

**FOUNDATION TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR ASOs IN THE
CENTRAL SECRETARIAT SERVICE (CSS) FOR THE CGLE-2023**

**A STUDY TOUR REPORT
ON
BHARAT DARSHAN**

Submitted by

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ASO IN MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

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1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) and the Institute of Secretariat Training and Management (ISTM) for granting me to take part in the mandatory training program at the Dr. MCRHRD Institute of Telangana.

I am very grateful to the Dr. Marri Channa Reddy Human Resource Development Institute of Telangana for giving me with this invaluable opportunity to embark on a Study Tour in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. This tour has enriched my understanding with various historical monuments and diverse challenges encountered by local communities.

I am highly indebted to my tour mentor and guide, **Dr. K. Sukumar Rao**, Faculty, Dr. MCR HRD IT, for providing me with all the necessary guidelines throughout the tour.

I am thankful to **Dr. K. Usha Rani**, Sr. Faculty and Head – CDS, Dr. MCR HRD IT for her constant support and encouragement.

Last but not the least, I extend my sincere thanks to all my fellow OTs whose direct and indirect support proved invaluable to me throughout the tour.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE TOUR

For the 2023 Batch of Assistant Section Officers (ASOs), a one-week Bharat Darshan was arranged as part of the mandatory ISTM Phase-1 Foundation Training Programme. It took place from April 28, 2024 to May 4, 2024, in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and Karnataka, under the guidance of Dr. K. Sukumar Rao, Sr. Faculty (FTP).

A total of 61 trainees from various ministries took part in this study tour. The primary objectives of this study tour are as follows:

- Foster team spirit, time management, management of crisis, and adaptability to diverse situations.
- Examine the implementation of policies and various governmental schemes in the visited areas.
- Gain familiarity with developmental initiatives and citizen-central activities in villages and tribal areas.

3. ITINERARY AND ROADMAP

The one week study tour was organised and arranged by Dr. MCR HRD Institute of Telangana, for the 2023 Batch of Assistant Section Officers (ASOs), as part of the mandatory ISTM Phase-1 Foundation Training Programme between April 28, 2024 and May 4, 2024, in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and Karnataka, under the guidance of Dr. K. Sukumar Rao, Sr. Faculty (FTP).

ITINERARY:

Day 1 (April 28, 2024):

- Departure from Dr. MCR HRDIT- Hyderabad
- Arrival in Chennai (Tamil Nadu)
- Exploration of Mahabalipuram's Cultural Heritage
- Visit historical monuments and landmarks
- Departure for Puducherry
- Overnight Stay in Puducherry

Day 2 (April 29, 2024):

- Discover Puducherry's unique blend of Culture
- Auroville Visit
- Interaction with local communities
- French Colonies Visit
- Rock Beach Puducherry visit
- Dinner and Overnight Stay in Puducherry

Day 3 (April 30, 2024):

- Departure for Puducherry Mangrove forest
- Kayaking and Boating Adventure in Mangrove Forest
- Rajiv Gandhi Art Centre Visit
- Interaction with local vendors
- Departure for Coimbatore

Day 4 (May 01, 2024):

- Arrival in Coimbatore
- Adiyogi- The Source of Yoga Visit
- Adiyogi Meditation Centre Visit
- Departure for Ooty
- Arrival and Overnight Stay in Ooty

Day 5 (May 02, 2024):

- Doddabetta Peak Visit
- Tea and Chocolate Factory Visit
- Engagement with local communities
- Boating Adventure in Ooty lake
- Sightseeing and Local Market Visit
- Interaction with local vendors in Ooty Market
- Bonfire Night and Overnight Stay in Ooty

Day 6 (May 03, 2024):

- Departure for Mysore
- Pykara Water Falls and Dam Visit

- Enroute visit to Mudumalai Tiger Reserve (Tamil Nadu) and Bandipur Tiger Reserve (Karnataka)
- Arrival in Mysore

Day 7 (May 04, 2024):

- St. Philomena's Cathedral Church Visit
- Interaction with Mysore's famous Silk Saree and Sandalwood Vendors
- Mysore (Mysuru) Palace visit
- Departure for Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru
- Arrival in Hyderabad

ROADMAP:

i. Pre- Tour Preparation:

- Selection of destinations based on relevance to study objectives
- Coordination and interaction with local communities and local vendors

ii. Execution of Itinerary:

