ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS DIARY

(AND)

13.11.2021

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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### Note
For convenience, the respective reference links have been dropped at the end of every topic.
1. Tiger Worship

- Tiger worship in India is an age-old phenomenon. The indigenous communities living in the forests across the country share a mystical association with the big cats.
- Their reverence for tigers isn’t a mere mythological superstition or belief, but it comes from the innate co-dependence between the two species.
- The tribal folks depend on the forests for their livelihood—the natural habitat is life to these communities who cannot see themselves apart from the jungles.
- People’s faith in tigers is so compelling that there are various names given to them by their devotees and there are many tiger temples across India.
- There are various philosophies and ideas behind worshipping tigers as a deity. Tiger is not just a wild animal with awe-inspiring appeal and beauty, but it has an enigmatic influence on people’s minds.
- Different tribes from different regions in India worship tigers for their own unique reasons. The most common belief that tribal communities have about tigers is that they are their protectors.
- The Gond tribe of Madhya Pradesh, Garo tribe of Meghalaya, and Tulunadus of Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka regard the tiger as their protector.
- The tribes follow certain traditions and wear certain jewelry to profess their belief—Garos wear necklaces made with tiger claws entrenched in gold or silver for protection, and the Gonds keep the shoulder bone of the tiger with them believing it to bring strength.
- The Irula tribe of Tamil Nadu also believes that tigers protect them from evil spirits. A pastoralist tribe in Maharashtra, known as Dhangars, venerates tigers as “Waghdev or Waghjai” with the notion that they protect their sheep.
- Since tribal communities depend on forests for necessary resources, food, and firewood, they worship tigers and offer sacrificial offerings to them. They believe that tigers are appeased with their adoration and they do not enter their villages to harm them.
- Agriculture being the main occupation of the tribal folks living in the protected areas of the forests, the safety of their cultivation is vital to them.
- Apparently, the tigers protect their crops by keeping the herbivorous animals at bay. The dairy farmers in the forest vicinities also believe that tigers help in keeping the milk thieves from intruding into their area.
- When tribal folks worship different species, they do not primarily intend to conserve them. However, their devotion turns out to be beneficial for the whole ecosystem.
- The philosophy of nature worship in India is evident in our rich biodiversity—we have a huge human and cattle population, even though we barely have 2.5% of the world’s landmass and only 4% of rainwater resources. It is believed that people who are in awe of their flora and fauna safeguard them and do not harm them in any manner.
- The mutual relationship that the tribes share with the forests emerges out of their reverence for the cycles of nature and their sense of accountability for future generations.
- Their customs prescribe that they should never harm nature, waste anything or take more than they need. Hence, most of them work on the belief that you should return to nature what you receive from it. For instance, when they reap honey from high in the trees, Soligas, the tribe in southern Karnataka, take some for themselves and leave some on the ground just as respect to nature and forests.
2. Natural Plant-Derived Compound Reduces Neurotoxicity in Alzheimer’s Brain.

- Emerging evidence indicates that short-chain fatty acids (SCFAs) — metabolites produced by beneficial gut bacteria and the primary source of nutrition for cells in your colon — contribute to brain health.
- The abundance of SCFAs is often reduced in older patients with mild cognitive impairment and Alzheimer’s disease, the most common form of dementia.
- This study is the first to discover that stimulation of the FFAR2 sensing mechanism by these microbial metabolites can be beneficial in protecting brain cells against toxic accumulation of the amyloid-beta (Aβ) protein associated with Alzheimer’s disease.
- Identifying a natural compound alternative to SCFAs to optimally target the FFAR2 receptor on neurons is important, because cells in the gut and other organs consume most of these microbial metabolites before they reach the brain through blood circulation.
- Further experiments in human neuronal cell cultures as well as Caenorhabditis elegans and mouse models of Alzheimer’s disease demonstrated that fenchol significantly reduced excess Aβ accumulation and death of neurons by stimulating FFAR2 signaling, the microbiome sensing mechanism.
- When the scientists more closely examined how fenchol modulates Aβ-induced neurotoxicity, they found that the compound decreased senescent neuronal cells, also known as ‘zombie’ cells, commonly found in brains with Alzheimer’s disease pathology.
- It reduces the formation of half-dead zombie neuronal cells and also increases the degradation of (nonfunctioning) Aβ, so that amyloid protein is cleared from the brain much faster.
- In exploring fenchol as a possible approach for treating or preventing Alzheimer’s pathology, the team will seek answers to several questions.

Reference:
3. Baiga Tribes Exhibition

- According to the Chhattisgarh government, by treating members of the tribe as nothing more than live mannequins, to be stared at and photographed with.
- Recently, the state government organised a departmental exhibition at the Science College in Raipur amid celebrations to commemorate the state’s foundation day.
- In the exhibition, aimed at showcasing the government’s various plans and achievements, the Special Backward Tribes section of the Department of Tribal and Scheduled Castes Development showcased the Baiga tribe by putting up a live display.
- The presentation was meant to highlight the tribe’s style of living, food habits, dance forms and festivals. Instead, the government department made Baiga tribes people sit on display while visitors clicked selfies with them.
- Pointing a finger at the government, Biswas asked whether the government did anything to preserve the tribe’s culture in the villages where they live.
- This culture is on the verge of extinction. Yet the government is merely putting them on display in exhibitions instead of making real efforts to preserve their culture.
- The red saris worn by the Baiga women in the exhibition stall were woven by members of the Panka community. The tribe no longer weaves the fabric but the state government has done nothing to restore or preserve the tradition.
- The Baiga tribals have suffered the agony of displacement over decades, while their areas known as Baiga Chak are devoid of basic facilities such as roads, drinking water and electricity.

Reference:
https://thewire.in/rights/chhattisgarh-governments-live-exhibition-of-baiga-tribals-draws-criticism

4. Scheme of Ashram Schools in Tribal Sub-Plan Area

- The objective of the scheme is to provide residential schools for STs in an environment conducive to learning to increase the literacy rate among the tribal students and to bring them at par with other populations of the country.
- The scheme has been revised with effect from the financial year 2008-09.
Under the revised scheme, State Governments are eligible for 100% central share for construction of all Girls’ Ashram Schools and also for construction of Boys’ Ashram Schools in naxal affected areas (identified by Ministry of Home Affairs from time to time).

The funding pattern for the other Boys’ Ashram Schools is on a 50:50 basis, while cent percent assistance is given to UTs for construction of both Girls and Boys’ Ashram Schools.

The scheme covers primary, middle, secondary and senior secondary levels of 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. 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’ hostels and also for construction of Boys’ hostels in naxal affected areas (identified by the Ministry of Home Affairs from time to time).
- The funding pattern for the other Boys’ Hostel to State Governments is on a 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:

UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:

1. Tribes & Welfare Schemes (S.N. - 2011)
2. Genetic Technology (L.Q. - 2000)

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. Tribal Sub plan approach (15 Mark)