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करियर शीट • CAREER SHEET

भारतीय विदेश सेवा

Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers serve as diplomats, representing India's political, economic and cultural interests at embassies and high commissions abroad.



Scan for everything on this career

Salary, exams, colleges, the routes in and the steps after — all on the portal.

career.gsssjethantri.in/#/career/indian-foreign-service

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श्री चेनाराम चौधरी

प्रधानाचार्य, डाइट बाड़मेर
Principal, DIET Barmer



श्रीमती संघमित्रा

वरिष्ठ व्याख्याता, डाइट बाड़मेर (सहयोग)
Sr. Lecturer, DIET Barmer (Support)



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सुरेश कुमार सैन

व्याख्याता (भूगोल) • रा.उ.मा.वि. रामसीन मूंगड़ा



वनिता कुमारी

व्याख्याता (इतिहास) • रा.उ.मा.वि. रामसीन मूंगड़ा



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व्याख्याता (राजनीति विज्ञान) • रा.उ.मा.वि. टापरा

करियर मार्गदर्शन कार्यशाला, डाइट बाड़मेर (14-17 जुलाई 2026) में विकसित व लोकार्पित
Developed & unveiled at the Career Guidance Workshop, DIET Barmer (14-17 July 2026)

यह एक स्वतंत्र परियोजना है, जो सरकार की आधिकारिक करियर-मार्गदर्शन सामग्री पर आधारित है। • An independent project based on the Government's official career-guidance content.

1 About this career

Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers serve as diplomats, representing India's political, economic and cultural interests at embassies and high commissions abroad.

2 At a glance

Minimum qualification	Graduation in any subject
Selection exam	UPSC Civil Services Exam
Training	Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi
Starting salary	₹56,100/month

3 What you need

INTERESTS

- Interest in international relations and politics
- Interest in languages and different cultures
- Desire to represent the nation

ABILITIES

- Excellent communication and negotiation ability
- Aptitude for learning new languages
- Diplomatic and balanced thinking

KEY SKILLS

- Diplomacy and negotiation skills
- Foreign language proficiency
- Understanding of international law and economics
- Cultural sensitivity
- Writing and presentation
- Crisis management

4 How to get there

- 1 Pass 10+2 in any stream.
- 2 Complete graduation in any subject from a recognised university (mandatory).
- 3 Clear the UPSC Civil Services Exam: Prelims, Mains and Interview.
- 4 A high rank leads to IFS allocation, followed by training at the Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi.
- 5 It is highly competitive — always complete graduation and keep a backup plan.

MAIN EXAMS

- UPSC Civil Services Exam (Prelims + Mains + Interview)

5 Where to study

GOVERNMENT INSTITUTES

- Delhi University — New Delhi (<https://www.du.ac.in>)
- Jawaharlal Nehru University — New Delhi (<https://www.jnu.ac.in>)
- University of Rajasthan — Jaipur, Rajasthan (<https://www.uniraj.ac.in>)
- Foreign Service Institute (प्रशिक्षण) — New Delhi

PRIVATE INSTITUTES

- Vajiram & Ravi — Private paid coaching — this portal does not endorse any institute. Look at the free options first: the Chief Minister Anuprati coaching scheme, and the recruiting board's own syllabus and past question papers. Check fees, facilities and success claims for yourself; no one can guarantee selection.

ONLINE

- UPSC Official Portal — Online (<https://upsc.gov.in>)
- SWAYAM / iGOT — Online (<https://swayam.gov.in>)
- स्वयं (SWAYAM) — भारत सरकार के निःशुल्क ऑनलाइन कोर्स — Free (<https://swayam.gov.in/>)
- राष्ट्रीय डिजिटल पुस्तकालय (NDLI) — Free books and study material (<https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/>)
- एन.सी.ई.आर.टी. — निःशुल्क पाठ्यपुस्तकें — The foundation for general knowledge, maths and science (<https://ncert.nic.in/>)

FEES

Graduation at government universities costs from nearly free up to about ₹50,000/year. The UPSC application fee is around ₹100 (waived for many categories). Coaching is optional and can cost ₹50,000–2,00,000.

