



# 10 Day Certificate Course Work on Indian Soft Power and Practices

2nd-11th January, 2023

## A REPORT



**10 Day Certificate Course Work**  
**on**  
**Indian Soft Power and Practices**  
**2nd-11th January, 2023**  
**RTC, ICCR, Kolkata**

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**A Report**

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Workshop on  
**INDIAN SOFT POWER AND PRACTICES**

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**PROGRAMME ITINERARY (11-16TH JULY, 2022)**

**DAY 1 – 2nd January 2023(Monday)**

**Inaugural Session**

Registration and Orientation : Orientation to the Programme Module: Ms. Kankana Roy, Workshop Coordinator, ISCS, India

Session 1 : Indian Culture: An Overview

Session 2 : Indian Culture a Key Player in Diplomacy- Prof. Ishani Naskar- Prof. International Relations, Jadavpur University

Session 3 : Documentary Film Show

**DAY -2 : 3rd January 2023(Tuesday)**

Session 1 : India and Neighbors' through Shared Culture and Connect-Sri Mohit Musaddi- Senior Research Associate, ISCS, India

Session 2 : Cultural Management and Communication

Visit- I : Sri Aurobindo Bhavan (Birth Place of Sri Aurobindo)

**DAY 3 : 4th January 2023(Wednesday)**

Session 1 : Indian Diaspora: Ethnicity and Identity

Session 2 : Ancient Trade Routes and its Modern Day Relevance

Group : India and Neighbourhood :Corridors of Engagement  
Discussion

**DAY 4: 5th January 2023(Thursday)**

Session 1 : Indian Folk Culture: A Conceptual Framework

Session 2 : Sports a Tool of Indian Soft Diplomacy

Session 3 : Diplomacy Through Indian Cinema

**DAY 5: 6th January 2023(Friday)**

Session 1 : Styles and Variations of Indian Music

Session 2 : Indian Dance Forms: Origin and Regions of Practice

Visit- II : Tour to Swami Vivekananda's Ancestral Home

**DAY 6: 7th January 2023(Saturday)**

Session 1 : Buddha Connectivity

Session 2 : Girmitya: The Great Emigration Through Indian Ocean

Visit- III : Maritime Archives and Heritage Centre, Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata

**DAY 7: 8th January 2023(Sunday)**

Session 1 : Indian Footprints in South East Asia

Session 2 : Indian Tea and its Global Outreach

Session 3 : Documentary Movie

**DAY 8: 9th January 2023(Monday)**

Special : Muktijuddha and 50 Years of Indo-Bangladesh Relations: A Way Forward  
Address

Session 2 : Intangible Heritage of Eastern India at its Global Significance

**DAY 9: 10th January 2023(Tuesday)**

Session 1 : Presentation By Students

Session 2 : Presentation By Students

**DAY 10: 11th January 2023(Wednesday)**

Special : "Religious Diplomacy"  
Address

Valedictory









The Institute of Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS), India that as an autonomous forum for more than a decade has been probing into history, culture, identity, and variance of cultural hemisphere of fascinating India and its adjoining regions. In order to transpire how soft power is being used as an important tool to strengthen the country's relation with its neighbours and coastal allies with whom the country shares its civilization linkages, security and socio-economic ties, the institute has designed and organized a 10 Day Certificate Course work on "Indian Soft Power and Practices" in Collaboration with the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) at the RTC, ICCR, Kolkata between 2nd to 11th January 2023. The course work was so structured that it traced the cultural commonalities between India and its abutting nations. The course also detailed about some of the diverse issues like ethnicity, identity and civilization link-ups affecting interstate relationship between India and adjoining regions. Along with academicians, researchers, post graduate students multi-sectoral stakeholders with interests in governance, policy implications and history, heritage and socio-cultural diversities participated in the course work. The course work enabled 30 participants from different fields and regions including North East to learn and engage and exchange ideas, converse, survey and debate with national and international academicians and eminent personalities on multiple cultural themes, social lives and future unfolding and opportunities.



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**2nd January 2023**

**Registration and orientation**

The Course work emanated with enrollment process, where the participants were handed with the study kit comprising of a jute kit bag, writing materials, course work brochure and ID cards. Followed to which participants were asked to introduce and give a brief description about their ongoing endeavours, interests and aspirations.



The Course work Co-ordinator, Ms. Kankana Roy oriented the participants with the course work modules, objectives and sessions briefly.







