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VIDEESH SEWA



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Mr. Rahul B. Gajbhiye,
Principal Private Secretary, SSIFS
Contribution/Feedback email : cc.ssifs@mea.gov.in

Editor's Desk



डीन
सुषमा स्वराज विदेश सेवा संस्थान
विदेश मंत्रालय

Dean
Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service
Ministry of External Affairs

The year 2022 began under the cloud of the Omicron surge in the country. This meant that courses conducted by the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service had to be done virtually or in a hybrid mode. We were fortunate in India that the third wave could be managed properly due to the high coverage of vaccination amongst the target groups. As the situation improved, SSIFS resumed its physical courses and rolled out some novel ones under the aegis of *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* (AKAM). The first quarter of the year was an eventful one.

We welcomed the 2021 Batch of the Indian Foreign Service Officer Trainees (IFS OTs) and two diplomats from Bhutan in March 2022 and thus began their six-month Induction Training Programme. It was heartening to see that out of thirty-five OTs, fifteen are women diplomats, ensuring a fair gender balance at 43%. The two OTs from Bhutan are both women diplomats. The first week in SSIFS was the 'Orientation Week' for the OTs with calls on External Affairs Minister, all three Ministers of State, Foreign Secretary and all the Secretaries in the MEA. The OTs were given introductory lectures on India's foreign policy and on the structure and functions of the MEA and other administrative matters.

MEA celebrated the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* (AKAM) week from 21-27 February 2022. To celebrate this occasion, SSIFS organized some modules/courses including the one on India's neighbourhood, in partnership with the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), at the 96th Foundation Course for 488 civil servants including IFS OTs, newly recruited officers from the All India Services and other Central Services (Group A) and 10 Officers from the Royal Bhutan Government Civil Services. The 3-day training module was the first-ever foreign policy module conducted as a part of the Foundation Course for civil servants and the first-of-its-kind on India's neighbourhood. There was an overwhelming response to the training module, both from the guest faculty and the trainee officers. A 'Special Course on Foreign Policy for Indian Media' was conducted in February 2022 in association with MEA's External Publicity Division. Twenty-one Indian journalists from various English, Hindi and regional media houses participated in the course.

As far as Non-Representational Grade (NRG) courses were concerned, the two-week Induction Training Programme (ITP) for Batch-II of Direct Recruit Assistant Section Officers (DR-ASOs) of the 2017 and 2018 Batches took place virtually in January-February 2022. On the foreign diplomats' front, a half-day training programme was organized on 25 February 2022 for fifteen Officer Trainees of the 2019 Batch of Bangladesh Foreign Service at the request of the High Commission of Bangladesh in New Delhi.

The Courses in SSIFS are picking up momentum as the pandemic recedes. We look forward to bringing you more good news on the exciting journey of diplomatic training in the months ahead!

[Arun Kumar Chatterjee]

New Delhi
April 2022

Highlights

Training for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Officers

Induction Training Programme for IFS Officer Trainees of 2021 Batch and Diplomats from Bhutan

The Induction Training Programme (ITP) for thirty-five Indian Foreign Service Officer Trainees (IFS OTs) of the 2021 batch and two diplomats from Bhutan commenced on 21 March 2022. The inaugural module of the ITP, conceptualized as an exercise to familiarize the officers with the structure and function of the Ministry and its highest offices, was held from 21-25 March 2022 as the 'Orientation Week'. During the Orientation Week,

the IFS OTs and Bhutanese diplomats called on External Affairs Minister, all three Ministers of State (External Affairs), Foreign Secretary and all the other Secretaries of MEA. The officers also attended sessions on India's foreign policy conducted by academicians and domain experts, and sessions on structure and function of the Ministry and other administrative matters conducted by officers from MEA.



