ANTHROPOLOGY NEWS DIARY

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. Genome History & Evolution

- A new study from Europe has identified 755 traits that have changed in the past 2-3,000 years of human evolution. These traits are linked with things like pigmentation, nutritional intake, and several common diseases or disorders.
- We sometimes tend to think of humans as the pinnacle of evolution, the tip of the biological pyramid. Not only does that show just how self-centered we humans can be, but it’s not really correct either. Even if it were to be the case, it’s not like evolution has stopped — it’s happening right as you’re reading this.
- Natural selection (the process through which individuals better adapted to an environment are more likely to reproduce) isn’t just happening in the animal world, it’s happening for humans too. Granted, the pressures that drive this can be quite different, but the process is taking place nonetheless — and it’s been happening since the dawn of human history.
- The genetic architecture of present-day humans is shaped by selection pressures in our history. Understanding the patterns of natural selection in humans can provide valuable insights into the mechanisms of biological processes, the origin of human psychological characteristics and key anthropological events.
- The researchers analyzed 870 polygenic traits — traits whose phenotype (the set of observable characteristics or traits of an organism) is influenced by more than one gene, comparing differences between the old and the new genetic groups.
- They found that 88% of these traits (755) underwent significant change in the past 2-3 thousand years. Some of these findings were linked to pigmentation, body size, and nutritional intake.
- One of the most interesting results was the finding that pigmentation, body measurement, and dietary traits were continuously under intense selection pressure across various human development timescales.
- However, researchers caution that their findings are limited exclusively to European data, and it’s not clear if there is a cause-effect between the associations between genetic variants and phenotype.

Reference:
https://www.zmescience.com/medicine/genetic/evolving-right-now-18112021/

2. Odisha & Mother Tongue of Tribals

- The new National Education Policy lays emphasis on imparting teaching in the mother tongue in primary classes. But when the language-base of Odisha’s adivasi communities is as diverse as 21 spoken languages further divided into 74 dialects, the task appears to be quite onerous.
- However, Odisha’s decade-long experiment in multilingual education may come in handy to take up the challenge.
- The ST and SC Development Department of the State government has already started working on a project called ‘Samhati’ to address the language issues faced by tribal students in early grades or elementary classes. The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI) along with the Academy of Tribal Language and Culture (ATLC), Bhubaneswar are implementing the project.
- The department manages 1,732 residential educational institutions across the State. More than 4.5 lakh tribal and Scheduled Caste students from primary to secondary level with free lodging, 85 boarding facilities are managed by the department. Now under Samhati, the
department plans to cover approximately 2.5 lakh students in 1,450 primary schools in the State.

- In addition, the School and Mass Education department also manages about 1,500 schools in 17 tribal dominated districts where students are taught in tribal languages. As many as 3,328 teachers and 222 language teachers are in place to impart teaching in tribal languages.
- Of the 21 languages, Santhali — the only language which has been included in the eighth schedule of the Constitution — is taught in its own ol chiki script while the rest of tribal languages have Odia scripts.
- According to the Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA), more than 302 textbooks and 2,500 supplementary reading materials including story books and pictures charts in 21 tribal languages have been developed.
- Odisha is home to 62 different tribal communities including 13 particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs), making it the State with the most diverse indigenous communities in the country.
- Since the ST and SC department runs residential schools, it enrolls students from all tribal communities in every school. These students are a multilingual group unlike mono-lingual groups in regular schools. So it is not practically possible to recruit teachers for each tribal language in a single school.
- To address this critical issue, the Odisha government can ask teachers to achieve additional tribal language proficiency during their training period itself, said researchers.
- Now, under Samhati, it has been decided that all teachers of primary level would be provided functional knowledge of tribal languages and ways of communicating with tribal students. In the first phase, 1,000 teachers would be asked to obtain these language skills.
- Now, efforts are being made to develop textbooks in tribal languages in sync with the syllabus of State boards, government textbook norms and National Education Policy.
- The SCSTRTI has proposed to set up an integrated language laboratory for carrying out research and address practical issues that may come up in implementing mother tongue-based education.