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**Session –I (11.00-12.30 pm)**

**Indian Culture: An Overview**– was addressed by

**Dr. Sarup Prasad Ghosh**, *Director, MAKAIAS, Kolkata*

The Speaker described how the Indian culture in its long journey has created institutions assimilated customs and many wonderful manifestations took place from different parts of the world which gave strength and power and have intermingled in a manner to create this modern view of our culture, power, custom and have influenced our traditions and various cultural trends emerged and got integrated with our traditional way of life and thought.







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**Session –II (2.00 -3.30 pm)**

**Indian Culture a Key Player in Diplomacy**– was addressed by

**Prof. Ishani Naskar**, *Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University*

The lecture arrested thoughts on how soft power has become increasingly relevant for the Indian foreign policy and soft diplomacy. In Contemporary times India's outreach programmes are based on cooperation and partnerships like development partnership programmes that entails number of projects, infrastructure initiatives and a supportive educational and financial system. The purpose of her talk was to acquaint the participants with various means and methods along with the tools of Indian soft diplomacy.





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**Session –III (3.30-4.30 pm)**

Documentary movie was shown to the participants

“Living Stories: The Story Telling Tradition of India”,

Directed by Neela Venkatraman- The movie was an illustration about Indian traditional folk music, the history behind it and how it has been promoted at global forums by the regional and contemporary artists. (Movie Link - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgcCsh\\_8f50](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QgcCsh_8f50))







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**3rd January 2023**

**Session –I (11.00-12.30 pm)**

**India and Neighbours through Shared Culture and Connect**– was addressed by

**Sri Mohit Musaddi**, *Senior Research Associate, ISCS, India*

The speaker began his lecture mentioning that Cultural values impact what people and therefore states, want and think in world affairs, often subconsciously. India's social fabric itself bears the cultural imprints of many civilizations. It is internationally recognized that one of the India's significant global contributions has been the exercise of its soft power, drawing on its ancient and civilization roots. Through a power point presentation the Speaker illustrated about India's cultural connect with neighbours like Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka.





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**Session –II (2-3.30 pm)**

**Cultural Management and Communication**– was addressed by

**Dr. Meenal Parekh**, *Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication, SNU, Kolkata*

As the course work oriented the participants with the concept of soft power diplomacy, acquainted them with its tools. Therefore the given session taught the participants about the mechanism to express their ideas and articulate the theory of soft power through actions and initiatives, in order to convey her ideas highlighting how theatre in itself is a tool of soft power diplomacy. On the other hand, she explained how media, digital power, educational courses like cultural management are enabling agents and forums in building convergence between the manifestation of culture and its outreach. The session initiated a discussion between the speaker and the participants.







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**Visit –I:**

**Visit to Sri Aurobindo Bhavan, Kolkata**

The participants were taken to the Aurobindo Bhavan, Kolkata which is the birth place of an icon who through work, activities, revolutionary endeavours had also tried to foster the role of India and Indian culture in the process of development. A lecture on the ideas of Sri Aurobindo was organized at the premises itself by Sri Ujjal Kumar Bose, a lawyer by profession and follower of Sri Aurobindo. The speaker shared the fundamentals defined by Sri Aurobindo himself while attaining development of the country and transforming human entity. He did punctuate the quotes of Sri Aurobindo that – Indian Civilization should be judged by the greatness of its Millennium and not by the weakness of centuries.





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**4th January 2023**

**Session –I (11.00-12.30 pm)**

**Indian Diaspora: Ethnicity and Identity** – was addressed by

**Prof. Renu Modi**, *Director, Centre For African Studies, University of Mumbai*

The lecture initiated with the basic definition of the Soft Power and difference between State and Non-State driven soft power. As non-state driven soft power defines connectivity in terms of food, culture, film, music, yoga and traditional music. In case of Indian Diasporic connection non-state driven soft power plays a crucial role in fostering cultural confluence and thereby meet critical issues like development, diasporic settlement, security. The speaker narrated how in case of Eastern Africa – maritime exercise, trade and settlement across Indian Ocean have helped India to win African political support, natural asset and drive access to market economy and thereby render strength with nation and continent as a whole.







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**Session –II (2-3.30 pm)**

**Ancient Trade Routes and its Modern Day Relevance** – was addressed by

**Ms. Sohini Nayak**, *Research Fellow, ORF, Kolkata*

Ms. Nayak is a very versatile young Research scholar and with connectivity her main area of interest featured how Bay of Bengal in itself is a stepping stone between Asia and South East Asia. Thereby connectivity can be represented as a very operative dimension of relation building connection between human communities through circulation of people, goods, knowledge, ideas, disease and beliefs. The speaker's presentation focused on the concept of connectivity and geo-politicization through improving regionalization by improving connectivity policies, defining new international space beyond the regions and emulating competition in politicized connectivity.





