



VIDESH SEWA

SUSHMA SWARAJ INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN SERVICE

The Induction Training Program for IFS Officer Trainees focused of Economic Diplomacy in the month of February

The officer trainees called on the Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal who spoke about the role of diplomats as Ambassadors of India's economic prowess and in forging deeper cooperation internationally. As we march towards the goal of becoming a Viksit Bharat, he emphasised their vital contribution in this mission as active partners of India's investment outreach exercises. As part of two days attachment at the Ministry of Commerce, the OTs had sessions on India's thinking behind

FTAs, Export Strategy to achieve \$ 2 trillion by 2030, role of Export Promotion Councils in trade promotion, prospects and challenges for India's Trade in Services, India's FDI policy and role of Invest India, Make in India & Startup India Missions. They could also get a feel of the activities in a SEZ by visiting Noida SEZ. Most importantly the OTs could feel the ambience and atmosphere of optimism in the MoC with multiple foreign delegations having simultaneous engagements in the Ministry in different state of art facilities within the premises. The OTs were also hosted for a working lunch by the Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, Shri Jitin Prasada.



FROM DEAN'S DESK

Dear Readers, Dear Friends,

Reading a good book is the best way to allow new perspectives, knowledge, writing styles, empathy and understanding to enrich our lives. With that thought, and as guided by Foreign Secretary in his first meeting with the Officer Trainees of 2024 batch on 2 December 2024, we started with the first book club activity at SSIFS on 7 February with great results. Details are inside the newsletter.

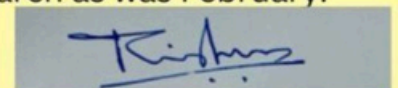


IFS Officer Trainees of 2024 batch along with two diplomats from Bhutan continued their third month of Induction Training Program which focused on Economic Diplomacy including Science & Technology Diplomacy in February. For experiential learning the program included attachments for two days with Ministry of Commerce, and Research Information System (RIS) each, and a three days visit to Mumbai, the commercial capital. At SSIFS they had knowledge sessions including the role-play and table-top exercises in the areas of trade negotiations, geo-economic challenges, and science diplomacy. A three days module with Protocol division of the Ministry of External Affairs, gave the OTs exposure to an important skill area for diplomacy - the Diplomatic Etiquette & Protocol. They could understand what goes behind the scenes to make the events look so professional and aesthetic, a key enabling ingredient for successful outcomes.

India's prioritized engagement with its extended neighbourhood with the countries in Gulf region has witnessed a transformation in past decade. In line with this vision, a Special Combined Course for diplomats from Kuwait, Oman & Saudi Arabia was organised in February. All three countries are important 'Strategic Partners' of India. Specially curated short course focussed on experiential learning through visits to centres of excellence, knowledge sessions as well as a short day trip to Taj Mahal. The topics were chosen both from functional as well as domain based competencies required for diplomacy. Economic, Environmental, & Technology themes were given three to four sessions each as specifically desired by the group.

The Institute also hosted 39 civil servants of Cambodia at SSIFS who were participating in the training program on public policy & governance at National Centre for Good Governance(NCGG).

Institute had the opportunity to host the Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Pabitra Margherita for a briefing session on the latest developments in Institute's drive towards aligning the training processes with the vision of Viksit Bharat, both by developing frameworks rooted in our ancient wisdom as well as by using the latest technological tools to make the training more efficient, effective, and environment friendly. Looking forward to a productive March as was February.



[Raj Kumar Srivastava]

New Delhi

28 February 2025

Combined Special Course for Diplomats from Kuwait, Oman & Saudi Arabia (17-25 February 2025)

A Combined Special Course for Diplomats from Kuwait, Oman & Saudi Arabia was held at SSIFS from 17-25 February 2025. The Special Course was attended by 08 diplomats from Kuwait, 03 diplomats from Oman and, 01 diplomat from Saudi Arabia. India shares historically strong economic and socio-cultural ties with Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia and India has strategic partnerships with all three countries.