SCHOLARSHIPS

- National Scholarship Portal (<https://scholarships.gov.in>)
- Rajasthan SJE Scholarships (<https://sje.rajasthan.gov.in>)
- Buddy4Study (<https://www.buddy4study.com>)
- Vidya Lakshmi (Education Loan) (<https://www.vidyalakshmi.co.in>)

6 What the work is like

WHERE YOU WORK

Ministry of External Affairs (New Delhi), Indian embassies, high commissions and consulates abroad.

WORK CULTURE

Postings are in India or abroad; office-based; leading teams of officers; a transferable posting; 5–6 days a week.

WHO HIRES

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) | • Indian embassies abroad |
| • High commissions and consulates | • United Nations and multilateral missions |
| • India's representation at international organisations | |

DEMAND (2026)

The All-India Services offer limited posts each year while lakhs of candidates apply, so competition is extremely high. Selection is tough, but demand stays strong because of nation-building and job security. It matters to keep two things apart: "demand" here counts the posts on offer, not your chance of getting one. In the UPSC Civil Services Examination 2025, 958 candidates in all were recommended across the Indian Administrative Service, the Indian Foreign Service, the Indian Police Service and every central Group A and Group B service combined; in 2024 the figure was 1,009. That is the whole country's intake for a year. So do not make this your only plan — keep a second route (a postgraduate degree, a skill, or another recruitment) moving alongside it.

7 Career growth

- 1 Third Secretary / Attaché
- 2 Second / First Secretary
- 3 Director / Counsellor
- 4 Ambassador / High Commissioner
- 5 Foreign Secretary

EARNINGS

Starting	₹56,100/माह
Mid level	₹1,44,200/माह
Senior level	₹2,25,000–2,50,000/माह

Basic pay per the 7th Pay Commission; a foreign allowance applies during postings abroad. Figures are indicative. The figures above rest on the 7th Central Pay Commission matrix, which is what applies as of 16 August 2026. The Union Cabinet approved the Terms of Reference of the 8th Central Pay Commission on 28 October 2025, and it must report within 18 months of its constitution. It has not reported yet, so no revised pay scale exists — but these figures will change. Dearness allowance has been 60% of basic pay since 1 January 2026.

8 The good parts · The challenges

The good parts

- Representing the nation on the world stage
- Foreign travel and global exposure
- Prestige and job security

The challenges

- Extreme competition; very few posts
- Away from family, frequent change of country
- Postings in difficult or sensitive countries

9 Real-life journeys

C. B. Muthamma

India's first woman IFS officer

Born in Kodagu (Karnataka), Chonira Belliappa Muthamma became the first woman to clear the UPSC and join the Indian Foreign Service in 1949, and fought gender discrimination within the service.

Wikipedia · https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C._B._Muthamma

Kaushal Kishore

IFS Officer (AIR 80)

Son of a farmer from Gaya (Bihar), Kaushal Kishore became an IFS officer after several setbacks over six years, finally securing All-India Rank 80 in his fifth UPSC attempt.

Indian Masterminds · <https://indianmasterminds.com/feature-stories-on-bureaucrats-changemakers/6-years-4-failures-1-dream-how-a-farmers-son-became-an-ifs-officer-after-continuous-setbacks-106664/>

10 Sources & further reading

1. UPSC official website — <https://upsc.gov.in>
2. Ministry of External Affairs — <https://www.mea.gov.in>
3. Rajasthan Career Guidance source — <https://cg.rajasthan.gov.in/careerguidance/hi/career/%e0%a4%ad%e0%a4%be%e0%a4%b0%e0%a4%a4%e0%a5%80%e0%a4%af-%e0%a4%b5%e0%a4%bf%e0%a4%a6%e0%a5%87%e0%a4%b6-%e0%a4%b8%e0%a5%87%e0%a4%b5%e0%a4%be-indian-foreign-service/>
4. 8th Central Pay Commission — Cabinet approval of the Terms of Reference (PIB, 28 October 2025) — <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2183289>
5. Civil Services Examination 2025 final result — 958 candidates recommended (PIB, 6 March 2026) — <https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2235922>

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