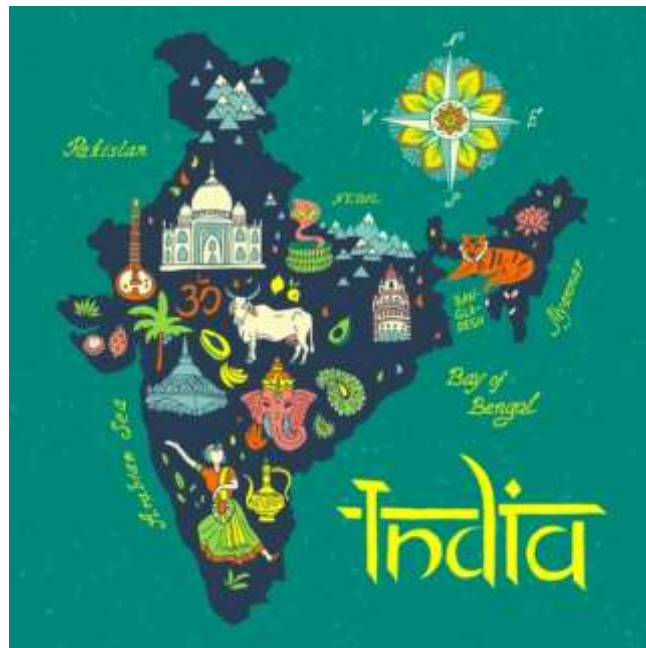
- Timely departure and arrival at each destination
- Ensuring safety and well-being of all the OTs throughout the journey

iii. Study Objectives:

- Structured visits to study the implementation of policies and governmental schemes
- In-depth engagement with local developmental activities in villages and tribal areas

iv. Post- Tour Evaluation:

- Analysis of insights gained and lessons learned
- Documentation and reporting of findings to relevant authorities for future reference



4. SIGHTSEEING, EXPLORATION, AND INTERACTION WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

I. TAMIL NADU:-

MAHABALIPURAM SHORE TEMPLE



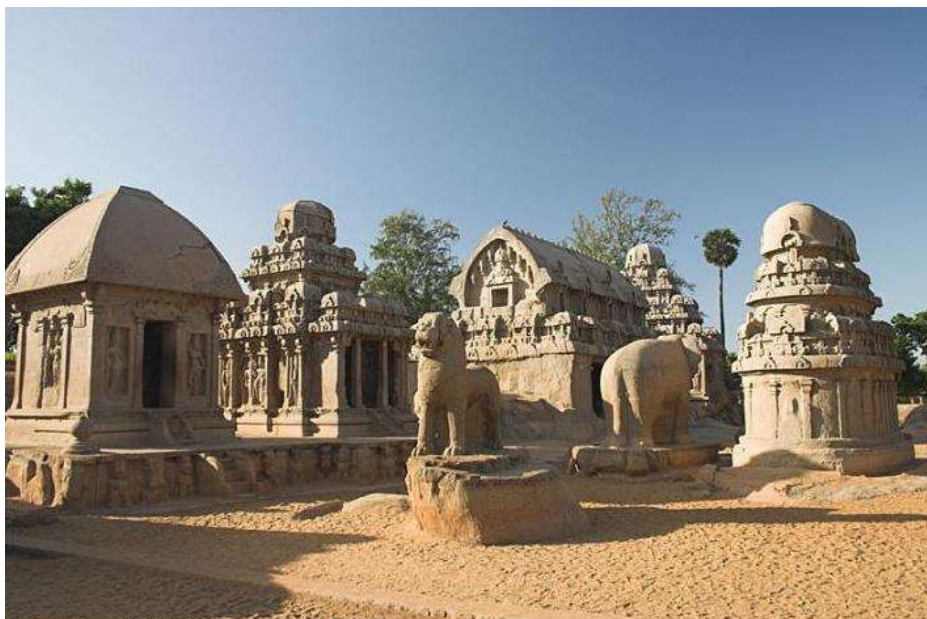
Mahabalipuram Shore Temple is a beautiful ancient temple located on the shores of the Bay of Bengal in Tamil Nadu, India. It was built during the 8th century AD by the Pallava dynasty. The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and is renowned for its stunning architecture and intricate carvings. It is one of the oldest structural stone temples in South India. The temple stands tall against the backdrop of the sea, making it a picturesque sight. Visitors can explore the temple complex and marvel at the sculptures depicting various Hindu gods and goddesses, as well as scenes from mythology.

KRISHNA'S BUTTERBALL, MAHABALIPURAM



Mahabalipuram's Krishna's Butterball is a huge rock sitting on a hillside in Tamil Nadu, India. It's famous because it looks like a giant ball of butter that could roll down the hill, but it hasn't moved for centuries. People think it's a miracle or magic. Locals believe it's linked to Lord Krishna, a Hindu god. Visitors come from all over to see this amazing rock and take pictures next to it. It's a fun spot to visit and a reminder of the incredible things nature can do.