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**Session –III Group Discussion (3.30-4.30 pm)**

**India and Neighbourhood :Corridors of Engagement** – was addressed by

**Ms. Keka Sarma**, *General Secretary, The Bharat Chamber of Commerce, Kolkata*

Ms. Sarma being a senior most representative of the Chamber of Commerce represented how Bharat Chamber of Commerce being a business forum with multi-sectoral stakeholder and a multiprong approach is acting as a contributor to the concept of Soft Power. Concepts like Business to Business (B to B) and People to People (P to P) at domestic and transnational level over policies and execution mechanism were discussed. Ms. Sarma shared her gamut of experience and observations how Chamber as an integral agent is building a convergence between contributors and investors and enabling the process to inclusive development.







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**5th January 2023**

**Session –I (11-12.30 pm)**

**Indian Folk Culture: A Conceptual Framework** – was addressed by

**Prof. Barun Kumar Chakraborty**- *Former Professor Head, Department of Folklore, Kalyani University*

It was an enriching experience to listen to Prof of Emeritus- Sri B.K. Chakraborty. He started his deliberation mentioning that in order to understand folklore it is important to know about our societal construct which comprises of Tribal, Folklore and Elite Society. Each societal compartment is different yet they have a lot of similarity among them, as the customs and each section of society is transpired and been profoundly practiced. Therefore the main task of the folklore is to identify the similarities and highlight them in an interesting way. His deliberation reflected ideas of “Standard Dictionary of Folklore and Design”. He reflected that folklore as a concept is nothing but a review of human life and his associated activities through acts, crafts, music, food and clothing. To communicate his ideas with participants the speaker did show some artifacts and pictorial representation.





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**Session –II (2-3.30 pm)**

**Sports a Tool of Indian Soft Diplomacy** – was addressed by

**Prof. Arindam Basu**, *Journalist and PR official at Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB)*

The speaker defines that the best mode of transfer of soft diplomacy is through sports. He explained how in history and mythology in Ramayana and Mahabharata sports like archery has been represented and given immense of importance and is a must learn art for the youths- for recreation and self defence. The Speaker's deliberation boasted the evolution of the sports which now as a medium heals tension and political conundrums between regions and territories. He defined how playground has become a platform of communication, meetings to resolve geopolitical and economic discomfiture. To explain his point he used Olympic as the biggest example that is being hosted in multiple regions involving diplomats, organizations, disparate people under one podium, themselves playing a role of organizer or a follower.







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**Session –III (3.30-5 pm)**

**Diplomacy Through Indian Cinema** – was addressed by

**Sri Shekhar Das**, *National and International Award Winner Film Director-Scriptwriter, attached to film institutes as guest faculty, Jury of Film festivals, Essayist and Travel writer*

The speaker through a power point presentation, audio-visuals and movie clippings tried to explain the ages of Indian cinema, the evolution that had taken place and slowly how with connectivity Bollywood cinema has made its reach to the western world. He also added that cinema has facilitated tourism and has substituted to the economy and most importantly a visual reciprocity between different parts of the country, as movie or a particular song may feature infrastructure or historic place of India and just with a blink it may take its viewers to some other part. Movies and Indian cinema had played a major role in attaining connectivity and cultural promotion of our country.





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**6th January 2023**

**Session –I (11-12.30 pm)**

**Styles and Variations of Indian Music** – was addressed by

**Sri Sumit Roy**- *Music Director, Singer, Composer and a performer*

The session was a live demonstration of how music in itself is an exemplar of connectivity. The speaker was accompanied by two other performing artists, Soumi Majumdar who is a classical singer and Shubhankar Ghosh, a guitarist. Through songs, music and lively interaction the speaker defined connectivity between Nepalese, Russian, Tribal songs, Assamese defined connectivity with south and south east Asia.







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**Session –II (2-3.30 pm)**

**Indian Dance Forms: Origin and Regions of Practice** – was addressed by

**Dr. Amita Dutta**, *Former Dean, Faculty of Fine Arts, Uday Shankar Professor of Dance, Director, Performing Art Therapy Centre, Rabindra Bharati University.*

The presentation on the given topic turned out to be really interesting as the speaker tried to define how dance in India has been an integral part of every social and cultural event since ancient times. The speaker through forms, formats and visuals tried to feature forms of Indian dance and the legacy, creativity and ancient connectivity behind such forms in details.





