Volume 12 - December 2025

VIDESH SEWA

SUSHMA SWARAJ INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN SERVICE

IFS Officer Trainees of 2025 batch along with two trainee diplomats from Bhutan called on External Affairs Minister and Foreign Secretary on first two days of their 9 months long Induction Training Program





31 Diplomats & officers from Mauritius, Seychelles and the IORA Secretariat participated in a Special Course on Functional Competencies for Smarter Diplomacy at SSIFS from 08-13 December 2025.



FROM DEAN'S DESK



Dear Readers, Dear Friends,

As we complete the year 2025, it's a good time to take a moment to reflect upon the year passed by and analyse what we aimed to achieve at the start and where we find ourselves at the end. It's been a truly transformative experience for us at SSIFS achieving many firsts in 2025 with **digital transformation, diversification,** & **distinction**.

We launched our first **digital** Learning Management System (LMS) on 1 Jan 2025 which resulted into many positive results in our training programs such as digital repository of course materials, digital alumni lists, digital institutional memory, AI enabled training techniques, and efficient & transparent assessment processes.

In our training programs for foreign diplomats, year 2025 was unique as we conducted 15 programs including 5 thematic, 5 bilateral, & 5 regional programs, in which we saw the **diversity** of our partnerships, with 475 diplomats & officers from over 105 countries benefiting from these carefully curated programs. In this year, we added to our list of International MoUs another 7, taking the number to 106 from 99 at the beginning of 2025. Within country we developed 12 new partnerships in terms of programs with a ""whole of nation approach" to capacity building.

Year 2025 also brought for SSIFS, **distinction** in terms of expansion of our visiting faculty to include new domains of knowledge such as AI and emerging technologies, focus on behavioural competencies, and connect with our foundations through Indian Knowledge System relevant to Diplomacy.

On 1st December, we began the 9-month-long Induction Training Program for the 52-member-strong 2025 batch of IFS, along with 2 trainees from Bhutan. On very first two days they could take guidance from External Affairs Minister and Foreign Secretary. They attended a special three day program conducted by Clingendael Institute of Netherlands on Laws of Seas as part of new partnership of SSIFS.

On 9th December, SSIFS had the privilege and honour to organize the 5th Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture which was delivered by Mr Teo Chee Hean, Chairman of Temasek and Senior Advisor to the Prime Minister of Singapore. Officer Trainees had the opportunity to be part of this unique event in which we remembered the unique contributions of Atal ji to our Foreign Policy & Diplomacy.

We concluded the year with a Special Program on Functional Competencies for Smarter Diplomacy for our friends from Mauritius & Seychelles. This program focused on processes, protocol, problem solving, progressive learning, and purposeful leadership.

As we look forward to our new range of activities in 2026, the enriching experience of 2025 would empower us to deliver better programs fitting to the needs of new age diplomacy which requires mindset, skillset, and temperament of strategist, communicator, statesperson.

Best wishes for a blissful 2026 from SSIFS Family.

Raj Kumar Srivastava
New Delhi
31 December 2025

2025 was the most Productive Year for SSIFS so far

Diplomatic Training at SSIFS in 2025 for our Partners from Abroad "15 Programs | 475 Diplomats | 105 Countries"

Thematic Programs

- Jan 13–31: 5th Disarmament & International Security Affairs Fellowship Program
- Apr 28–May 3: IORA Member Countries
- May 19–30: 72nd Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats
- Sep 8-19: 3rd Global South Young Diplomats Forum
- Nov 17-22: 2nd Special Program for BIMSTEC Countries

Bilateral Programs

- Feb 19: Cambodia
- Mar 17-27: Myanmar
- Mar 19–28: Democratic Republic of Congo
- Jun 9–18: Iraq
- Oct 8–17: Egypt

Regional Programs

- Feb 17–25: Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia
- Jul 16–25: Central & West Africa
- Aug 4–13: North & East Africa
- Oct 29–Nov 7: Central & South America, and Caribbean Islands
- Dec 8-13: Mauritius, Seychelles, & IORA Secretariat