PANCHA RATHAS, MAHABALIPURAM



Mahabalipuram's Pancha Rathas is a group of five ancient monolithic rock temples located in Tamil Nadu, India. Each temple is carved from a single large stone and resembles different Carriots or Rathas. The temples are named after the five Pandava brothers from the Hindu epic, Mahabharata, and their wife, Draupadi. Despite their small size, the temples are intricately carved with detailed sculptures depicting various deities and mythical creatures. Visitors can explore the unique architecture and learn about the rich cultural and religious significance of the Pancha Rathas. It's a fascinating site that showcases the skill and craftsmanship of ancient Indian artisans.

PANCHA RATHAS, MAHABALIPURAM



Mahabalipuram's Arjuna's Penance, also known as Descent of the Ganges, is a famous ancient rock carving located in Tamil Nadu, India. It depicts scenes from Hindu mythology, including the story of Arjuna, a hero from the epic Mahabharata, performing severe penance to obtain a powerful weapon. The masterpiece is carved on two massive boulders, standing over 30 feet tall and 100 feet wide. Visitors can see intricate carvings of gods, animals, and celestial beings, as well as everyday life scenes. It's a remarkable piece of art that attracts tourists and historians alike, showcasing India's rich cultural heritage and artistic excellence.

II. PUDUCHERRY:-

AUROVILLE



Auroville is an international township located in Tamil Nadu, India. Founded in 1968 by Mirra Alfassa, also known as "The Mother," and designed by architect Roger Anger, it aims to be a universal town where people from all over the world can live in harmony. Auroville is based on the principles of human unity, peace, and sustainable living. It is home to residents from diverse cultures and backgrounds who work together towards these ideals. The town is known for its unique architecture, green initiatives, and spiritual atmosphere. Visitors come to explore its serene surroundings, participate in community activities, and experience its inclusive spirit.

FRENCH COLONIES



Puducherry, formerly known as Pondicherry, was a cluster of French colonies on the eastern coast of India. From the 17th to the 20th century, it was under French colonial rule, contributing to its distinctive French influence. The town boasts charming colonial architecture, quaint streets, and French-style cafes. Visitors can explore the French Quarter, characterized by its colorful buildings and tree-lined boulevards, and discover landmarks like the Aurobindo Ashram. Puducherry's cuisine also reflects its French heritage, with delectable pastries and fusion dishes. Today, Puducherry is a popular tourist destination, offering a unique blend of Indian and French cultures.

ROCK BEACH



Rock Beach, located in Puducherry, India, is a popular coastal destination known for its unique charm and scenic beauty. The beach is characterized by its rocky shoreline, with large boulders dotting the sandy stretch. Visitors can take leisurely strolls along the promenade, enjoying views of the Bay of Bengal and the cool sea breeze. The beachfront is lined with vibrant cafes, eateries, and souvenir shops, offering a perfect spot to relax and unwind. Rock Beach is also a favorite spot for locals and tourists to gather during the evenings, enjoying the serene ambiance and stunning sunsets over the horizon.

MANGROVE FOREST



The Mangrove Forest in Puducherry, India, is a lush and diverse ecosystem full of life. These special forests have many mangrove trees, which grow in salty coastal areas. You can explore the forest on boat tours, going through winding waterways and under the green trees. Many different plants and animals live here, like birds, fish, and crabs. The mangrove forest is important because it helps protect the coast from erosion, and it gives people jobs like fishing and eco-tourism. It's a beautiful place to visit and learn about nature.

KAYAKING ADVENTURE



Kayaking is a fun water activity where you sit in a small boat called a kayak and use a paddle to move through the water. It's like canoeing but with a different type of boat. Kayaks are usually narrow and have a covered deck, and you use a double-bladed paddle to propel yourself forward. People enjoy kayaking on rivers, lakes, and oceans for recreation, exercise, and exploring nature. It's a great way to get outdoors, enjoy the water, and see different sights from a unique perspective.

ART AND CRAFT VILLAGE AND INTERACTION WITH LOCAL VENDORS



The Art and Craft Village in Puducherry, India, is a vibrant hub where artisans showcase their creativity and traditional crafts. Visitors can explore colorful stalls and workshops, where local craftsmen demonstrate their skills in pottery, weaving, painting, and more. It's a lively marketplace where you can buy handmade souvenirs, textiles, and artwork, directly supporting the local artisans. The village also hosts cultural events, exhibitions, and craft fairs, providing a glimpse into the rich cultural heritage of the region. It's a wonderful place to immerse yourself in the arts, learn about traditional crafts, and appreciate the talent of local artisans.



