

Comprehension 1: CSS 2022

Q: Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow: (20)

Civil society refers to all of the places where individuals gather together to have conversations, peruse '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 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 works, 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 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 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 for 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 function less efficiently. However, some scholars opine that many people are simply choosing to participate in different kinds of association with fewer face-to-face meetings but supplemented with 'virtual' interactions facilitated by resources.

Questions:

(4 Marks Each)

1. How does the author characterize the concepts of civil society?
2. Why does civil society strive towards better socialization drives 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?

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Ans 1 = The author characterizes the concepts of civil society by taking some examples. According to the author, the place where people spend time other than working hours and discuss different social and other issues is termed as civil society. Civil society plays a crucial role in making the public opinion. As during a football match, people discuss all other issues while enjoying the match.

Ans 2 = The civil society strives towards better socialization driven by tolerance because tolerance is an important and practical skill that is enhanced in multicultural nations. Moreover, tolerance strengthens the group or culture. The practical example is the ^{importance} level of tolerance in football teams that consolidates the team and leads to winning the match.

Ans 3 = Social capital means social understanding and mutual commitment that is enhanced in the civil society through tolerance.

Ans 4 = A civil society assumes the role of a public stakeholder because when many people meet and discuss social issues, they basically protect the collective public interests. For common interests, they approach the representative and put their demands in front of it. In this way, civil society plays a role of public stakeholder.

Ans 5 = The impact that is feared by the weakening state of civil society is that, there is less people participation in voluntary gathering which leads to weaken the political institutions. The government face a lot of difficulties due to lack of people participation.