

VIDESH SEWA



Sushma Swaraj Institute
of Foreign Service

भारत विदेश सेवा केंद्र
Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India



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Editor's Desk



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सुषमा स्वराज विदेश सेवा संस्थान
विदेश मंत्रालय

Dean
Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service
Ministry of External Affairs

The Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) witnessed a change of guard early in the month of September 2021. Amb. J.S. Mukul completed his four-year term and relinquished charge as the Dean of SSIFS on 12 September 2021. I assumed charge as the Dean on 14 September 2021 in addition to my charge as Additional Secretary (Administration) in the Ministry of External Affairs. It is a great pleasure to head the Institute where I trained as an Officer Trainee nearly three decades ago.

With the easing of COVID-19 situation in the country, the highlight of this quarter was a return to the on-campus training programmes both for the Indian officers/officials and foreign diplomats. SSIFS conducted courses for the first time for officers from the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India in view of their growing involvement in the auditing of international organizations and for the officers from the Haryana Institute of Public Administration (HIPA) in the spirit of paradiplomacy conducted by them. The Mid-Career Training Programme (MCTP)-I for Officers of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) with about a decade's service was held virtually at Headquarters and Missions/Posts abroad. A four-week probation-related Training Programme for Under Secretary level officers was organized online during this period to implement the new format for their induction into Group 'A' of the IFS. Defence Attachés who have been posted to Missions/Posts abroad, underwent a week-long training programme at SSIFS during this period.

The 8th Special Course for Diplomats from Afghanistan in July 2021 marked the return to the physical format for diplomats travelling from overseas. Barring an online Special Course for Diplomats from Sierra Leone in June 2021, all the other courses were conducted offline. The first-ever Special Course for diplomats from six countries of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) was held in September 2021. The Familiarization Programmes for Heads of Foreign Diplomatic Missions and Foreign Resident Diplomats in New Delhi were well received. We were happy to welcome Hon'ble MoS for External Affairs & Education Shri Rajkumar Ranjan Singh to SSIFS. He graced the Valedictory Function for Foreign Heads of Missions and interacted with the Ambassadors and High Commissioners. In the coming months, SSIFS intends to organize courses which were postponed due to the pandemic.

SSIFS' *Videsh Sewa* now enters its second decade with this eleventh edition! We will continue to offer a snapshot of our activities as we contribute towards building capacity in diplomacy in the post-pandemic world!

[Arun Kumar Chatterjee]

New Delhi
October 2021

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Highlights

Training for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Officers

6th edition of Mid-Career Training Programme-I

SSIFS conducted the 6th edition of the Mid-Career Training Programme (MCTP)-I from 5-16 July 2021 in the virtual mode. 36 IFS officers from Headquarters as well as our Missions and Posts abroad participated in the training programme which included modules covering the entire gamut of foreign and domestic policy and also other important topics like cyber security, role of new technology in foreign policy, cultural diplomacy, Diaspora matters and health diplomacy. MCTP-I is a mandatory training programme for IFS officers of 8-12 years experience and is conducted every year.



Special Training Module for officers of Haryana State Government

A Special Training Programme on Foreign Policy for officers of Haryana State was conducted on 23 July 2021 in association with the Haryana Institute of Public Administration (HIPA). 25 officers from the Haryana State

Government participated in the training programme. This was the first State-specific programme organized by SSIFS in continuation of the special training programmes in Economic & Commercial Diplomacy held in January and February 2021 for IAS and other officers from States and Union Territories of India. The special training module, anchored in the spirit of paradiplomacy, focused on presenting an overview of India's foreign policy and the cooperation extended by State Governments as partners in furthering India's foreign engagements.



Training Programme for International Relations Division, Office of CAG of India

A customized training programme for officers from the International Relations Division, Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) of India was conducted from 02-03 August 2021. This was a first of its kind programme organized by SSIFS specifically for officers from the CAG's Office. 14 Officers from the Office of CAG participated in the training programme. Keeping in mind the growing global responsibilities of the CAG's Office like auditing of international organizations, the training at SSIFS was designed to familiarize the participants with India's foreign policy and the basic skills and tools of diplomacy. Incidentally, on 24 September 2021, India's CAG was selected as the next External Auditor of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for a six-year term through an election process held at the General Conference of the IAEA in Vienna.



Probation-related Training Programme for US level officers

SSIFS conducted, for the first time ever, a four-week Probation-related training programme for officers at the level of Under Secretary from 31 August-24 September 2021. This was conducted online and 22 Officers, both from Headquarters and our Missions and Posts abroad, participated. The training programme included sessions on a range of subjects covering diplomatic practice, different aspects of India's foreign policy and domestic, strategic and security issues.



