

VIDESH SEWA



Sushma Swaraj Institute
of Foreign Service

विदेश मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार
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*

During the last quarter of 2021, the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) had a packed calendar and conducted courses for Indian officers and officials and foreign diplomats both at the campus and in an online mode. The easing of the COVID-19 situation in the country made it possible. We had put in place an ambitious programme for the coming months including resuming many of the postponed programmes due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But our plans got affected with Omicron being declared a Variant of Concern (VOC) by the World Health Organization (WHO) in the last week of November 2021. SSIFS is now constrained to either further postpone or conduct online the programmes for the foreign diplomats and Indian officials till the situation stabilizes.

The Mid-Career Training Programme-II (MCTP-II) for IFS officers of the 2005 batch was conducted online in October 2021 for officers posted both at Headquarters and in Missions and Posts abroad. SSIFS, in collaboration with the think-tank India Foundation, organized the second edition of the 'Sushma Swaraj Lectures (SSL 2021) on Introduction to India' for resident foreign diplomats under the aegis of *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM)* on 21-22 October, 2021. Fifty diplomats from forty-three countries took part. The objective of the lecture series was to introduce India to foreign diplomats resident in India. SSIFS hosted thirty diplomats from The Gambia in November 2021 in the 2nd Special Course for their diplomats posted not only in Banjul but also in their Embassies in Belgium, Ethiopia, USA (Washington DC and New York) and Turkey. The first-ever Special Course for Diplomats from Oman was conducted in December 2021 for two-weeks. The group had a perfect gender balance with twelve lady diplomats in a group of twenty-five!

The last two months of 2021 were momentous for MEA officials as comprehensive two-week Induction Training Programmes (ITP) were conducted for Personal Assistants and Stenographers (22 November-03 December) and Batch-I of Assistant Section Officers (13-24 December) of the 2017 and 2018 Batches. The Institute of Secretariat Training and Management (ISTM) collaborated in the conduct of these programmes. Although the ITP was conducted almost after a year or more of their joining the MEA due to the pandemic and a host of other factors, both groups appreciated the courses and were unanimous that this would qualitatively improve their functioning in the Ministry. It also led to strong bonding and *esprit de corps* amongst them.

Videsh Sewa wishes all the SSIFS alumni and readers a very happy, bright, healthy, prosperous and successful New Year!

[Arun Kumar Chatterjee]

New Delhi
January 2022

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Highlights

Training for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Officers

Mid-Career Training Programme-II

The Mid-Career Training Programme-II (MCTP-II) for IFS officers of the 2005 batch was conducted online from 04-14 October 2021. The participants included officers posted both at headquarters and in Missions and Posts abroad. Apart from the foreign policy module conducted virtually from SSIFS, MCTP-II also included an online management and diplomacy module which was conducted by the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIM-A).



Training Programmes for Foreign Diplomats

'Sushma Swaraj Lectures 2021 on Introduction to India' for Diplomats from Resident Foreign Missions

SSIFS, in collaboration with the think-tank India Foundation, organized the second edition of the 'Sushma Swaraj Lectures (SSL 2021) on Introduction to India' for resident foreign diplomats from 21-22 October 2021 under the aegis of *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM)*. The first edition was organized in two parts in October and November 2020. The overarching objective of the lecture series was to introduce India to foreign diplomats resident in India. The inaugural address was delivered by Secretary (East), Amb. Riva Ganguly Das. She described the Indian diplomatic ideals of Samman (dignity), Samvaad (dialogue), Samridhi (shared prosperity), Suraksha (regional and global security) and Sanskriti and Sabhayata (cultural and civilizational links) which were, in turn, interlinked with India's broader political and economic goals. The Valedictory Address, on 22 October, was delivered by Mr. Ram Madhav, Member, Board of Governors, India Foundation on 'India's Global Vision'. In SSL 2021, fifty diplomats from forty-three countries took part. The programme included lectures on Indian history, polity, economy, culture and foreign policy which were delivered by eminent speakers including Members of Parliament, senior Government officials and academicians.





2nd Special Course for Diplomats from The Gambia

The 2nd Special Course for Diplomats from The Gambia was held from 15 November - 26 November 2021. Thirty diplomats from The Gambia participated in the course. The Special Course was inaugurated on 15 November 2021 by Dean (SSIFS) & AS (AD), Shri Arun K. Chatterjee. A welcome reception was also hosted for the visiting diplomats. The two-week Special Course included modules on India's foreign policy, India-West Africa Relations and in particular with The Gambia, development partnership cooperation, diplomatic protocol, opportunities in higher education in India, Ayurveda etc. As part of their study tours, the diplomats visited Rashtrapati Bhavan, Election Commission and media houses. They visited the India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2021 to witness first-hand the overarching 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' (self reliant) theme of the trade expo. The course also included study tours of historical and cultural monuments – Agra & Fatehpur Sikri - in order to experience the rich cultural heritage of India. The diplomats made an interesting country presentation on the last day of the programme highlighting the immense tourist and economic potential of The Gambia.