Key Indian Training & Outreaches

Induction & Foundation Training

- IFS OTs (2024 Batch) 2 Dec 2024 – 22 Aug 2025
- IFS OTs (2025 Batch) - Dec 2025

Mid-Career Training Programmes (MCTP)

- MCTP-II (2013 Batch)- 7–25 Apr 2025
- MCTP-I (2009 Batch)-5–23 May 2025
- MCTP-III (2000-01 Batches)- 18 Aug – 5 Sep 2025

Specialized Training Programmes

- Large-Scale Jan Seva (CBC) - 21–22 Apr 2025
- Def. Attaches Orientation Programs - 29 Apr – 2 May & 24–28 Nov 2025
- Legal & Treaties Cadre (MEA) - 2–6 Jun 2025
- Indian Defence Accounts Service (IDAS) - 11 Jun 2025
- IRS (C&IT) 76th Batch – Economic Diplomacy Week - 14–18 Jul 2025
- Indian Forest Service (2023 Batch) – Environment Diplomacy - 21-22 Jul 2025 at IGNFA Dehradun
- Government of Sri Lanka Officials (XP & PD Division) - 18–20 Aug 2025
- Training for Group A Officers of Cabinet Secretariat - 3–4 Nov 2025

Outreach& Academic Engagement

- Visit of O. P. Jindal University Students - 15 Oct 2025
- National Essay Competition in partnership with India's World Magazine - 4 Dec 2025
- Visit of Students of Public Policy from IIT Madras - 17 Dec 2025

Flagship Event

- 5th Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture - 9 Dec 2025

Functional Competencies Training at SSIFS in 2025 for Staff Members "25 Programs | 1200 Staff Members at SSIFS & 200 Online| Three Themes "

IMAS & Accounts Programs

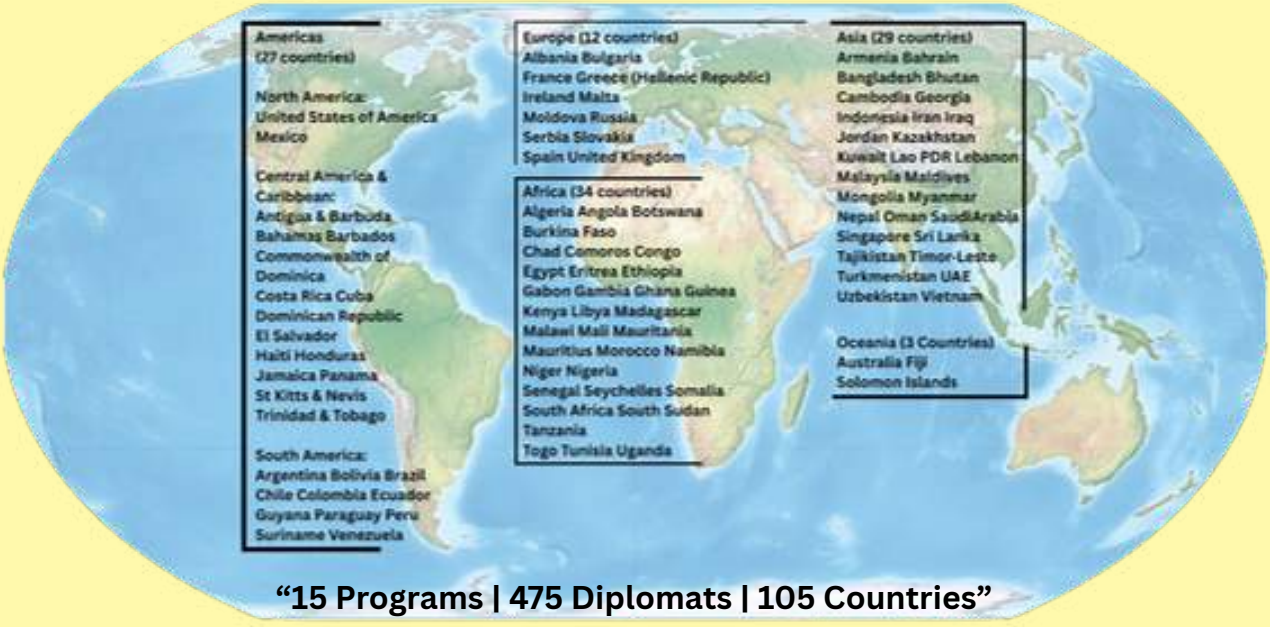
- 94th - 99th IMAS Training Programs benefitting 282 Staff Members
- Two Accounts Modules attended by 93 Staff Memybers

