

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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DEAN

SUSHMA SWARAJ INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN SERVICE
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

The quarter April-June 2020 was a particularly challenging one for the Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) due to the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic resulting in a prolonged lockdown with 'work from home'. As a result, the traditional SSIFS methodology of interactive class room sessions needed to be suspended. However, the Institute's innovative spirit sought to seek opportunities in this challenge.

SSIFS went digital in a big way. In the past, training courses over webinar had been conducted selectively for officers and staff posted in Missions/Posts abroad. Online training almost became the new normal and was mainstreamed for our sessions at all levels. It is noteworthy that Phase-II of Induction Training Programme (ITP) of IFS Officer Trainees-2019 during this time was entirely conducted online. This entailed training through regular online modules as also new ones dealing with cyber security, speed reading, etc. The very first training programme of Interpreters Cadre of MEA was conducted entirely online. Similarly, mandatory training for officers and staff related to promotions and postings was conducted online with a focus on practical application of IMAS, IVFRT, etc.

Once the initial hesitation and some technical glitches were overcome, SSIFS discovered that the digital medium provided a viable option even for normal times. It also enabled the Institute to leverage eminent scholars, academics, experts who were based outside Delhi including in foreign countries as guest faculty. Going forward, SSIFS's endeavour will be on optimum combination of physical classes with online sessions to calibrate a healthy mix.

The International Forum on Diplomatic Training's (IFDT) Steering Group online meeting on June 8 reviewed and finalised IFDT's annual conference calendar in the light of challenges posed by Covid 19. This first IFDT Steering Group meeting at which India was participating decided that India would remain the host of IFDT's annual conference in 2022 to coincide with India@75.

New Delhi
July 2020


[J.S. Mukul]

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Highlights

Training of IFS OTs

Induction Training Programme of Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Officer Trainees (2019 batch) and Diplomats from Bhutan

The classroom sessions and study tours of Induction Training Programme (ITP) for 30 IFS Officer Trainees (OTs) of 2019 Batch and 2 diplomats from Bhutan, which commenced in December 2019, were disrupted in the last week of March 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

However, in April this year, the OTs and Bhutanese diplomats performed duty in the Control Room of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and assisted in dealing with MEA's COVID-19 related work. Specifically, they were assigned various countries/regions to answer queries from Indian citizens/NRIs/PIOs in these countries/regions. This provided the OTs firsthand experience on crisis management.

Subsequently, the OTs participated in an online Cyber-Security Course by Gujarat Forensic Sciences University (GFSU), Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

The OTs also had an online training programme on 'Speed Reading and Memory Training' by IRIS Chicago, USA.

Phase-II of ITP commenced on 15 June 2020 through webinar and is in progress.



(Deployment of IFS OTs at COVID-19 Control Room, MEA, New Delhi)



(Address by Dean (SSIFS) to IFS OTs in the Phase-II of ITP)

Pre-Promotion Training of MEA Interpreter Cadre

Online Pre-Promotion Training conducted for 7 officers of Interpreter Cadre of MEA was conducted by SSIFS from 6-17 April 2020.

Training of MEA Officials

IMAS (accounts) Training Programme was conducted by SSIFS from 10-12 June through webinar. 90 MEA officials participated in the training.

A 1-day IVFRT (consular) training was conducted on 13 June through webinar. The training was attended by 51 participants.



(Speaker addressing on webinar to participants of IMAS Training Programme)

Cooperation with IFDT

Amb. J.S. Mukul, Dean (SSIFS) participated in an online meeting of IFDT (International Forum on Diplomatic Training) Steering Group on 8 June. Amb. Mukul reiterated India's keen interest to host the annual IFDT meeting in India in 2022 to coincide with India@75. IFDT has agreed to the proposal.

Amb Mukul also took part in an online conference 'The Impact of Covid-19 on Diplomatic Training: Best Practices, Recommendations and Future Plans' on 10 June hosted by the Mohammad bin Mubarak Al Khalifa Academy for Diplomatic Studies of Bahrain.

Training of Foreign Diplomats

The following training programmes for foreign diplomats, which were scheduled to be held at SSIFS in the 2nd quarter of 2020, were postponed due to Covid-19 pandemic:

| S.No | Programmes | Date |
|------|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 69th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats | 16 Mar – 9 Apr 2020 |
| 2 | 3rd Special Course for Pacific Island Countries | 13-25 Apr 2020 |
| 3 | 2nd Special Course for Dominican Republic | 13-25 Apr 2020 |
| 4 | 1st Special Course for Argentina | 13-25 Apr 2020 |
| 5 | 1st Special Course for El Salvador | 13-25 Apr 2020 |
| 6 | 2nd Special Course for Kenya | 27 Apr – 9 May 2020 |
| 7 | 1st Special Course for Ethiopia | 27 Apr – 9 May 2020 |
| 8 | 1st Special Course for Zambia | 27 Apr – 9 May 2020 |
| 9 | 1st Special Course for Oman | 8-20 June 2020 |

MoUs Signed by SSIFS

Till date, SSIFS has signed 87 Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with counterpart institutions abroad.

