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1. Consider the following statements

- 1) Nearly 95% production of the world's gherkin requirement is grown in India.
- 2) Recently, India has emerged as the largest exporter of gherkins in the world.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

2. Consider the following statements about Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar award

- 1) It is a scheme of awards instituted by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.
- 2) It is a National Award, given for institutions involved in rendering distinguished service for the cause of elderly persons.

Which of the statements given above is/ are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

3. With reference to the Right to Information (Amendment) Act, 2019, consider the following statements.

1. The amendment sets the term of the central Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners at five years.
2. According to the amendment, the salaries, allowances and other terms of service of the Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners shall be equivalent to that of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners respectively.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

4. Consider the following statements.

1. Dark matter does not interact with the electromagnetic force.
2. Dark matter accounts for roughly 68 percent of the universe's total mass and energy.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

5. The Chagos Islands is a disputed territory between

- a) China and Philippines
- b) China and Japan
- c) Mauritius and the United Kingdom
- d) Kenya and Somalia

1)Answer: B

Explanation

What's in the news?

- **Statement 2 is correct:** India has emerged as the largest exporter of gherkins in the world. India has exported cucumber and gherkins to the tune of 1,23,846 Metric Tonnes with a value of USD 114 million during April-October, 2021.
- India has crossed the USD 200 million mark of export of agricultural processed product, - pickling cucumber, which is globally referred as gherkins or cornichons, in the last financial year.
- In 2020-21, India had shipped 2,23,515 Metric Tonnes of cucumber and gherkins with a value of USD 223 million.
- Gherkins are exported under two categories -- cucumbers and gherkins, which are prepared and preserved by vinegar or acetic acid and cucumbers and gherkins, which are provisionally preserved.
- Gherkin cultivation, processing and exports started in India during the early 1990s with a modest beginning in Karnataka and later extended to the neighbouring states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Nearly 15% production of the world's gherkin requirement is grown in India.
- Apart from its export potential, the gherkin industry plays a key role in the creation of rural employment. In India, cultivation of gherkins is carried out under contract farming by around 90,000 small and marginal farmers with an annual production area of 65,000 acres.

2)Answer: D

Explanation

What's in the news?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to interact with Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar awardees.
- **Both the statements are incorrect:** The Government has been conferring the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar award to **children for their exceptional achievement in six categories.**
- These are **Innovation, Social Service, Scholastic, Sports, Art and Culture and Bravery.**
- The awards are conferred on children **between the age of 5 to 18 years.**

3) Answer: D

Explanation

About RTI Act, 2005

- Under the Right to Information Act, 2005, **Public Authorities** are required to make disclosures on various aspects of their structure and functioning.
- This includes: (i) disclosure on their organisation, functions, and structure, (ii) powers and duties of its officers and employees, and (iii) financial information.
- The intent of such *suo moto* disclosures is that the public should need minimum recourse through the Act to obtain such information. If such information is not made available, citizens have the right to request for it from the Authorities.
- This may include information in the **form of documents, files, or electronic records** under the control of the Public Authority. The intent behind the enactment of the Act is to **promote transparency and accountability** in the working of Public Authorities.

Who is included in the ambit of 'Public Authorities'?

- The RTI Act defines "public authorities" in **Section 2(h).**
- A "public authority" means any authority or body or institution of self- government established or constituted
 - by or under the Constitution;
 - by any other law made by Parliament;
 - by any other law made by State Legislature;
 - by notification issued or order made by the appropriate Government, and includes any –
 - body owned, controlled or substantially financed;
 - Non-Government organization substantially financed, directly or indirectly by funds provided by the appropriate Government.

Section 8 of the RTI

- This provides for **exemption from disclosure of information** that are more valid in reasons
 - Which would affect the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security, strategic, scientific or economic interests of the State;

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- Which has been expressly forbidden to be published by any court of law or tribunal;
- Which would cause a breach of privilege of Parliament or the State Legislature;
- Information including commercial confidence, trade secrets or intellectual property;
- Information received in confidence from foreign government;
- Information which would endanger the life or physical safety of any person; etc.

How is the right to information enforced under the Act?

- The Act has established a **three tier structure** for enforcing the right to information guaranteed under the Act.
- The first request for information goes to the **Central/State Assistant Public Information Officer** and **Central/State Public Information Officer**, designated by the Public Authorities. These Officers are required to provide information to an RTI applicant **within 30 days** of the request.
- Appeals from their decisions go to an **Appellate Authority**.
- Appeals against the order of the Appellate Authority go to the **State Information Commission or the Central Information Commission**. These Information Commissions consist of a **Chief Information Commissioner, and up to 10 Information Commissioners**.

Right to Information (Amendment) Act, 2019

- The Act amended Sections 13 and 16 of the RTI Act, 2005.
- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Section 13 of the original Act sets the term of the central Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners at **five years** (or until the **age of 65**, whichever is earlier). The amendment changed that the appointment will be for such term as may be **prescribed by the Central Government**. In 2019, the Central Government reduced the tenure of central and state information commissioners from five to three years under the amendment act.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** According to the amendment act, the salaries, allowances and other terms of service of the Chief Information Commissioner and Information Commissioners **shall be such as may be prescribed by the Central Government**. Previously it was equivalent to that of the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners respectively.
- The government said that the amendment was required because the election commission is a Constitutional body while the information commission, formed under the Right to Information Act, is a **statutory one**.

4) Answer: A

Explanation

- Dark Matter refers to the hypothetical matter that scientists have not been able to locate in the universe - either through telescopes or using any other technological method.
- Dark matter works like an **attractive force** — a kind of cosmic cement that holds our universe together. This is because dark matter does interact with gravity, but it doesn't reflect, absorb or emit light.

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- **Statement 1 is correct:** Unlike normal matter, **dark matter does not interact with the electromagnetic force**. As a result, it **does not absorb, reflect or emit light**, making it extremely hard to spot.
- In fact, researchers have been able to infer the existence of dark matter only from the gravitational effect it seems to have on visible matter.
- In the 1930s, astronomer **Fritz Zwicky** speculated the presence of “dark matter” for the first time.

Dark energy

- Dark energy is a **repulsive force** — a sort of anti-gravity — hypothesised to be responsible for the accelerated expansion of the Universe.
- Like Dark Matter, Dark Energy is **not directly observed**, but rather inferred from observations of gravitational interactions between astronomical objects.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Dark energy is the far more dominant force of the two, accounting for roughly **68 percent** of the universe’s total mass and energy. **Dark matter makes up 27 percent**. And the rest — a measly 5 percent — is all the regular matter we see and interact with every day.
- Current hypotheses propose dark energy might emerge from the bubbling of empty space, a small effect that is also widespread, making it powerful enough to drag apart clusters of galaxies without ripping them apart from within.

5) Answer: C

Explanation:

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What is the Chagos Islands dispute about?



- Chagos Islands is a **disputed territory between Mauritius and the United Kingdom.**