IVFRT Programs

- Four IVFRT Consular Programs attended by 220 Staff Members

Stenographers Programs

- Eight Programs for Stenographers benefitting 340 Staff Members
- Five Programs for Promotion Training attended by 270 Staff at SSIFS & 205 Online



"15 Programs | 475 Diplomats | 105 Countries"

Fifth Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture

The 5th Atal Bihari Vajpayee Memorial Lecture was delivered on December 09, 2025 by Mr. Teo Chee Hean, Chairman, Temasek Holdings and Senior Advisor to the Prime Minister of Singapore, on the topic - Enduring Partnerships in a Changing World. The annual memorial lecture series is organised as a tribute to late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, a towering statesman and visionary, for his lifelong contribution towards nation-building and India's Foreign Policy as External Affairs Minister and Prime Minister.





Summary of the 5th ABVML by Mr Teo Chee Hean

- The lecture honours Atal Bihari Vajpayee, whose reforms and India–Singapore ties laid foundations for today's partnership.
- India and Singapore share deep historical, cultural, and economic linkages, with roots stretching from Sanskritic influence to modern diaspora contributions.
- The global economic centre of gravity is shifting back to Asia, driven by India's rising weight and broader Asian growth.
- Globalisation has delivered prosperity but also inequality, prompting nations to recalibrate policies around resilience, security, and strategic autonomy.
- Singapore champions predictability, openness, multilateralism, and flexible partnerships, even as global institutions face strain.
- Singapore advances connectivity through FTAs, digital economy agreements, and green-economy partnerships, creating interoperable and inclusive frameworks.
- India's reforms under Prime Minister Modi—spanning technology, manufacturing, logistics, and regulatory simplification—are accelerating its path toward Viksit Bharat.
- India's multi-alignment strategy enables it to work with diverse partners across regions, contributing to global governance, humanitarian efforts, and emerging technologies.
- Temasek has been a long-term investor in India, with US$50B+ exposure, spanning sectors like healthcare, logistics, renewables, and financial inclusion.
- The speech concludes with a call for shared, multi-generational commitment to peace, stability, and prosperity, with India and Singapore positioned as natural partners in a changing world.

Full Speech Text - https://www.temasek.com.sg/en/news-and-resources/news-room/speeches/2025/speech-chairman-teo-chee-hean-5th-atal-bihari-vajpayee-memorial-
Video of the whole event-
https://youtube.comrr/live/l2EZoXqQcLM?feature=share

Training Program for Foreign Diplomats

Special Course on Functional Competencies for Smarter Diplomacy (08-13 December 2025)

A Special Course on Functional Competencies for Smarter Diplomacy was conducted at the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service from 08-13 December 2025. 31 Diplomats and officers from Mauritius, Seychelles and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Secretariat participated in the 6-day long special course. Dean (SSIFS), Amb Raj Kumar Srivastava inaugurated the Course. In his inaugural address, he explained the 3 competencies for smarter diplomacy (Behavioral, Functional & Domain) and elaborated on the 5Ps (Process, Protocol, Progressive, Purposeful, Problem Solving) of Functional competency. He also spoke about the pillars of the Indian Foreign Policy, Strategic Horizon, Core Dimensions of its Resilience and 4Ts(trade, technology, tourism, talent) of the 'Diplomacy for Development' and Govt of India's recent initiatives (ISA, CDRI, IBCA, GBA).