List of MoUs in Chronological Order

| Sl No. | Name of country | Date | Sl No. | Name of country | Date |
|--------|-----------------|-------------------|--------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Peru | 26 May 1997 | 39 | Iraq | 23 August 2013 |
| 2 | Russia | 10 June 1999 | 40 | Liberia | 11 September 2013 |
| 3 | Uruguay | 06 December 1999 | 41 | Kuwait | 08 November 2013 |
| 4 | Sudan | 09 April 2000 | 42 | Macedonia | 17 December 2013 |
| 5 | Chile | 10 August 2000 | 43 | Bahrain | 19 February 2014 |
| 6 | Argentina | 30 August 2000 | 44 | Fiji | 19 November 2014 |
| 7 | Guyana | 28 November 2000 | 45 | Costa Rica | 16 March 2015 |
| 8 | Croatia | 05 January 2001 | 46 | Qatar | 25 March 2015 |
| 9 | Panama | 02 February 2001 | 47 | Mongolia | 17 May 2015 |
| 10 | Egypt | 03 February 2001 | 48 | Trinidad & Tobago | 05 June 2015 |
| 11 | Colombia | 05 March 2001 | 49 | Turkmenistan | 11 July 2015 |
| 12 | Cuba | 13 March 2002 | 50 | Jordan | 11 October 2015 |
| 13 | Tunisia | 07 May 2002 | 51 | Maldives | 11 October 2015 |
| 14 | Palestine | 29 August 2003 | 52 | Montenegro | 20 May 2016 |
| 15 | Canada | 13 October 2003 | 53 | Morocco | 31 May 2016 |
| 16 | Uzbekistan | 06 November 2003 | 54 | Ghana | 13 June 2016 |
| 17 | Bulgaria | 28 July 2004 | 55 | Intra-BRICS | 16 October 2016 |
| 18 | Afghanistan | 01 September 2004 | 56 | Kyrgyzstan | 20 December 2016 |
| 19 | Venezuela | 02 September 2004 | 57 | Turkey | 1 May 2017 |
| 20 | Namibia | 24 February 2005 | 58 | Spain | 30 May 2017 |
| 21 | Norway | 17 June 2005 | 59 | Germany | 31 May 2017 |
| 22 | Saudi Arabia | 24 June 2005 | 60 | Dominican Republic | 03 October 2017 |
| 23 | Mexico | 21 October 2005 | 61 | Italy | 30 November 2017 |
| 24 | Indonesia | 23 November 2005 | 62 | Syria | 25 January 2018 |
| 25 | Ecuador | 18 July 2006 | 63 | Oman | 11 February 2018 |
| 26 | Romania | 23 October 2006 | 64 | Azerbaijan | 04 April 2018 |
| 27 | Brazil | 12 September 2007 | 65 | Guatemala | 7 May 2018 |
| 28 | Serbia | 17 September 2007 | 66 | Ethiopia | 9 May 2018 |
| 29 | Philippines | 05 October 2007 | 67 | Myanmar | 10 May 2018 |
| 30 | Nigeria | 15 October 2007 | 68 | Netherlands | 23 May 2018 |
| 31 | Czech Republic | 19 November 2007 | 69 | Somalia | 5 June 2018 |
| 32 | Ukraine | 28 March 2008 | 70 | Greece | 18 June 2018 |
| 33 | South Africa | 04 June 2010 | 71 | Suriname | 20 June 2018 |
| 34 | IBSA | 18 October 2011 | 72 | Seychelles | 24 June 2018 |
| 35 | Korea | 21 March 2012 | 73 | UAE | 25 June 2018 |
| 36 | Yemen | 03 April 2012 | 74 | Cambodia | 29 August 2018 |
| 37 | Bangladesh | 10 February 2013 | 75 | Malta | 17 September 2018 |
| 38 | Iran | 04 May 2013 | 76 | Tanzania | 16 October 2018 |

| Sl No. | Name of country | Date | Sl No. | Name of country | Date |
|--------|------------------|-------------------|--------|-----------------|------------------|
| 77 | Papua New Guinea | 19 February 2019 | 83 | Thailand | 10 October 2019 |
| 78 | Paraguay | 06 March 2019 | 84 | Sierra Leone | 13 October 2019 |
| 79 | Gambia | 07 March 2019 | 85 | Saudi Arabia | 29 October 2019 |
| 80 | Bolivia | 29 March 2019 | 86 | Kenya | 03 December 2019 |
| 81 | Zambia | 21 August 2019 | 87 | Portugal | 14 February 2020 |
| 82 | Lao PDR | 06 September 2019 | | | |