Reference:

3. Horticulture Awareness Camp

- An awareness/training camp was organized at Aloosa, a remote tribal area of Bandipora by the Department of Horticulture.
- This was the 3rd such camp organized by the Department to reach out to the tribal population.
- Director General (DG) Horticulture Kashmir, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat was the Chief Guest at the function.
- Block Development Chairperson Aloosa along with other PRIs were present on the occasion, besides a large number of progressive orchardists, particularly those belonging to Tribal population, attended at the camp.
- Besides the Department of Horticulture and other line Departments viz. Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Sheep Husbandry, Lead Bank & Employment participated in the camp.
The main purpose of the camp was to raise awareness among the tribal and far-flung population about the different departmental Schemes.

During the camp the representatives of line departments highlighted their achievements and appraised the participants about the different developmental schemes/initiatives taken by UT Government for the betterment of Tribal Community.

Addressing the gathering, the DG elaborated in detail about the incentives available under the various central and UT sponsored schemes of the department viz. MIDH, PMDP, SMAM, PMKSY, CAPEX etc., and urged the tribal farmers to come forward and avail the benefits under these schemes.

Reference:  

4. Varnashrama-dharma

According to Hindu texts, Varnashrama-dharma is not a man-made system but refers to natural classifications that appear to various degrees in all human societies. Individuals have different innate tendencies for work and exhibit a variety of personal qualities.

There are also natural phases in life, when it is easier and more rewarding to perform certain activities. Hinduism teaches that individual’s best realise their potential by taking into account such natural arrangements, and that society should be structured and organised accordingly.

Each varna and ashram has its own specified dharma. What may be desirable for one section of society may be degrading for another. For example, absolute non-violence, which includes refraining from animal sacrifice, is essential for the priestly class but considered wholly unworthy of a kshatriya (warrior).

Generating wealth and producing children are essential for householders, but intimate contact with money and women is spiritually suicidal for the renunciate. Underlying all these apparent differences is the common goal of advancing in spiritual life based on sanatana-dharma. Without the spiritual equality and sense of service inherent in sanatana dharma, varnashrama-dharma tends to degrade into the rigid and exploitative caste system.

Useful Analogy
The social body
The social body and its components are likened to the human form.

![Image]
● Society is compared to a body with the *brahmanas* as the head, *kshatriyas* as the arms, *vaishyas* as the belly (or thighs) and the *shudras* as the legs.

● Social functions are determined according to this analogy. For example, the *brahmanas* are the eyes and mouth of society. They provide a spiritual vision for society and teach people accordingly. Just as the arms are raised to defend the body, the *kshatriya*’s main duty is to protect society. The *vaishya*’s main duty is material nourishment, and the *shudra* supports all other sections of society.

● They are sometimes related to the same metaphor, with the successive stages of student life, household life, retirement and renunciation represented by the legs, belly, arms and head respectively.

*Reference:*

[https://iskconeducationalservices.org/HoH/concepts/key-concepts/varnashrama-dharma/](https://iskconeducationalservices.org/HoH/concepts/key-concepts/varnashrama-dharma/)

5. Turner Syndrome

● Turner syndrome is a genetic disorder affecting girls and women. The cause of Turner syndrome is a completely or partially missing X chromosome.

● Turner syndrome symptoms include short stature and lack of breast development and periods. Treatment for Turner syndrome may include hormone therapy.

● Turner syndrome (TS), sometimes referred to as congenital ovarian hypoplasia syndrome, is a genetic disorder. It is the most common sex chromosomal abnormality affecting girls and women. More specifically, it’s a problem with one of the two X chromosomes -- the thread-like structures inside cells that are made of DNA.

● We get our DNA from our parents and it is the DNA that contains the specific instructions that make each living creature unique!

● Turner syndrome often causes short stature, typically noticeable by age 5. It usually doesn’t affect intelligence but can lead to developmental delays especially with calculations and memory. Heart problems are common, too. While TS can somewhat shorten life expectancy, screening for and treating known related conditions helps protect health.

● Turner syndrome is a genetic disorder, but it’s usually not inherited, except in rare cases. An inherited genetic condition means that a parent (or both parents) passed down a mutated, or changed, gene. In Turner syndrome, the chromosome change happens randomly before birth.

*Reference:*

[https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/15200-turner-syndrome](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/15200-turner-syndrome)
UPSC Previous year questions based on today’s concept:

1. Direction of Tribal Change  
   (S.N. - 1993)

2. Discuss the contemporary trends in evolutionary studies  
   (L.Q. - 1992)

**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. Turner Syndrome  
   (10 marks)