IFS OTs 2021 Batch with Team SSIFS



Welcome address by Dean (SSIFS)



EAM with women IFS OTs 2021 Batch



EAM with Bhutanese OTs



Call by IFS OTs on Minister of State for External Affairs & Parliamentary Affairs, Shri V. Muraleedharan





Call by IFS OTs on Minister of State for External Affairs & Culture, Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi



Call by IFS OTs on Minister of State for External Affairs & Education, Dr. Rajkumar Ranjan Singh



Call by IFS OTs on Shri Saurabh Kumar, Secretary (East), MEA



Call by IFS OTs on Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, Secretary (CPV & OIA), MEA



Call by IFS OTs on Shri Dammu Ravi, Secretary (ER), MEA



Call by IFS OTs on Shri Sanjay Verma, Secretary (West), MEA



Training Programmes for other Civil Service Officers

Training Programme for Officers Posted to Overseas Audit Offices

SSIFS conducted an online two-day training programme for officers posted to the Overseas Audit Offices of CAG on 06-07 January 2022. Fifteen officers participated in the programme. The training programme focused on familiarizing the participants on working in Embassies/Consulates abroad, including the structure and functions of Indian Missions/Posts abroad, overview of India's foreign policy, major aspects of diplomatic practice etc. This is the second edition of the training programme for Audit Officers, the first one having been held in August 2021 for the officers of the International Relations Division of the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG).



Training Module on India's Neighbourhood for the 96th Foundation Course at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA)

SSIFS, in partnership with the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), organised a training module on India's neighbourhood at the 96th Foundation Course for the latest entrants to India's Civil Services. The 3-day training module on India's Neighbourhood, held from 9-11 March 2022, was organised for 488 participants including IFS Officer Trainees, newly recruited officers from All India Services and other Central Service (Group A), and 10 Officers from the Royal Bhutan Government Civil Services. This was

the first-ever foreign policy module conducted as part of the Foundation Course for civil servants and the first of its kind training module on India's neighbourhood. There was an overwhelming response to the training module, both from the guest faculty comprising retired Ambassadors (who have either dealt with these countries or have served as Ambassadors in these countries) and the Officer Trainees who appreciated this attempt to better familiarize the civil servants regarding the dynamics of India's relations with its neighbours.



*Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla,
Foreign Secretary virtually
addressing the participants*



*Amb. Rajiv Bhatia with
the participants*



*Address by Amb. Sujan Chinoy, DG,
Manohar Parrikar Institute of Defence Studies*



*Participants at the 96th
Foundation Course*

AKAM – Special Course on Foreign Policy for Indian Media

SSIFS, in association with the External Publicity Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, organised a ‘Special Course on Foreign Policy for Indian Media’ from 21-25 February 2022. The Special Course coincided with MEA’s Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) week. Twenty-one Indian journalists from various English, Hindi and regional media houses participated in the course.

The programme was inaugurated on 21 February

2022 by Smt. Reenat Sandhu, then Secretary (West), MEA. The Special Course included interactive sessions on MEA’s structure and functions, and relevant aspects of India’s foreign policy and diplomatic engagements around the world. Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi, Minister of State for External Affairs & Culture, was the Chief Guest at the Valedictory Ceremony held on 25 February 2022.



Participants of the Special Course on Foreign Policy for Indian Media



Inaugural address by Smt. Reenat Sandhu, then Secretary (West), MEA



Minister of State for External Affairs & Culture, Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi graced the Valedictory Ceremony



Training Programmes for Foreign Diplomats

Training Programme for Officer Trainees of Bangladesh Foreign Service

A half-day training programme for fifteen Officer Trainees of the 2019 Batch of Bangladesh Foreign Service was organized on 25 February 2022 at the request of the High Commission of Bangladesh in New Delhi. The 16-member delegation from the Foreign Service Academy of Bangladesh was led by Director General, Mr. Shah Ahmed Shafi. Three interactive sessions on India and its land, people and culture, India's foreign policy and bilateral

relations with Bangladesh were organised for the visiting delegation. Dean (SSIFS), Shri Arun Kumar Chatterjee, warmly welcomed the young diplomats from Bangladesh and highlighted the special bonds of friendship between the two countries anchored in history, culture, language and shared values of secularism and democracy. The programme was held under the aegis of the MEA's *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* (AKAM) week.