1st Special Course for Diplomats from Oman

The 1st ever Special Course for Diplomats from Oman was held from 06 - 17 December 2021. Twenty-five diplomats from the Sultanate of Oman participated in the course. The Special Course was inaugurated on 06 December 2021 by Dean (SSIFS) & AS (AD), Shri Arun Kumar Chatterjee. A welcome reception was hosted for the visiting diplomats. The programme included lecture sessions on India's foreign policy, economy, polity, syncretic culture, India-Oman bilateral and commercial relations, energy and maritime security, the Arab world and GCC, India's relations with major powers, health diplomacy, climate change, digital empowerment, negotiation skills, sessions on Yoga and Ayurveda. There was also an interactive session with Secretary (CPV & OIA), Amb. Sanjay Bhattacharyya. As a part of their study tour, the diplomats undertook visits to Rashtrapati Bhavan, Election Commission and media houses. The course also included study tours of historical and cultural monuments including the National Museum and Humayun's Tomb in Delhi and outstation tour of Agra and Fatehpur Sikri. The lady diplomats, numbering twelve, made an interesting presentation on, "Women in Oman" and the group as a whole, spoke about "Moving Forward with Confidence – 2040 Oman Vision".



Training Programmes for MEA Officials

Induction Training Programme (ITP) for Personal Assistants and Stenographers of the 2017 and 2018 Batches

The first-ever Induction Training Programme for Personal Assistants and Stenographers of the 2017 and 2018 Batches was held from 22 November – 03 December 2021. Fifty-two PAs and Stenographers participated in the ITP. The two-week programme included sessions *inter alia* on MEA organization, Missions and Posts, role of Stenographers, work, file and record management, Manual of Office Procedure (MOP), noting and drafting, forms of official communication, Conduct Rules, IFS PLCA, Consular and Visa Module, FR/SR (Recruitment Rules, conditions of service, LTC, Leave Rules, Pay, Income Tax, GPF/NPS, Pension/Retirement benefits etc.), APAR, physical and departmental security, RTI, General Financial Rules (GFR), Budgeting and Accounts, PFMS, basic IT training and cyber security, MEADOWS, E-Office, Official Language Policy, effective communication skills, welfare measures for MEA officials, operating office equipment, protocol, gender sensitization etc. In addition, there were a few lectures on Indian polity, economy, foreign policy, ITEC, Development Partnership Cooperation and emotional intelligence. The programme concluded with a session on Heartfulness Yoga to promote long-term general well-being.



Induction Training Programme (ITP) (Batch-I) for Direct Recruit Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) of the 2017 and 2018 Batches

An Induction Training Programme (Batch-I) for Direct Recruit Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) of the 2017 and 2018 Batches was held from 13-24 December 2021. Fifty ASOs participated in the Programme. The two-week programme included *inter alia* sessions on MEA organization, Missions and Posts, file and record management, Manual of Office Procedure (MOP), noting and drafting, forms of official communication, Conduct Rules, IFS PLCA,

Consular and Visa Module (including issuance of Passports, CPGrams, IVFRT, e-Seva etc.), FR/SR (Recruitment Rules, conditions of service, LTC, Leave Rules, Pay, Income Tax, GPF/NPS, Pension/Retirement benefits etc.), APAR, physical and departmental security, Parliamentary procedure and work, RTI, General Financial Rules (GFR), Budgeting and Accounts, processing of financial proposals, PFMS, GeM and Public Procurement Policy, basic IT training and cyber security, MEADOWS, E-Office, Official Language Policy, effective communication and negotiation skills, welfare measures for MEA officials, protocol at Headquarters and Missions abroad, gender sensitization, office etiquette, dress code etc. In addition, there were a few lectures on Indian land, culture, polity, economy and globalization, foreign policy, ITEC, Development Partnership Cooperation, Indian Diaspora and emotional intelligence. The programme concluded with a session on Heartfulness Yoga to promote long-term general well-being. The ASOs, of their own volition, organized a cultural programme with a Valedictory Speech, poetry recitation, solo songs and a group song to culminate the ITP.



Visitors to SSIFS



H.E. Mr. Nurlan Zhalgasbayev, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to India met Dean (SSIFS), Shri Arun Kumar Chatterjee on 25 November 2021 to discuss training related and mutual cooperation matters.



