

Comprehension 1: CSS 2022

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 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 resources.

(4 Marks Each)

Question:

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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Date: 01.10.2024

(1)

According to the author, the civil society is a group of people that gather at a place and talk about things of common interest. That can be either sports, politics, favourite place etc. That civil society will have a huge impact on the community where people can learn to appreciate differences and develop a sense of social trust. For example a group of people gather every sunday on a playground to play cricket and discuss many ideas and topics. After some time they begin to see people living nearby have started littering the

ground. They can organize a "do not litter the playground" campaign to aware people about the damage they will do to the playground.

(2)

When people from different places, belonging to different cultural values gather at a place to discuss their shared culture, values and differences. They come to know about various aspects about certain ideas and look forward for many more because they are open to participate and value association.

For example, a group of football players can have

conflicts among them, and at that time on certain issues they will have significant differences but eventually they will look for a way to resolve this conflict because everybody wants to stay in the team rather leave on certain differences. That's where they learn to tolerate social differences which is a valuable skill to live in a multicultural society.

(3)

The term "Social Capital" in the passage refers to a society where there is mutual obligation, a sense of trust, tolerating social differences basically

a multicultural society which later can be seen as a multicultural sonation. As in a society or a nation there lives people having different cultural values, the aim of social capital is to have a society accepting positive skills and tolerating differences.

(4)

The civil society assumes the role of a public stakeholder because gathering in an association, people think their personal interests as public interests and as they guard their personal values they protect the public values as well. For

example, back in the 19th century in France a boy lost his house to a bank, the bank auctioned the house but there were 200 people nobody said a word at the auction as for the sake of the boy because he was affiliated with his house and wanted it back from the bank. The story shows how a civil society's role is beneficial in a society's well being.

(5)

In a society where the civil society is weakened it will have the following impacts, people will not associate with each other, they will not care about each

Day: _____

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Other's well being, social interest will be gone, greed and selfishness will be promoted people will be disconnected from each other, less trust which will lead to political institutions ineffectiveness. Weakened civil society ~~can~~ be is harmful for a society's wellbeing.