Bangladesh delegation with Team SSIFS



Address by Dean (SSIFS)



Presentation of mementos by Dean (SSIFS) and DG, Foreign Service Academy, Bangladesh



Training Programmes for MEA Officials

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

The Induction Training Programme (ITP) for Batch-II of Direct Recruit Assistant Section Officers (DR-ASOs) of the 2017 and 2018 Batches was conducted online (due to the prevailing COVID-19 situation at that time) from 31 January- 11 February 2022. Fifty-six ASOs participated in the Programme. The ITP for Batch-I was conducted in a physical format in December 2021.

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, gender sensitization, office etiquette, dress code etc. In addition, there were a few sessions on India's 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 Valedictory Session was held physically at SSIFS during which Certificates of Participation were given to the ASOs. They were invited for a valedictory lunch as a culmination of the ITP.

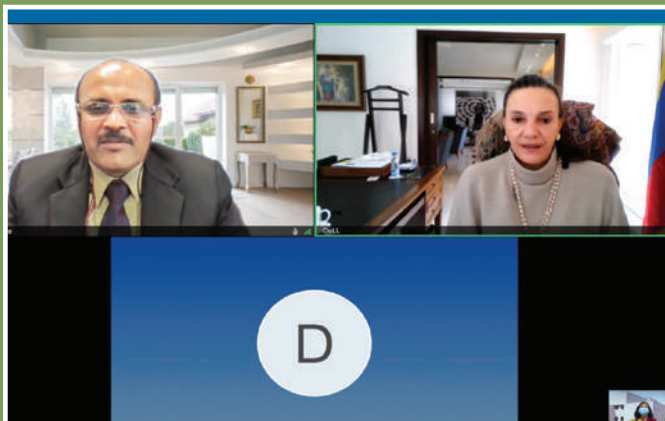


Participants of ITP for Batch-II of DR-ASOs



Valedictory Session of ITP for Batch-II of DR-ASOs

Meeting of Dean (SSIFS)



Dean (SSIFS), Shri Arun Kumar Chatterjee had a virtual meeting with H.E. Ms. Mariana Pacheco-Montes, Ambassador of Colombia to India on 02 February 2022. Dean (SSIFS) gave a detailed briefing on SSIFS' activities and training programmes. They discussed issues of mutual cooperation and training related matters.

SSIFS Outreach

As a part of its outreach programme, SSIFS has signed Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) with its following counterparts during this quarter:

Sl. No.	Name of Institution	Country	Date
1.	Bandaranaike International Diplomatic Training (BIDTI)	Sri Lanka	28 March 2022
2.	Foreign Service Institutes of BIMSTEC Member States	BIMSTEC Member States	30 March 2022



MoU signed with Sri Lanka



MoUs signed with BIMSTEC Member States

New Postings

SSIFS bid farewell to:

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Dr. Rajiv Kaushik	Faculty
2.	Shri Mukesh Kumar Singh	MTS

SSIFS welcomes:

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Ms. Ovessa Iqbal	Deputy Secretary
2.	Shri Harender Singh	MTS

Upgradation of facilities at SSIFS



SSIFS is constantly endeavouring to upgrade its facilities and infrastructure at its premises. In continuation of these efforts, renovation and modernization of toilets was undertaken to offer better facilities to the trainees including foreign diplomats. In addition, regular maintenance of hostel facilities including upgradation of sports facilities by way of adding sports and gym equipments among others was carried out before the arrival of IFS Officer Trainees of 2021 Batch for their six-month long Induction Training

Programme. In the SSIFS Library, more space was added by removing old newspapers/magazines/books and old, unused electronic equipments. Latest books and publications are being added to the Library's collection after taking on board suggestions by Faculty Members and OTs.





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.

Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service

Ministry of External Affairs, Baba Gangnath Marg, Old JNU Campus, New Delhi –110067, India

Phone: 26170249, 26181248, 26181366 | Fax: 26181345 | Email: cc.ssifs@mea.gov.in