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### Visit –II

#### **The Ancestral House of Swami Vivekananda, 105, Vivekananda Road, Kolkata**

The participants as a part of their course work were taken to the Ancestral house of Swami Vivekananda at the northern junction of the city. The place where the genius was born, grew up, nurtured, worshipped and aspired to turn himself into a yogi and dedicate himself to the service of society. In parallel to that represent the grace of Indian traditional hierarchy to the western world. The house now turned into a museum by the organization “Ramakrishna Mission” preserves Original relics of his clothes, boxing gloves, horse riding stirrup, etc. which depict Swamiji’s various hobbies in boxing, riding and fencing, among others. A 3D movie was also shown to the participants which depicted the world famous Speech of Swami Vivekananda at the World Parliament of Religion at Chicago in 1893.







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**7th January 2023**

**Session –I (11-12.30 pm)**

**Buddha Connectivity** – was addressed by

**Subham Amin-** *Assistant Professor, Department of English at Sri Ramkrishna Sarada Vidyamahapitha*

The Speaker through his presentation denoted how Buddhism has facilitated the trade prospects and connectivity for the country with neighbourings. The merchant enroutings, religious tourisms connecting east with Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet and China became profound through Buddhist religious connect. As a result of which areas attained development, employment opportunities gained strength and relations between neighbourhood also boosted. The presentations, mappings and notations helped participants to understand the regional and inter country connect through Buddhism.





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**Session –II (2-3.30 pm)**

**Girmitiya: The Great Emigration Through Indian Ocean** – was addressed by

**Sri Goutam Chakraborti**, *Security Advisor (Retd), Hony. Heritage Coordinator, SMPT*

The Speaker explained how during no Colonial Emigration Acts – Private agents as authorized by the planters of Mauritius came to India to recruit men. Girmitiyas also known as Jahajibhais, were indentured labourers from British India transported to work on plantation in Fiji, Mauritius, South Africa and Caribbean as a part of Indian indentured system. The rudimentary contract (The agreement or Girit as it was pronounced by native labourers) insisted labourers to work for planters or such other plantations, he may be transferred to and stipulated the duration of the contract (five years), remuneration, amount of food, clothing, medical facilities to be provided along with an optional free return passage to Calcutta at the end of the contract were promised. The Port Calcutta was the primary take-off point for the partly enticed and mostly forced human exodus to the British colonies from the vast catchment areas mainly of the Eastern province, the Gangetic plains, Tamilian backward and also the Northern provinces.







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**Visit –III**

**Maritime Archives and Heritage Centre, Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata**

The participants were taken to the Archives and Heritage Centre, Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata. It is a 100 year old heritage building at the Strand Road, Kolkata which was the hub of commercial activity a century ago. The archive provides an opportunity to know the history of the grand organization from its inception to the present status. The institute is a repository of thousands of documents, maps, charts, photographs, memorabilia and audio-visual recordings. The participants and the coordinating group were accompanied by Sri Goutam Chakraborti. A detailed description on the museums and its displays were given by Sri Kaushik Chatterjee, Security Adviser, SMPT and his research team. All the participants were given souvenir at the end of their tour.





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**8th January 2023**

**Session –I (11-12.30 pm)**

**Indian Footprints in South East Asia** – was addressed by

**Prof. Suchandra Ghosh- Deptt. of History, University of Hyderabad**

The session was extremely interesting as the speaker tried to combine factual information with a critical approach probing into the nature of culture and identity of South East Asia from multiple angles. A concise deliberation painted a graphic picture of the components and elements connecting South East Asia for example terracotta, ceramics, deity and customary practice. The lecture and the power point demonstration examined both the history and social changes evolving and influencing the region over centuries.







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**Session –II (2-3.30 pm)**

**Indian Tea and its Global Outreach** – was addressed by

**Buddha Dev Acharya, Senior Tea Consultant**

The aim of the course work was to appraise the participants about the Indian Soft Power and Practice while engaging various academicians at one end and at the same time involving participation of multi-sectoral stakeholders. Therefore the subject depicting Tea Connectivity was addressed by a very senior Tea Consultant, who marked the history of the Tea Cultivation in India, its evolution over a period of time, its outreach that has enabled to seek India a global stand and moreover how the product itself or later Tea Estates turning into a hospitality segment are encouraging economic empowerment in multiple dimensions. The speaker mentioned about the policy practice and its scope of improvement that could enable the rich domestic product to seek a global acclamation and earn sustainable revenues.