In the past decade, India's prioritised engagement with its extended neighbourhood including the countries in the Gulf Region has witnessed a transformation. In line with this vision, the combined special course covered diverse themes : Global Geopolitical & Geo-economic Landscapes; India's relations with countries in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC); Economic Diplomacy; Reform of Multilateral Institutions to strengthen multipolarity; Pro-planet People Initiatives such as International Solar Alliance & Mission LiFE; Emerging Technologies & Responsible AI For All. As part of study visits, the diplomats visited Research and Information System for Developing Countries; DAKSHIN- Global South Centre of Excellence; International Solar Alliance Hqrs. The visiting delegates also visited several places of historical and cultural importance, including Taj Mahal.



**Combined Special Course for Diplomats from Kuwait, Oman & Saudi Arabia
(17-25 February 2025) - Some Glimpses from Knowledge Sessions & Study Visits**



**Knowledge Sessions
& Study Visits**



Combined Special Course for Diplomats from Kuwait, Oman & Saudi Arabia (17-25 February 2025) - Some Glimpses from visits to iconic places

Taj Mahal



Humayun's Tomb



Museum of
Constitution: JGU



Valedictory Day Presentations by Participants from three countries & Ceremony



SSIFS and RIS Partnership in February

A day module on Economic Diplomacy at RIS for Special Course for Diplomats from Kuwait, Oman, and Saudi Arabia



Two days module on Economic Diplomacy at RIS for IFS Officer Trainees of 2024 Batch



Induction Training Program for 2024 Batch IFS Officer Trainees (OTs) in February 2025

The 2024 Batch IFS Officer Trainees and two Bhutanese diplomats began the third month of their Induction Training Program with sessions on diplomatic protocol and etiquette. These sessions aimed to provide a crucial skillset in diplomacy which ensures that meetings and events are organised with established protocols, and aesthetics to ensure enabling environment for substantive discussions to take place and deliver desired outcomes. The OTs visited Jindal Global University in Sonipat on 6 February and had an engaging program on diplomacy at this centre of excellence private university, where they could also visit the recently built, state of art and high tech, Constitution Museum which houses all information that one could desire on Indian constitution. OTs also attended a one-day module on cyber security at CERT-In.

Rest of the month was focussed on Economic and S&T Diplomacy, where two days attachments with Ministry of Commerce & Industry, and with Research & Information System (RIS) provided sufficient knowledge and experience sharing with both experts as well as policy makers in the field of economic diplomacy. Within SSIFS we conducted knowledge sessions with experts on trade negotiations, science topics of current relevance, ideas for building S&T partnerships, and on forecasting methods.

A three day long attachment in Mumbai gave the OTs exposure to Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Indian Navy, Videsh Bhawan (including RPO), and the Capital Market. The economic diplomacy module couldn't complete without a trip to the commercial capital of India.

The OTs also attended in february, sessions on 'Introduction to Golf' from professional coaches at the DDA's Qutub Golf Course.

The Phase -I of Induction Training Program for IFS OTs comes to an end in February after which for next three months they would continue their desk attachments in different divisions of the Ministry to get an hands-on experience and on-job training before they return to SSIFS for their three months of Phase-II of training program.



A day visit for IFS Officer Trainees Jindal Global University where they also could see the new state-of-art Constitution Museum



You are cordially invited to participate in
A Daylong Engagement
with

INDIAN FOREIGN SERVICE (IFS) OFFICER TRAINEES

from the
Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS)
Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India

THURSDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2025 | 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

PROGRAMME



Book Club Activity by IFS Officer Trainees on 7 February

A total of 18 books were covered in the first book club day at SSIFS on 7 February by the IFS Officer Trainees, which included 8 presentations with infographics, 13 book reviews, and one fireside chat with the author of Anger Management, Amb. Ajay Bisaria. It was a day of celebrating books, sharing knowledge, honing writing skills, and becoming story tellers. Fireside chat was absolute delight for the OTs as well as the author, as can be seen from the message on X by Amb Bisaria.