This special course was designed in line with the Government of India's vision MAHASAGAR i.e. Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth Across regions and was curated to equip participants with the 5 Ps in diplomacy namely, political, protocol, process, public and progressive learning and contained 14 knowledge sessions by domain experts from government organisations, prominent think-tanks and serving officers of MEA. The delegation visited the National Maritime Foundation, India's foremost autonomous think-tank on the maritime domain to learn about critical maritime issues in the Indian Ocean region, coastal security, anti-piracy operations, and capacity building to enhance preparedness of the island nations.

Some glimpses from the knowledge sessions



Special Course on Functional Competencies for Smarter Diplomacy

Visits to places of Cultural and Historical significance

The participants visited the Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya, a public museum chronicling the contributions of India's Prime Ministers since independence and were impressed by the advanced experiential displays. They also visited the Qutb Complex, a UNESCO World Heritage site built in the early 13th century and Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti to know more about the life and thought of Mahatma Gandhi, his noble ideas and life values that India wishes to inculcate in her citizens.

The delegation visited The Kunj, an initiative by the Ministry of Textiles showcasing the rich tradition of Indian handicrafts and textiles and the Swaminarayan Akshardham temple, participants to learn about its philosophy, its global humanitarian work, relief operations and the outreach activities carried out by the temple during various national and international crises. Some glimpses from these visits are as below:









Special Course on Functional Competencies for Smarter Diplomacy

Special Sessions on Yoga and Hospitality

A special session on Yoga was conducted for the participants by a trained yoga instructor who taught them about the well-being arising from yoga and taught them postures for improving flexibility, enhancing strength and de-stressing. Participants committed to continuing with yoga for holistic wellness of the mind and body

Teachers from India Tourism Development

Corporation (ITDC) conducted a session explaining practical aspects of dining such as food service for multi-course cuisines, table etiquettes, seating plan at formal banquets through practical demonstrations.





Special Course on Functional Competencies for Smarter Diplomacy (08-13 December 2025)

Final Day of the programme: Valedictory and Feedback

Dean (SSIFS) took a special session wherein he discussed the diplomatic challenges and opportunities in the age social media with the participants. He shared some effective tools for easing complicated tasks with large amounts of data. As part of the valedictory session, he handed over certificates of participation to the participants and encouraged them to foster ties between India and their respective countries. Participants unanimously agreed that the programme addressed emerging challenges and helped them navigate critical issues relevant to the island nation.













Dr S. Jaishankar
2 Dec ·

Delighted to interact with Indian Foreign Service Officer Trainees of the 2025 batch and two Bhutanese diplomats.

Shared my diplomatic experiences and encouraged them to develop the skills and aptitude for their calling.

Extended my good wishes as they begin their careers in service of their nation.







Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service
1 Dec ·

Induction Training Program for 2025 Batch of IFS OTs & 2 Bhutanese Diplomats commenced today, on 1st December, 2025 at SSIFS.
Amb. Raj Kumar Srivastava, Dean(SSIFS) inaugurated the program & extended warm welcome to all the participants.
The 52 strong batch is largest in the history of Service, increasing capacity to contribute towards the vision of 'Viksit Bharat'.



Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service
1 Dec ·

IFS Officer Trainees of 2025 Batch and 2 Bhutanese Diplomats called on Foreign Secretary Shri Vikram Misri today, on 1 December 2025, the first day of their Induction Training Program at SSIFS.
FS stressed upon the need for Officer Trainees to inculcate the qualities of pride, integrity, courage and humility in their professional life. He highlighted the importance of Technology as the new determinant of comprehensive national power and need for OTs to develop deep understanding of the emerging technologies. He welcomed the new batch to the enter the service with positive mindset to contribute with clarity and courage despite the uncertainties of current times.

94 3 6



Beginning of IFS OTs' Training Program in the Social Media of SSIFS

Sushma Swa... · 10.12.2025.
Marking the 1st institutional cooperation between SSIFS & @Clingendaelorg, & with the support of Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a 3-day SSIFS-Clingendael module on the Law of the Sea kicked off on 9th Dec, 2025.