Prof. Deepa Mani, Deputy Dean and Mr. D.N.V. Kumara Guru, Director of the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad met Dean (SSIFS), Shri Arun Kumar Chatterjee and other officials on 25 November 2021 and had detailed discussions on the management module for the forthcoming Mid-Career Training Programme-III (MCTP-III).



H.E. Mr. Hamed Saif Al Rawahi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to India met Dean (SSIFS), Shri Arun Kumar Chatterjee on 02 December 2021 in connection with the 1st ever Special Course for Diplomats from Oman the following week.



H.E. Mr. David Puig, Ambassador of the Dominican Republic (DR) to India met Dean (SSIFS), Shri Arun Kumar Chatterjee on 16 December 2021 to discuss training related matters for DR diplomats.



High Commissioner of Bangladesh to India, H.E. Mr. Muhammad Imran met Dean (SSIFS), Shri Arun Kumar Chatterjee on 05 January 2022 to discuss forthcoming training courses for diplomats from Bangladesh.



Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to India, H.E. Mr. Wael Hamed met Dean (SSIFS), Shri Arun Kumar Chatterjee on 18 January 2022 to discuss the forthcoming 2nd Special Course for Diplomats from Egypt.

International Outreach

47th IFDT Annual Meeting

The 47th Annual Meeting of the International Forum on Diplomatic Training (IFDT) was hosted by the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation of the UAE from 03-07 November 2021. Established in 1972, IFDT is a consortium of academic and diplomatic training institutions with members from over 56 countries. A two-member delegation from SSIFS, comprising Shri. Mridu Pawan Das, Joint Secretary (SSIFS) and Ms. Devi Gopinath, Deputy Secretary (SSIFS), participated in IFDT's 47th Annual Meeting. The programme included panel discussions on a range of topical issues such as diplomacy in the post-Covid world, multilateralism, women in diplomacy and digital diplomacy. Shri. Mridu Pawan Das, JS (SSIFS), participated as a speaker on the panel on digital diplomacy. Ms. Devi Gopinath, DS (SSIFS), made a presentation on the topic 'Best practices at SSIFS for hybrid/virtual training' during the IFDT Bazar, a platform for sharing best practices in diplomatic training.

SSIFS would be hosting the 48th Annual Meeting of IFDT in New Delhi in November 2022 under the aegis of *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* (AKAM).



Signing of Memorandum of Understanding with Tajikistan

A Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Diplomatic Training between SSIFS and the Centre for Advanced Training and Retraining of Diplomatic Personnel of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan was signed on 18 December 2021 by Hon'ble External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar and the Hon'ble Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, H.E. Mr. Sirojiddin Muhridin during the latter's visit to India.



Field Visits

Diplomats from The Gambia



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



Visit to Media Studio



Visit to Election Commission of India (ECI)



Visit to Rashtrapati Bhavan



Visit to India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2021



Visit to Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikri



Diplomats from Oman



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



Visit to Indian media studio



Visit to Rashtrapati Bhawan



Visit to the National Museum



Visit to Taj Mahal



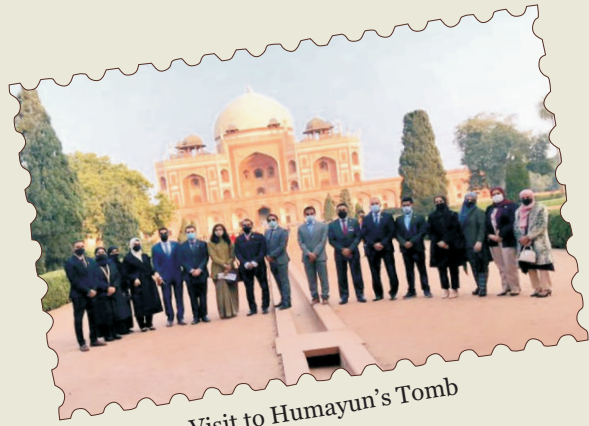
Visit to Fatehpur Sikri



Visit to Election Commission of India



Visit to IIT Delhi



Visit to Humayun's Tomb

Activities



Diplomats from The Gambia participated in the Yoga Session



Pledges



Dean (SSIFS) administered the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas pledge on 31 October 2021



Dean (SSIFS) administered the Constitution Day pledge on 26 November 2021



Joint Secretary (SSIFS) administered the Constitution Day pledge on 26 November 2021 to Personal Assistants and Stenographers during their Induction Training Programme

New Postings

SSIFS bid farewell to:

Name	Designation
Ms. Soumya Nair	Deputy Secretary

SSIFS welcomes:

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Ms. Bhashita	ASO
2.	Shri Mohit Saini	MTS