Of the 87 MoUs to-date, a majority ie. 44 have been concluded since May 2014

SSIFS' Online Presence

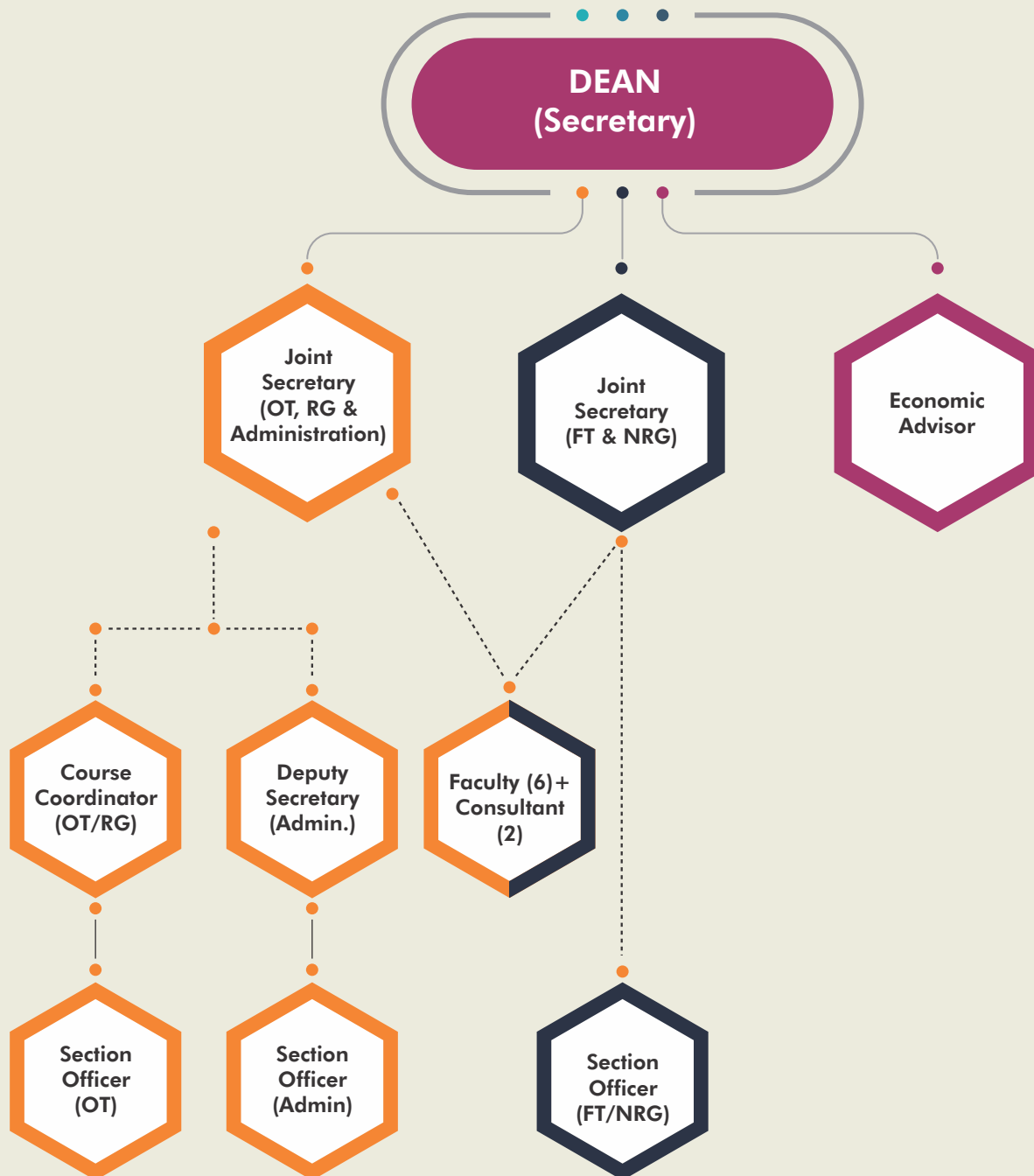
SSIFS has an active online presence. Links are given below:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Website of SSIFS: | https://meafsi.gov.in/ |
| SSIFS Alumni Portal: | https://SSIFSalumni.gov.in/ |
| SSIFS's Twitter: | https://twitter.com/SSIFS_MEA |
| SSIFS's Facebook Page: | https://www.facebook.com/SSIFS.MEA.NEWDELHI/ |
| SSIFS's Flickr Page: | https://www.flickr.com/photos/meafsi |

Welcome/Farewell

SSIFS bid farewell to (i) Col. Mayank Chaubey, Director/Consultant, whose term ended in May 2020 (ii) Mr. Bal Krishna Anand, PPS, who left on his posting to CGI Sydney.

SSIFS Organogram





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 Amb J.S. Mukul. SSIFS, primarily has an extensive guest faculty drawn from experts in the field of academics and research, the media, public life, industry and trade, senior serving and retired diplomats and other government officials.

Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service

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