9 Months long Induction Training Program for IFS Officer Trainees of 2025 Batch & Two Trainee Diplomats from Bhutan began on 1st December 2025

The Induction Training Programme for Indian Foreign Service Officer Trainees (2025 Batch) is structured to provide a comprehensive intellectual and professional foundation for diplomatic service through a phased and integrated approach. The first module combines academic rigour with applied skill development, enabling officer trainees to engage effectively with complex international legal, political, and strategic challenges.

The first week of the programme focused on academic orientation and foundational capacity building. Officer trainees were introduced to the objectives, structure, and expected outcomes of the ITP curriculum, along with administrative procedures and an overview of the professional life of a diplomat during the first overseas posting. Sessions on leadership, motivation, and mentorship strengthen professional readiness. Dr. Vikrant Singh Tomar delivered an inspiring and energising session on motivation, discipline, and public service, offering officer trainees clearer direction as they prepare for responsibilities of national and global significance. His interaction further addressed anxiety, emotional intelligence, and the collective mental profile of the batch, while outlining practical methods to navigate personal and professional challenges. In addition, Dr. Preet Deep Singh highlighted simplified and practical approaches to the use of artificial intelligence, demonstrating accessible tools and workflows to enhance learning and research. Exposure to AI in education and diplomacy, combined with heritage walk to Qila Rai Pithora highlighted the diplomatic practice within India's civilisational and cultural context.



9 Months long Induction Training Program for IFS Officer Trainees of 2025 Batch & Two Trainee Diploma from Bhutan began on 1st December 2025

The second week focussed on International Law for diplomacy, with particular emphasis on the governance of the global commons. A key component is the academic attachment with the Clingendael Academy, which provided specialised instruction on the legal dimensions of maritime governance. Under the guidance of Professor Alex Oude, officer trainees engage in in-depth study of the Law of the Seas, maritime domain awareness, and evolving legal challenges related to oceans and global commons. Complementing this, focused sessions on professional presentation and communication skills conducted by Sebastian Olislagers strengthened trainees' ability to articulate legal and policy arguments effectively. The week concluded with a structured Communication Skills Assessment to evaluate analytical clarity, articulation, and professional presentation.

The third week advanced into International Relations theory and strategic studies, integrating classical and contemporary theoretical frameworks with indigenous strategic thought, including lessons from the Arthashastra. The officer Trainees assessed the current geopolitical scenarios in the Kautiliyan framework. The module addressed key global and regional issues such as the Indo-Pacific, cyber regulation, space diplomacy, nuclear order, global disorder, and India–China relations. Expert lectures, group discussions, tabletop exercises, and a formal report submission reinforced analytical depth and policy-oriented thinking.

Overall, the academic module bridges theory and practice, strengthening legal reasoning, strategic analysis, and communication capabilities essential for effective diplomatic engagement.



Diplomats have to become good Story Tellers
A day to test Communication Skills and a Heritage Walk to know the Story

As theIFS OTs of 2025 batch settle down with their program at SSIFS, they got a chance to test their communication skills in front of camera. They would get to compare their performance over the coming nine months to understand how much they progressed. Story telling is an integral part of Diplomacy. Its an essential competency on which we devote considerable time and effort to ensure our young diplomats master the art.

The OTs also got a chance to do a heritage walk in the historic surroundings of SSIFS to develop an understanding of history through experiential learning.





84th Edition of Know India Program

SSIFS conducted a half day orientation program for 39 young PIOs from 17 countries in the 84th edition of the Know India Program(KIP) on 11 December.

Dean(SSIFS) Raj Srivastava made two insightful presentations- "Ancient Bharat: Land of Knowledge" & "Viksit Bharat: The Vision of Prosperity" The first presentation made by Dean SSIFS gave the young PIOs a glimpse of their ancestral linkages & antiquity of their "motherland", the foundation of Vedic Civilization, energy of "Bharat" powered by the wisdom of Vedas & Upanishads, Ayurveda & Ayurgenomics. In the second presentation, he described the guiding principles of Indian Foreign Policy, the 4Ts(trade, technology, tourism & talent) of 'Diplomacy for Development', Govt of India's recent initiatives (ISA, CDRI, IBCA, GBA), and how India is marching strongly on its path of Viksit Bharat guided by ancient wisdom with human centric, environment sensitive, technologically advanced mindset.