Book Club Activity on 7 February 2025 (Friday)

0930-1130 40 Minutes
CHIP WAR
Session with the Author Amb. Ajay Bisaria

1200-1330 40 Minutes
AI 2041
10 Minutes
DIGITAL EMPIRES
40 Minutes
WHY BHARAT MATTERS

1430-1630 30 Minutes
10 Minutes
20 Minutes
20 Minutes

BOOK REVIEWS

FAREED ZAKARIA
INDIA AND ASIAN GEOGRAPHY
TO EYE BHARAT MATTERS
THE HISTORY OF INDIA'S GEOGRAPHY
LONG GAME
ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY

Ajay Bisaria · 08.02.2025. Had an engaging conversation with the latest cohort of foreign service officers, at their inaugural book club meet. Impressed by their close reading of the book and the incisive questions.

Sushma S... · 07.02.2025. At the inaugural session of 2024 batch IFS Officer Trainees' Book Club, Amb. Ajay Bisaria engaged with them at SSIFS on 7 Feb 2025 in a fireside chat on his book Anger Management. Reflecting on India-Pak relations & the role of diplomats, he addressed the queries of the OTs.

Glimpses from IFS OTs' Mumbai Attachment (23-26 February 2025)



Resolutions towards Vision of Viksit Bharat by IFS Officer Trainees of 2024 batch in Poetry and in Prose



Jayasree
Pradhan

Like the river in Kahlil Gibran's words, I stand at the edge of a vast ocean—the world of diplomacy. Looking back, I see the path I have traveled, shaped by hard work, passion, and an unwavering commitment to service. Ahead lies uncertainty, but just as the river must merge with the sea to fulfill its destiny, I must embrace the unknown. The Indian Foreign Service is a leap of faith, and in the words of the Hon'ble External Affairs Minister, it is much like jumping off a plane with a parachute, uncertain of the exact destination but confident in the adventure ahead. But I welcome this challenge. I am ready to fly, to navigate complexities, and to grow into a diplomat who embodies the vision of Viksit Bharat.

India's journey toward Viksit Bharat requires a diplomatic cadre that is skilled, adaptable, and visionary. While I possess core strengths in duty, communication, and collaboration, there are areas I need to work on—particularly in economic diplomacy, technology, and public diplomacy. By actively upskilling and aligning myself with the principles given by the honorable Prime Minister, I aim to enhance my role as a Karmayogi Diplomat, ensuring that I contribute meaningfully to India's development and global leadership



Amritanshu
Nayak

Annapurna
Singh



In Bharat's heart, dreams take flight,
With Panch Pran as guiding light.
Through Ekata's strength, we stand as one,
A Karmayogi's duty never undone.
With Kartavya strong and vision grand,
We build a future, bold and planned.
Through Svadhyaya, we learn and grow,
With Rajyakarma, our ethics show.
To Atmanirbhar Bharat, we pledge each day,
In unity and resolve, we find our way



Garima
Mundra

In the mirror of self, I see a spark,
A flame of passion, even in the dark.
Critique and courage in a dance so fine,
Building bridges of thought, line by line.
With feedback as my compass,
and humor as my guide,
I'll steer my ship with pride, on the tide.
Each lesson learned, a step towards the light,
A diplomat forging a future bright.
In every critique and every cheer,
I find the strength to persevere.
This is my path—ever evolving, ever true,
In service of Bharat, in all I do.

Some Excerpts from Tour Reports by IFS OTs on their Mumbai Attachment (23-26 February 2025)



Gokul K.

Mumbai's open culture is one of its most defining characteristics. The city is a melting pot of cultures, languages, and traditions, where people from all walks of life coexist and thrive. This inclusivity is evident in its public spaces, from local trains to bustling markets, where differences are celebrated rather than suppressed. The city's resilience is also remarkable; despite facing numerous challenges, from overcrowding to natural disasters, Mumbai continues to grow and inspire. Its ability to adapt and reinvent itself is a lesson in perseverance and optimism. Our visit to Mumbai was a microcosm of India's diversity, ambition, and challenges. The institutions we visited—BARC, SEBI, RPO, and the Indian Navy—highlighted India's strengths in science, economics, governance, and defence. Mumbai, with its boundless energy and resilience, is a testament to the indomitable spirit of India, Mumbai isn't just the "Financial Capital".