Training Programme for Defence Attachés

A training programme for Defence Attaché-designates (DA-designates) who have been posted to Indian Missions abroad, was organized from 27 September – 01 October 2021. The training programme, intended to familiarize and sensitize DA-designates about the various aspects of serving at an Indian Mission abroad, was specially curated to meet their training needs and objectives. 11 DAs participated in the training programme.



Training Programmes for Foreign Diplomats

1st Special Course for Diplomats from Sierra Leone

The 1st Special Course for Diplomats from Sierra Leone was held virtually from 21 June – 02 July 2021. Thirty-five diplomats from Sierra Leone participated in the programme. The programme was inaugurated on 21 June 2021 by Dean (SSIFS), Amb. J.S. Mukul. The two-week programme included modules on India's foreign policy, contemporary international issues such as maritime security, multilateral diplomacy, diplomatic skills, India's economic and technological development, disaster management, health diplomacy, India-West Africa Relations including regional groupings and a special focus on India-Sierra Leone Relations. The Programme, although conducted online, received an overwhelming response from the Sierra Leonean diplomats. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sierra Leone has now requested for physical courses at the SSIFS Campus for their diplomats.



8th Special Course for Diplomats from Afghanistan

The 8th Special Course for Diplomats from Afghanistan was held from 05-17 July 2021. Twenty-five diplomats from Afghanistan along with three diplomats from their Embassy in New Delhi participated in the course.

The programme was inaugurated on 05 July 2021 by Dean (SSIFS), Amb. J.S. Mukul. A welcome reception was also hosted for the visiting diplomats. The lecture sessions included modules on India's foreign policy, bilateral relations with Afghanistan, relations with neighbouring countries, key international issues, multilateral diplomacy, diplomatic and communication skills, diplomatic protocol, role of women in diplomacy, economic diplomacy, negotiation skills, international law, health diplomacy, Indian culture and cinema, opportunities in higher education in India etc. As part of their study tours, they visited Rashtrapati Bhavan, Election Commission, International Solar Alliance, audio-visual and print media houses. In order to experience the rich cultural heritage of India, they undertook outstation visits to Agra and Fatehpur Sikri. In Delhi, they visited the National Gallery of Modern Art and Dilli Haat. The group included three women diplomats. The diplomats made an interesting country presentation on the last day of the programme highlighting the immense multi-dimensional potential of Afghanistan.



4th Familiarization Programme for Resident Foreign Diplomats

The 4th Familiarization Programme for Resident Foreign Diplomats was held from 26-30 July 2021. Twenty-five diplomats from resident diplomatic Missions from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas participated in the programme. The programme was inaugurated on 26 July 2021 by Dean (SSIFS), Amb. J.S. Mukul. The aim of the week-long programme was to provide a broad overview of India and its foreign policy. Senior officers from the Ministry of External Affairs addressed the diplomats on contemporary strategic issues, India's relations with the big powers and its neighbours, Indian Ocean Region, UN, economic diplomacy and initiatives, health diplomacy etc. This was the fourth in the series of Familiarization Programmes conducted by SSIFS this year for resident foreign diplomats. The programmes have been lauded by the diplomatic corps for providing a foot board to India and its foreign policy.



4th Familiarization Programme for Resident Heads of Missions

The 4th Familiarization Programme for Foreign Heads of Missions (HoMs) resident in New Delhi was held from 23-27 August 2021. Twenty-six Ambassadors/High Commissioners participated in the programme. This is the fourth edition of this programme. In August 2018, SSIFS conducted the 1st Familiarization Programme for Resident HoMs from Latin and Caribbean countries; the 2nd Familiarization Programme for Resident HoMs from East, West & South Africa was held in February 2019 and the 3rd Familiarization Programme for Resident HoMs from Arab, Caucasian, Central Asian & North African countries was conducted in August 2019. The fourth edition was inaugurated on 23 August 2021 by Dean (SSIFS), Amb. J.S. Mukul, who hosted a welcome lunch in honour of the HoMs. Senior officers from the MEA addressed the HoMs on a wide variety of foreign policy issues during the week-long programme which was aimed at giving an introduction and perspective on India and its foreign policy including contemporary dimensions, challenges, strategic issues, relations with neighbouring countries and major powers, India and the UN, development partnership, economic and commercial relations and cultural diplomacy.

Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs, Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh graced the valedictory function on 27 August 2021 and interacted with the foreign resident Heads of Missions.



