other signs of a sedentary lifestyle further support the Farming Hypothesis.
● The team's archaeological results also highlight the West Liao River basin, where communities started farming broomcorn millet roughly 9,000 years ago. Bayesian analysis of an archaeological database of 255 Neolithic and Bronze Age sites, including 269 directly carbon-dated cereals, showed a cluster of related Neolithic cultures in the West Liao basin, from which two branches of millet-farming cultures separate: a Korean Chulmun branch and a branch of cultures covering the Amur, Primorye and Liaodong.
● The current study shows how the triangulation of linguistic, archaeological and genetic methods can increase the credibility and validity of a hypothesis, but the authors are quick to recognize the need for further research.
● More ancient DNA, more etymological research and more archaeobotanical research will further deepen our understanding of human migrations in Neolithic Northeast Asia and untangle the influence of later population movements, of which many were pastoralist in nature.

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

1. Linguistic Anthropology (S.N - 2005)
2. Language & Culture (10 Marks - 2008)

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. Home sapiens. (15 Marks)