ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS DIARY

(AND)

15.11.2021

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.
# INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>SYLLABUS</th>
<th>PAGE NO.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Janjatiya Gaurav Divas</td>
<td>PAPER II, 6, 7;</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why did modern humans take so long to settle in Europe?</td>
<td>PAPER I, 1;</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient Chaco Canyon</td>
<td>PAPER I, 1.8; PAPER II, 1;</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food for Tribal Children</td>
<td>PAPER II, 7;</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal Murals</td>
<td>PAPER I, 2; PAPER II, 6;</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**UPSC ANTHROPOLOGY PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS**..................................................08

**PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PEER REVIEW**.............................................................08

*Note - For convenience, the respective reference links have been dropped at the end of every topic.*
1. Janjatiya Gaurav Divas

Context:
As a part of the year-long commemoration of 75 years of Independence, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the declaration of November 15 as “Janjatiya Gaurav Divas” to remember the contributions of tribal freedom fighters.

Highlights:
- Announcing the decision, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said the date was chosen as it was the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda, a tribal freedom fighter revered as “bhagwan” by tribal communities.
- India’s freedom struggle was strengthened by several movements by tribal communities such as Santhals, Tamars, Kols, Bhils, Khasis and Mizos to name a few. The revolutionary movements and struggles organised by the tribal communities were marked by their immense courage and supreme sacrifice. However, the public at large is not much aware about these tribal heroes.
- In his Independence Day speech in 2016, Mr. Modi announced the setting up of 10 such tribal museums in the country.
- Mr. Modi is scheduled to address a BJP tribal outreach event in Bhopal on November 15, which will mark Birsa Munda’s birth anniversary, celebrate tribal art and culture and is likely to include announcements of welfare measures for tribal communities.
- The government has declared November 15 as Janajatiya Gaurav Divas, to honour the contribution of the tribal community to the nation. It also happens to be the birth anniversary of the great tribal leader, Birsa Munda, whose role in the freedom struggle changed the course of modern India’s history. He mobilised the tribal community against the British, forcing them to introduce laws protecting the land rights of tribals.
- India is unique in that it has more than 700 tribal communities. These communities have enriched the country’s cultural heritage, through their exquisite art and craft.
- They have played a leading role in the promotion, protection and conservation of the environment through their traditional practices; with their vast repository of traditional knowledge, they have been the torch-bearers of sustainable development. Recognising the importance of tribals and their role in nation-building, the Constitution made special provisions for the protection of tribal culture and the development of Scheduled Tribes.
- The entire forest ecosystem, including water bodies, is the mainstay of the tribal economy. The British disrupted this and created a class of Zamindars (landlords) and gave them rights...
over land in tribal territories. This reduced the tribals to mere tenants in their own lands. This exploitation fuelled the resentment which led to violent eruptions in the tribal revolutionary movements.

Reference:

