

Q 3. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given at the end. (20)

Civil society refers to all of the places where individuals gather together to have conversation, pursue common interests and, occasionally, try to influence public opinion or public policy. In many respects, civil society is where people spend their time when they are not at work or at home. For example, a group of people gather at a local park every Thursday afternoon for a game of football. Most of them arrive well before the game begins and stay for some time after it ends. Some of them go out

game begins and any for some time after it ends. Some of them go out for dinner or a drink after the game. In the course of their meetings they talk about a wide range of topics, including football but also extending, to include issues such as work, family, relationships, community events, racial issues and politics. This kind of solidarity can be found in a variety of other places in civil society – such as sports clubs, bowling leagues, reading groups and social movements – where individuals get together to associate on the basis of some shared interest fostering more effective forms of citizenship. Even though people may come together on the basis of an interest they all





on the basis of an interest they all share in common, they eventually have to develop productive strategies for dealing with conflicts and differences that emerge within the association. Team mates in a bowling league discover, on certain issues, significant differences of opinion. And yet, because they value the association and look forward to participating in its activities, they do not respond to these differences by exiting the scene. Instead, they search for the ways of interacting that will not threaten the solidarity of the group. In the process, they learn to appreciate and to tolerate social differences, a valuable skill to have in an increasingly multicultural nation. They also develop a general

... of social trust and mutual





nation. They also develop a general sense of social trust and mutual obligation, which makes society function more efficiently (this is what political scientists and sociologists are talking about when they refer to the importance of social capital). Gathering together in an association, people begin to think about their shared private interest as a collective public interest, and they try to make sure that this public interest is safe and secured. For example, the group that gets together for a weekly football game begins to talk about the park as an important community resource; if feel that the park is being mistreated or mismanaged, will organize a 'save





the park is being mistreated or
mismanaged, will organize a 'save
the park' campaign to try to
influence their local politicians and
the other residents of the
community. Recently, there has
been growing concern that civil
society is weaker than it used to be,
because people are losing interest
in joining associations. As citizens
become increasingly disconnected
from voluntary associations, they
will experience less trust and less
social connection, and as a result
political institutions will function
less efficiently. However, some
scholars opine that many people
are simply choosing to participate
in different kinds of associations
with fewer face-to-face meetings
but supplemented with 'virtual'
interactions facilitated by





but supplemented with virtual interactions facilitated by resources.

Questions: (4 marks each)

- 1 How does the author characterize the concept of civil society?
- 2 Why does civil society strive towards better socialization drive by tolerance?
- 3 What do you understand by the term 'Social Capital' used in this passage?
- 4 Why does a civil society assume the role of a public stake holder?
- 5 What impact is feared by the weakening state of civil society?

Q1. How does the author characterize the concept of civil society?

Ans. According to the author, civil society includes any space where people gather for a common interests, exchange of communication or group discussions. It may be a public place, a restaurant, a park or a stadium.

2. Why does civil society strives towards better socialization drive by tolerance?

Ans. In civil society, individuals are united due to a common cause or shared interest, despite of conflicts they focus on working together as a team. They become more considerate about their interactions, ~~and~~ to add to appreciate their team mates.

Q3. What do you understand by the term "social capital" used in this passage?

Ans. When a group of individuals work together for a common goal in an efficient way, it constitutes social capital. It is a situation where individuals neglect personal differences and develop understanding among themselves.

Q4. Why does a civil society assume the role of a public stake holder?

Ans. Civil society is an association of individuals that gather for common interests or public interests. They work together for security of their public interest through various campaigns to influence politicians and community.

Q5. What impact is feared by the weakening state of civil society?

Ans. There is a growing concern ^{about} that ~~there is~~ decline in number of people to join for a social cause, due to trust deficit and low social interaction. Though few scholars argue that people prefer virtual meetings over face-to-face interactions.