1st Special Course for Diplomats from Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

The 1st Special Course for Diplomats from the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) was held from 20 September - 01 October 2021. Thirty five diplomats from six IOR countries namely the Comoros, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles and Sri Lanka participated in the programme.

This first-ever Special Course was inaugurated on 20 September 2021 by Dean (SSIFS), Mr. Arun K. Chatterjee. A welcome reception was also hosted later in the evening to which the resident Ambassadors/High Commissioners of the participating countries were invited. The two-week Special Course encompassed modules on India's polity and foreign policy, contemporary maritime issues, challenges and strategies, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief initiatives, international framework under UNCLOS, multilateral diplomacy, economic and commercial diplomacy, diplomatic protocol and communication, negotiation skills, development partnership cooperation, climate change challenges and responses, health diplomacy, disaster management etc. The lectures were delivered by senior officials of the MEA, retired Ambassadors as well as experts from academia and think tanks. The group undertook field visits to Rashtrapati Bhavan, Election Commission of India, Gandhi Smriti, National Gallery of Modern Art and Akshardham Temple in New Delhi and outstation visits to Agra and Fatehpur Sikri. They also visited media houses and witnessed first-hand the dynamic electronic and print media in India. The country presentations by each of the six groups of diplomats showcased their beautiful island countries along with their potential in diverse areas.



Workshop/Training for MEA Officials

- A combined Promotion-related Training Programme for Section Officers and Private Secretaries was held virtually from 12-16 July 2021. The second week from 19-23 July 2021, was for Section Officers only. A total of 50 Section Officers and 37 Private Secretaries participated in the programme.
- An IVFRT (Immigration, Visa and Foreigners' Registration & Tracking) Training Programme was conducted virtually from 02-03 August 2021 for 65 MEA officials posted to Missions/Posts abroad.
- An Accounts Training Programme for 52 MEA officials under orders of transfer to Missions/Posts abroad, was conducted from 05-06 August 2021. This was followed by the 80th IMAS (Integrated Mission Accounting System) Training Programme from 09-23 August 2021 for 51 officials.
- To cover all MEA officials who stand posted to Missions/Posts abroad, another Accounts Training Programme was organized from 02-03 September 2021 for 51 officials followed by the 81st IMAS Training Programme from 13-24 September 2021 for 53 MEA officials.
- Second IVFRT Training Programme for 49 MEA officials was organized from 06-08 September 2021.



Promotion Related Training Programme for SOs/PSS virtually held from 12-23 July 2021



Dean (SSIFS) addressing the participants of Accounts Training Programme



Participants of IMAS undergoing hands-on training in the Computer Lab of SSIFS

SSIFS Campus

SSIFS has taken a major step towards conservation of water by upgrading the Rain Water Harvesting (RWH) Facility on its premises. Originally built in 2005-06 but rendered dysfunctional over time, RWH was revived and upgraded recently in March 2021. With the revival of RWH, SSIFS has complied with the National Green Tribunal direction in the matter.

Visitors to SSIFS



H.E. Mr. Ahmad Haroon Najmpoor, Director General, Institute of Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan visited SSIFS on 17 July 2021 and discussed ways and means to strengthen the partnership between the two diplomatic training institutes. He explored possibilities for more regular training programmes of Afghan diplomats in India. Till date, 218 Afghan diplomats have undergone training in SSIFS.



H.E. Dr. Heba Elmarassi, Ambassador of Egypt to India, paid a courtesy farewell call on Dean (SSIFS), Amb J.S. Mukul on 27 July 2021.



The Capacity Building Commission (CBC), headed by Chairman Shri. Adil Zainulbhai visited SSIFS on 01 September 2021. The programme of the visit included a meeting with Dean (SSIFS), Amb. J.S Mukul, an interactive session with Team (SSIFS) and a tour of SSIFS facilities. The CBC was briefed on the 'sui generis' nature of SSIFS, its role as the only Central Training Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs which takes care of all the training needs of the Ministry and the only premier institution imparting professional training to both Indian and foreign diplomats. The CBC was also given a detailed presentation on SSIFS, including the vision, mandate and organizational structure, the Indian and foreign training verticals of the institute, the flagship, annual, and customized courses organized by SSIFS as well as the new initiatives taken by the institute. The CBC was given an overview of the training architecture of SSIFS in terms of duration, content, pedagogy, guest faculty, system of assessment, blended/hybrid learning mode, mentoring programme, attachments (of the IFS Officer Trainees with Armed Forces, Missions abroad, State Governments etc.), partnership with other institutions etc. The CBC has been mandated by Government of India to drive standardization and harmonization across all civil services of India and plays a central role in the overall institutional framework of Mission Karmayogi.