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**Session –III**

**Documentary Movie –**

A documentary movie on “Harmony Fest” was shown to the participants. Directed by Sanjeev Sivan and supported by the Indian Diplomacy, GOI it portraits the diverse range of festivities across India. The documentary recited range of stories and myths behind each of the festivities, interregional connect along with exuberance with which they are celebrated. The important message which the documentary transpired was the spirit of harmony, solidarity which the country preserves and manifests during each of the festivals irrespective of religious and cultural differences. Movie Link- (<https://youtu.be/3lINgzWlQko>)







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**9th January 2023**

**Session –I (11-12.30 pm)**

**Muktijuddha and 50 Years of Indo-Bangladesh Relations: A Way Forward** – was addressed by

**Sri Bimal Shankar Nanda**- *Professor of University of Calcutta*

The given topic remains extremely relevant as Bangladesh celebrates its 50th year of Independence. Therefore it is necessary to denote how the country as immediate neighbour and bi-lateral partner has evolved in the course of last 50 long years. The speaker who himself is an expert of political science and international relations depicted about the history of friendship between India and Bangladesh, the role of Muktiyodhas who contributed in the Liberation war of 1971 and enabled Bangladesh to seek independent identity. The Speaker also featured about the existing Indo-Bangladesh co-relations, challenges along with the employability of soft power in the relation between India and Bangladesh and mechanisms to strengthen link between two immediate neighbours interconnected through culture, language and practices.





**Session –II (2-3.30 pm)**

**Intangible Heritage of Eastern India and its Global Significance** – was addressed by

**Dr. Satyabrata Chakraborty**, *General Secretary, The Asiatic Society and Former Deputy Director, Anthropological Survey of India*

The speaker could not be present due to some circumstantial issue, but he addressed the participants on the valedictory mentioning that the concept of culture in itself is very cohesive which defines combining and working in unity. He further asserted that not only eastern India but India itself is a land of intangible heritage – where people from varied sections of society assemble and celebrates festivities, customary practices and social events. The concept of unity surfaced over culture in case of India is also been identified and admired by the Western World and therefore in case of Eastern India the recognition of Durga Puja as Intangible heritage by UNESCO – is a message that till today the unity in diversity that could be seen in our country is a foremost imperative of Soft power along with other factors that includes representation of art, handicrafts, employment and inclusive growth.







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**10th January 2023**

**Presentation By Students**

The 9th day of the course work turned out to be an assessment day for the participants, in other words the participants were given a chance to represent their learning of 8 long days through a power point presentation. Participants delivered presentation on various topics on which they were oriented during the course work like role of soft power in strengthening people to people connectivity, Sports like Chess acting as a medium of connectivity, tourism, theatre and language like Sanskrit as tools enabling the country to exercise soft power diplomacy in multiple ways. In



order to clarify their doubts and sharpen their thoughts and perceptions, Dr. Mahua Mukherjee, Professor, Department of Dance, Rabindra Bharati University (RBU) and Dr. Pradipta Roy, Assistant Professor of Political Science, Scottish Church College as invigilators, reviewed their presentation and with their valuable remarks enabled the participants to improve their understandings on the vitals on Indian Soft Power in the development of the nations.

The day was divided into two halves and individual participants were given approximately 15 mins for their presentations.



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**11th January 2023**

**Special Address –I (11-12.30 pm)**

“Religious Diplomacy”- – was addressed by

**Prof. Janardan Ghosh** - *Teaching & Research Associate, School of Indian Heritage, Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda Educational and Research Institute.*

The speaker explored the concept of religious diplomacy from multiple dimensions. He firstly underlined how religion in India remains a principle imperative of soft power. He explained how religious leaders in various eras like Swami Vivekananda, Yogi Yogananda, Sri Aurobindo connected nations and combined people through the rich flavour of Indian religion. He further added how religious premises in itself has turned into a paradigm of people to people connect, economic opportunities, tourism and growth of the region. He mentioned about religious circuits like Buddhism that has become a nexus of connectivity across south and south east Asia. The session indulged into discussion and conversation between the speaker and the participants





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**Valedictory – (12.30-1.30 pm)**

The valedictory session marked the closure of the 10 day course work on “Indian Soft Power and Practices”. The valedictory facilitated a small interaction among the participants and the Director of ISCS, Sri Arindam Mukherjee. The valedictory received the address by the two Distinguished Guests – Dr. Ajay Pratap Singh, Director General, RRRLF & The National Library of India and Shri Ashish Middha, IFS, Regional Passport Officer, MEA, GOI and Sri Satyabrata Chakraborty, General Secretary, Asiatic Society, Kolkata. The Distinguished guests expressed how the understanding of Indian history, vast social and cultural canvas, described as tools of soft power, is not only required by the academicians, researchers or students, but is also a subject of reference for the government officials who are serving the country at domestic or international levels. As attendees Ms. Minakshi Mishra, Zonal Director and Sri Parthivan, Director, RTC, ICCR were also present. The participants were handed over the certificates along with the pen drives comprising of the lectures and power point of different sessions.







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