Anjuga P.

Mumbai is more than India's financial capital; it is an emotion, a paradox, a living, breathing force that pulsates with ambition. Over the course of my official visit, I had the privilege of engaging with some of India's most critical institutions—its naval command, nuclear research centre, financial regulatory body, and, of course, its vibrant food culture. Each of these encounters provided a deeper understanding of India's strengths, aspirations, and the challenges it continues to overcome.

Mumbai is a city of contrasts—a place where luxury high-rises stand beside sprawling slums, where tradition meets innovation, and where chaos fuels ambition. Standing before the Gateway of India, I was reminded of its historical significance—a monument that has seen empires rise and fall, welcoming visitors and bidding farewell to colonial rulers. It stands as a symbol of India's resilience and ever-evolving identity. The visit left me with three enduring reflections: 1. India is mastering self-reliance. From nuclear energy to financial governance, the vision of ATMANIRBHAR Bharat is in full force. 2. Maritime security is key to India's global aspirations. Naval advancements suggest India is positioning itself as a dominant force in regional security. 3. Mumbai thrives on its people. The sheer determination and ambition of its residents make it a powerhouse of innovation and progress.

**End of Phase I Get Together before moving on to the Desk Attachments
at the Ministry of External Affairs during March-May 2025**



**Learning Golf - A sport which helps in diplomacy and in life,
to keep the head down, live in the moment , and play against
yourself to achieve your best possible potential**



Partnership between SSIFS & National Centre for Good Governance(NCGG) for sharing best practices

Civil servants of Cambodia were received at SSIFS on 19 February, who were participating in the training program on public policy & governance at National Centre for Good Governance(NCGG).

Dean (SSIFS) presented to the visiting officials a brief overview of the institute, its history & motto, structure of the training programs along with latest infusion of technology in training processes to make it more efficient, effective, paperless, and transparent. He also shared the three dimensional competency model of training which is making training more tangible and measurable exercise.

As the 39 members delegation represented five different ministries from Cambodia including heads of some training institutions, the delegates expressed their gratitude for sharing best practices so openly marking true friendship between the two countries



Partnership between SSIFS & LBSNAA during 4th Round of Common Mid-Career Training Programme (CMCTP) for the 2004 Batch

In line with the Hon'ble PM's call for de-siloization, and in an effort to strengthen cooperation with other CSTIs, Amb. Raj Kumar Srivastava, Dean(SSIFS) participated at a panel discussion at Lal Bahadur Shahstri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) in Mussoorie, on 13 February, where he presented case studies from experiences of Ministry of External Affairs where whole of government approach was the basis of success achieved. These case studies included specific examples of evacuation and HADR exercises undertaken by GoI with MEA in lead, streamlining the migration and mobility of Indian citizens with four key central and many state governments playing their respective roles and coordinating actions, and specific examples of facilitating investments from Japan through focussed outreaches undertaken by different states of India with the help of Indian Embassy in Tokyo.



Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Pabitra Margherita paid a visit to SSIFS and was briefed about the latest developments at SSIFS

<  Pabitra Margherita  · ...
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18 Feb · 

Visited Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service, MEA today and had a productive review meeting with the Dean & officials of the SSIFS.

Reviewed the latest upgrades in physical & digital infrastructure and innovative pedagogical methods being used to align with PM's vision of #ViksitBharat.

Impressed by SSIFS's paperless approach & new digital learning platforms.

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India
Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service



Dean (SSIFS) received Ambassadors of Iran, Kuwait, & Jordan in February and discussed future cooperation in the field of diplomatic training and sharing of best practices



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 in the Ministry of External Affairs. The current Dean is Shri Raj Kumar Srivastava. 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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