The High Commissioner (Designate) of Sri Lanka to India, H.E. Mr. Milinda Moragoda paid a courtesy call on Dean (SSIFS), Shri Arun K. Chatterjee on 16 September 2021. Dean (SSIFS) gave a detailed briefing on SSIFS' activities and training programmes. They discussed issues of mutual cooperation and training related matters.

Field Visits

Diplomats from Afghanistan



Briefing session by Joint Secretary (XP) & MEA Spokesman, Shri Arindam Bagchi along with Joint Secretary (PAI), Shri J.P. Singh



Visit to International Solar Alliance



Visit to Election Commission of India (ECI)



Visit to Rashtrapati Bhavan



Visit to Taj Mahal



Visit to Fatehpur Sikri

Visit to National Gallery of Modern Art



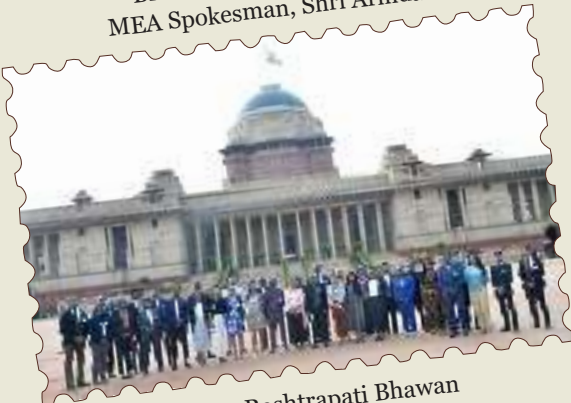
Diplomats from Indian Ocean Region Countries



Briefing by Joint Secretary (XP) & MEA Spokesman, Shri Arindam Bagchi



Visit to Indian media studio



Visit to Rashtrapati Bhawan



Visit to Gandhi Smriti



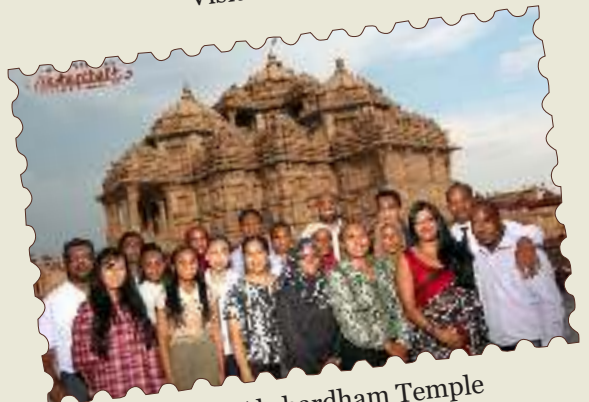
Visit to Taj Mahal



Visit to Fatehpur Sikri



Visit to National Gallery of Modern Art



Visit to Akshardham Temple

Activities



Yoga Session for Afghan Diplomats



Diplomats from IOR countries participated in the Yoga Session

New Postings

SSIFS bid farewell to:

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Amb. J.S. Mukul	Dean
2.	Shri Bimal Saigal	Consultant
3.	Shri Sunil Kumar	Private Secretary
4.	Shri J. Deybakshi	SO (Retd.)



SSIFS bid farewell to Dean (SSIFS), Amb. J.S. Mukul

SSIFS welcomes:

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Shri Arun K. Chatterjee	Dean
2.	Shri Mridu Pawan Das	Joint Secretary
3.	Smt. Amar Golay	Private Secretary
4.	Shri Santanu R. Dutta	Personal Assistant
5.	Smt. Deepali Likhari	ASO
6.	Ms. Kajal	Steno
7.	Ms. Durgesh	Steno
8.	Shri Anil Kumar	Chauffeur
9.	Shri Rahul Saini	MTS



About Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service

The Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) was established in 1986 by the Government of India primarily to cater to the professional training needs of the Indian Foreign Service and the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi. SSIFS has diversified its activities to include Courses for foreign diplomats in its efforts to build bridges of friendship and cooperation with countries around the world and Courses of interest to staff and officers at all levels of the Ministry of External Affairs as well as other Civil Services. The Institute is located at Baba Gangnath Marg, Old JNU Campus, New Delhi.

SSIFS is headed by the Dean, a senior Foreign Service officer of the rank of Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs. The current Dean is Shri Arun K. Chatterjee. SSIFS, primarily has an extensive guest faculty drawn from experts in the field of academics and research, media, public life, industry and trade, senior serving and retired diplomats and other government officials.

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