2. Why did modern humans take so long to settle in Europe?

- Modern humans made several failed attempts to settle in Europe before eventually taking over the continent. This is the stark conclusion of scientists who have been studying the course of Homo sapiens’s exodus from Africa tens of thousands of years ago.
- Researchers have recently pinpointed sites in Bulgaria, Romania and the Czech Republic where our ancestors’ remains have been dated as being between 40,000 to 50,000 years old. However, bone analyses have produced genetic profiles that have no match among modern Europeans.
- These early settlements appear to have been created by groups of early modern humans who did not survive to pass on their genes.
- The crucial point is that the demise of these early modern human settlers meant Neanderthals still occupied Europe for a further few thousand years before Homo sapiens eventually took over the continent.
- Modern humans first appeared in Africa around 200,000 years ago and slowly evolved across the continent before moving into western Asia around 60,000 years ago.
- Neanderthals in Europe were one of the last hominin species to succumb, dying out around 39,000 years ago.
- However, recent studies – outlined at a meeting of the European Society for the study of Human Evolution earlier this year – have shown that this takeover by Homo sapiens was not straightforward. On several occasions, groups of early settlers perished as they moved into the continent.
- The discovery of these lost outposts of modern human expansion suggests that Homo sapiens dispersed into Europe in pulses, and raises critical questions for scientists. In particular, why did modern humans’ later forays into Europe succeed when earlier ones failed? The impact of this success on our world has been significant, after all. Some scientists argue that environmental factors played a key role in the Neanderthals’ demise.
- Genetic studies have made it clear that interbreeding between Homo sapiens and Neanderthals occurred many times. As a result, men and women of non-African origin today have genomes that are around 2% Neanderthal. That figure would have been much higher 40,000 years ago.
- As numbers of Homo sapiens grew and we spread ever wider across Europe, it is quite possible that we ‘absorbed’ some of the other species – in particular, the Neanderthals – out of existence.
- If prime-age Neanderthals were entering the modern human breeding pool, whether voluntarily or otherwise, those individuals were no longer contributing to the survival of their own species. The end result would have been straightforward extinction for the Neanderthals – although, as a species, they still survive in the DNA of men and women today.
As numbers of Homo sapiens grew and we spread ever wider across Europe, it is quite possible that we ‘absorbed’ some of the other species – in particular, the Neanderthals – out of existence.

If prime-age Neanderthals were entering the modern human breeding pool, whether voluntarily or otherwise, those individuals were no longer contributing to the survival of their own species.

The end result would have been straightforward extinction for the Neanderthals – although, as a species, they still survive in the DNA of men and women today.

Reference:

3. Ancient Chaco Canyon

Context:
New research reveals ancestral pueblos in ancient Chaco Canyon interacted with local ecosystems to thrive for more than a millennium, but unsustainable deforestation practices likely contributed to destabilizing environmental impact prior to their final exodus.

Highlights:

- The ancestral pueblos interacted with the local ecosystem in ways that helped them adapt and thrive for over a millennium.
- Many active researchers, however, align with the idea that Chaco Canyon was too arid to sustain day-to-day living, arguing that the land and architectural structures were not permanent dwellings.
- Basically, they contend that the massive stone and timber infrastructure at Chaco Canyon, built over many centuries, was used only as a periodic ceremonial center and storage facility.
- But it was not that simple and our evidence contradicts many of the currently proposed theories about the occupation of Chaco Canyon in ancient times.
- Our findings add new data that reveal measurable changes in the juniper pinyon woodlands that occurred before 600 B.C. when the food procurement system transitioned from hunting and gathering to agricultural production.
- The shift in ancestral pueblos food resource management enhanced their ability to sustain larger populations in a harsh, barren landscape for several centuries during the pre-Columbian era.
But with their landscape modifications came serious environmental ramifications. At the cost of major reduction of tree density in the local woodlands, their activities ultimately contributed to a destabilizing environmental impact prior to their final exodus.

Chaco Canyon, a 34,000-acre center of social complexity located in the southwestern region of the U.S., flourished during the height of the Chaco culture between (800 to 1140 A.D.), a period Lentz refers to as the Bonito phase.

During the cultural flourishment, the hierarchical society was known for elaborate ceremonial activities, the maintenance of long-distance trade routes and impressive architectural complexes, including more than a dozen immense structures that Lentz and archaeologists refer to as "great houses." One of the houses, known today as "Pueblo Bonito," may have had over 600 rooms, including crypts that housed more than 100 burials.

Against this backdrop, archaeologists generally agree that Chaco Canyon functioned as a remote trade center and ceremonial site for the Chaco culture. Until now, however, Lentz says studies lacked evidence to support human management of the canyon's precarious environment for daily living.

Using lidar aerial mapping technology and the analysis of various ancient substances including carbon isotopes, pollen content, macro botanical remains and chemical composition of soils, the research team evaluated alternative hypotheses relating to environmental impacts by the ancestral puebloans.