SSIFS hosted a cohort of students of Public Policy from IIT, Madras, , on 17 December 2025

Dean(SSIFS) Amb. Raj Kumar Srivastava engaged with the students on topics of foreign policy as well as India's story of resilience & growth, & wished them a bright future.



India’s Next Strategic Thinkers - National Essay Competition 2025

At the INDIA'S WORLD Conclave, the top three winners of India's Next Generation Strategic Thinkers - National Essay Competition 2025 were felicitated by Amb. Raj Srivastava, Dean of the Foreign Service Institute, and Prof. Happymon Jacob.

The competition, titled India’s Next Generation Strategic Thinkers, was an initiative jointly organised by India’s World magazine and the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS), Ministry of External Affairs. Through a nationwide call for essays and interaction with an eminent jury, this programme identifies and celebrates young Indian voices shaping the future of strategic thinking.

SSIFS & India's World congratulates the top three winners:

Aarushi Shekhar Barthwal: A student at the University of Oxford pursuing an MSc in Modern South Asian Studies.

Lokendra Sharma: Staff Research Analyst with the High-Tech Geopolitics Programme at the Takshashila Institution in Bengaluru.

Shreyas Shende: Research Associate at the Net Zero Industrial Policy Lab at Johns Hopkins University. (The award was collected by Ms. Vasundhara Yadav on his behalf)



Ministry of External Affairs
Government of India



6th Annual Disarmament & International Security Affairs Fellowship Program 12-30 January 2026

The fellowship programme aims at equipping participants with knowledge and perspectives on issues related to contemporary disarmament, non- proliferation, arms control and international security affairs, and familiarizing them with India and India's foreign policy. The initiative fulfils the mandate of UNGA Resolution "United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education" and is in line with the focus on 'Disarmament Education' in UN Secretary General's Agenda for Disarmament - 'Securing our Common Future'.

28 Knowledge Sessions with Experts in Security issues drawn from Diplomacy, International Institutions, & Think Tanks

Visits to 10 Institutions in 3 Cities to understand Space, Nuclear, Maritime, & Non-Traditional Security

Understanding India through visits to Heritage sites, sessions on Yoga and Ayurveda, enjoying diverse cuisines & Republic Day celebrations



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. 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.

Within Indian Foreign Service, SSIFS conducts training programs annually at four levels - Induction Training Program of nine months for IFS Officer Trainees at entry level, and Mid Career Training Programs of three weeks duration - MCTP I (for 10-11 years in Service), MCTP II (for 15-16 years in Service), & MCTP III (for 24-25 years in Service).

For Foreign Diplomats, SSIFS conducts every month one specific program which includes three annual flagship programs in the form of - Disarmament & International Security Affairs Fellowship Training program for three weeks in January, Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD) for two weeks in May, and Global South Young Diplomats Forum (GSYDF) Training Program for two weeks in September. Other months, SSIFS organises country, region, grouping, or themes-specific training programs of a maximum of two weeks, emanating from 105 MoUs that SSIFS has signed in the past three decades.

SSIFS has an extensive and expanding pool of guest faculty drawn from experts in the fields of domain competencies like International Relations, Diplomacy, Economy, Trade, Tourism, Technology, Governance, Media & Journalism, Defence & Security, Culture & Indian Knowledge System, Yoga & Ayurveda, and Behavioural Competencies like Emotional Intelligence, Purposeful & Collaborative Leadership, Communications & Negotiations Skills and Progressive Learning & Problem Solving Attitude.

SSIFS is headed by the Dean, a senior Foreign Service Officer in the Ministry of External Affairs. The current Dean is Amb. Raj Kumar Srivastava, IFS officer of the 1997 batch. The Institute is located at Baba Gangnath Marg, Old JNU Campus, New Delhi.



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