Courses conducted in SSIFS in 2021

S. No.	Programmes	Date
1.	Induction Training Programme for IFS OTs of the 2020 Batch	December 2020 - June 2021
2.	1 st Special Training Programme on 'Economic & Commercial Diplomacy' for IAS and other officers from States and UTs	04 - 08 January 2021
3.	Typing Test for Direct Recruit Assistant Section Officers	13 January 2021
4.	1 st Familiarization Programme for Resident Foreign Diplomats	18 - 22 January 2021
5.	IVFRT (Immigration, Visa and Foreigners' Registration & Tracking) Training Programme (hybrid mode)	20 - 22 January 2021
6.	English Stenography Test for Personal Assistants and Stenographers	03 February 2021
7.	2 nd Special Training Programme on 'Economic & Commercial Diplomacy' for IAS and other officers from States and UTs	08 - 12 February 2021
8.	Accounts Training Programme	18 - 19 February 2021
9.	2 nd Familiarization Programme for Resident Foreign Diplomats	22 - 26 February 2021
10.	79 th IMAS (Integrated Mission Accounting System) Training Programme	22 February - 05 March 2021
11.	New training session of IVFRT on PAP/RAP (Protected Areas Permit/Restricted Areas Permit) in eFRRO Module (online)	18 March 2021
12.	3 rd Familiarization Programme for Resident Foreign Diplomats	22 - 26 March 2021
13.	Promotion-related Training Programme for Assistant Section Officers and Personal Assistants	22 - 26 March 2021
14.	Promotion related Training Programme for Principal Private Secretaries (PPS) of the Stenographers' Cadre (hybrid mode)	05 - 09 April 2021
15.	2 nd Special Course for Diplomats from Vietnam (online)	11 - 12 May 2021
16.	Special Training Module for Diplomats on 'Reformed Multilateralism' for Diplomats from the Dominican Republic (online)	16 June 2021
17.	1 st Special Course for Diplomats from Sierra Leone (online)	21 June - 02 July 2021
18.	Mid-Career Training Programme-I (MCTP-I) for IFS officers of 2009 Batch (online)	05 - 16 July 2021
19.	8 th Special Course for Diplomats from Afghanistan	05 - 17 July 2021
20.	Promotion-related Training Programme for Section Officers (SOs) and Private Secretaries (PSs) (online)	12 - 23 July 2021
21.	Training Programme for Haryana State Officers	23 July 2021
22.	4 th Familiarization Programme for Resident Foreign Diplomats	26 - 30 July 2021
23.	Training Programme for Officers of International Training Division, Office of CAG of India	02 - 03 August 2021
24.	IVFRT (Immigration, Visa, Foreigners' Registration & Tracking) Training Programme (online)	02 - 03 August 2021
25.	Accounts Training Programme	05 - 06 August 2021
26.	80 th IMAS (Integrated Mission Accounting System) Training Programme	09 - 23 August 2021
27.	4 th Familiarization Programme for Resident Heads of Missions (HoMs)	23 - 27 August 2021
28.	Probation-related Training Programme for US-level Officers (online)	31 August - 24 September 2021
29.	Accounts Training Programme	02 - 03 September 2021
30.	IVFRT (Immigration, Visa and Foreigners' Registration & Tracking) Training Programme	06 - 09 September 2021
31.	81 st IMAS (Integrated Mission Accounting System) Training Programme	13 - 24 September 2021
32.	1 st Special Course for Diplomats from Indian Ocean Region (IOR)	20 September - 01 October 2021
33.	Training Programme for Defence Attachés and Officers of National Security Council Secretariat	27 September - 01 October 2021
34.	Mid-Career Training Programme-II for IFS Officers of 2005 Batch (online)	04 - 14 October 2021
35.	'Sushma Swaraj Lectures (SSL 2021) on Introduction to India' for Resident Foreign Diplomats under the aegis of <i>Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM)</i>	21 - 22 October 2021
36.	Quarterly Typing Test for Direct Recruit Assistant Section Officers (DR ASOs), Junior Secretariat Assistants (JSAs) and Multi-Tasking Staff (MTS)	28 October 2021
37.	2 nd Special Course for Diplomats from The Gambia	15 - 26 November 2021
38.	Induction Training Programme for Personal Assistants and Stenographers of 2017 and 2018 batches	22 November - 03 December 2021
39.	1 st Special Course for Diplomats from Oman	06 - 17 December 2021
40.	Mandatory English Stenography Test for Direct Recruit Personal Assistants and Stenographers	09 December 2021
41.	Induction Training Programme for Assistant Section Officers (ASOs) of 2017 and 2018 batches [Batch-I]	13 - 24 December 2021



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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