It became clear to the researchers that as ancient puebloans tussled with the unpredictable environment, they kept their society thriving for more than 1,000 years through agriculture by growing a variety of crops such as corn, beans and squash in the canyon while simultaneously harnessing local pinyon and juniper tree woodlands for architectural needs, food resources and firewood for cooking.

The researchers found a gradual degradation of the local woodlands beginning around 600 B.C., much earlier than previously thought, Lentz says. In spite of the woodland clearance, the people living in the canyon flourished for nearly a millennium through indigenous agricultural practices while using water irrigation methods from the nearby Chaco, Escavada and Fajada Wash tributaries.

Critical evidence for utilizing the local juniper trees for firewood to cook locally cultivated corn, beans and squash was especially important, says Lentz. The pinyon pine nuts provided a valuable source of food, so the Chacoans protected the pinyon trees from over-harvesting for firewood. But the juniper trees, an excellent source of fuel, were not spared from this extensive harvesting.

We found a reduction of the pinyon-juniper woodlands, with a loss of mostly juniper trees, happened at about the same time there was an introduction of agriculture into the canyon along with the technology for making pottery.

Through radiocarbon dating from previous studies, we know that the woodlands were established and flourishing in that area as far back as 5,000 years ago, centuries before the puebloans began the use of agriculture.

With Chaco Canyon now declared a national park and UNESCO World Heritage site, visitors to Chaco Culture National Historical Park in New Mexico can marvel at the remains of 12 great houses and more than 4,000 areas of archaeological interest in the rocky landscape. The
structures and ruins are protected from destruction and development and given national monument designation by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1907.

Reference:
https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2021/10/211027150700.htm

4. Food for Tribal Children
● To ensure that tribal children eat nutritious food, the Ranni block panchayat will provide cooked food to adivasi kids at their doorsteps. KS Gopi, President, Block Panchayat, said, under the project, food will be given to tribal children in Laha, Chalakkayam and Pampa regions.
● There are at least 30 tribal hamlets in these places. The tribal extension officer will execute the project.
● The project will be executed in association with Perunad grama panchayat.
● The block panchayat has set aside Rs 10 lakh for this purpose. Perunad panchayat will donate Rs 3 lakh.
● The project will be implemented under the 'Subhiksha Keralam-Sundara Balyam' scheme.
● More than 100 tribal families (Malampandaram tribe) are residing in Laha and Manathodu of Perunad panchayat. There are nine grama panchayats under the Ranni block panchayat.
● Tribal populations can be mainly seen in Seethathodu, Perunad and Vechoochira gram panchayats. The block panchayat plans to extend the project to more areas in phases.

Reference:

5. Tribal Murals
● A small tribal village, located just about nine kilometre away from Jainoor mandal headquarters, is the new hot topic in Komaram Bheem-Asifabad district.
● Spread over a mere 9.33 sq km, Marlavai has been attracting people from all across the erstwhile district for the past few months, thanks to the unparalleled profusion of murals painted by local residents on the walls of various houses.
● Even elected representatives from various parts of the district are making a beeline to the hamlet to see the intricate wall paintings that highlight the culture and tradition of tribals.
● While the local water tank has a beautiful mural of a thickly grown tree with roots that delve into the heart of the village which has been depicted as a place where both aquatic and terrestrial animals live in harmony, the walls of various houses have been embellished with paintings that portray the relationship between tribals and the nature.
● Apart from this, the local residents have also arranged eco-friendly chairs made from bamboo at various points in the village. This initiative has, according to the local officials, helped scores of tribals get employment.

● Meanwhile, on learning about the initiatives of these tribals, a team of the district administration’s architecture wing visited Malavai and inspected the area to develop it further. Now, the local residents, officials and elected representatives are waiting to get assistance from the district administration to give their tiny village a proper facelift.

Reference:
https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/telangana/2021/nov/14/walls-that-talk-2383374.html

---

UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:

1. Anthropology & Archaeology 
   (10 Marks - 2015)

2. Homo Erectus 
   (S.N. - 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 Art and mechanisms to preserve and promote. 
   (20 Marks)