III. COIMBATORE:-

ADIYOGI- THE SOURCE OF YOGA



Adiyogi, also known as the "Source of Yoga," is a magnificent statue located in Coimbatore, India. Standing tall at 112 feet, it represents Lord Shiva, the first yogi according to Hindu mythology. The statue is surrounded by lush greenery and serves as a symbol of peace, strength, and spiritual awakening. Adiyogi is not just a sculpture; it embodies the essence of yoga and meditation, inviting people to explore their inner selves and connect with the divine. Visitors often come to admire its grandeur, learn about the principles of yoga, and seek inspiration for their spiritual journey.

IV. OOTY:-



Ooty, short for Ootacamund, is a picturesque hill station nestled in the Nilgiri Hills of Tamil Nadu, India. Known for its cool climate, lush greenery, and stunning landscapes, Ooty attracts tourists from all over the world. Visitors can explore its charming tea estates, botanical gardens showcasing diverse flora, and the tranquil Ooty Lake offering boating opportunities. The town's colonial-era architecture adds to its charm, with attractions like the Government Rose Garden and the historic Nilgiri Mountain Railway. Ooty is also famous for its homemade chocolates and handmade crafts, making it a delightful destination for nature lovers and culture enthusiasts alike.

DODDABETTA PEAK



Doddabetta Peak is the highest mountain in the Nilgiri Hills, standing tall at 2,637 meters above sea level. Located near Ooty in Tamil Nadu, India, it offers breathtaking panoramic views of the surrounding landscapes. Tourists often flock to its summit to witness stunning sunrises and sunsets amidst the mist-covered valleys and rolling hills. Doddabetta is a haven for nature enthusiasts, with opportunities for hiking and bird watching along its trails. At the peak, there's a tower providing a bird's-eye view of the lush greenery below. It's a must-visit destination for those seeking tranquility and awe-inspiring natural beauty in the Nilgiris.

TEA & CHOCOLATE FACTORY



In Ooty, visitors can explore tea and chocolate factories, offering delightful experiences for all ages. At the tea factories, tourists learn about the intricate process of tea production, from plucking leaves to the final packaging. They witness the aroma-filled rooms where tea leaves are dried and processed, and often have the chance to sample freshly brewed varieties. Similarly, chocolate factories showcase the art of chocolate making, from cocoa bean to chocolate bar. Visitors observe skilled chocolatiers crafting delicious treats, and sometimes participate in hands-on workshops. These experiences provide insights into the rich history and craftsmanship behind two of Ooty's most beloved indulgences.

OOTY LAKE



Ooty Lake is a serene artificial lake nestled amidst the scenic hills of Ooty, Tamil Nadu, India. Built in the early 19th century, it spans approximately 65 acres and is a popular tourist destination. Visitors can enjoy leisurely boat rides on its calm waters, soaking in the breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains and lush greenery. The lake is fringed by eucalyptus trees and flowering plants, enhancing its natural beauty. Surrounding the lake are various recreational activities such as horse riding, cycling, and picnicking, making it an ideal spot for families and nature lovers to unwind and create lasting memories.

PYKARA WATERFALLS



Pykara Waterfalls, nestled near Ooty in Tamil Nadu, India, is a breathtaking natural wonder. Flowing from the Pykara River, these falls offer a serene escape into nature. Cascading gracefully over rocky ledges amidst verdant greenery, they paint a picturesque landscape. Visitors marvel at the sight and sound of the rushing water, often capturing the moment with photographs. Surrounding the falls, the lush forest teems with diverse wildlife, inviting exploration and relaxation. Whether for a leisurely stroll, a peaceful picnic, or simply to bask in the tranquility of nature, Pykara Waterfalls provides an enchanting retreat for all who venture there.

MUDUMALAI TIGER RESERVE



Mudumalai Tiger Reserve, located in Tamil Nadu, India, is a haven for wildlife enthusiasts. Spanning lush forests and rolling hills, it is home to a diverse array of flora and fauna. Visitors can embark on safaris to spot majestic tigers, elephants, leopards, and numerous bird species in their natural habitat. The reserve also shelters endangered species like the Indian giant squirrel and the Bengal tiger, contributing to conservation efforts. With

its scenic landscapes and rich biodiversity, Mudumalai Tiger Reserve offers an immersive experience in nature, allowing visitors to connect with the wild and gain a deeper appreciation for the importance of conservation.

V. **KARNATAKA:-**

BANDIPUR TIGER RESERVE



Bandipur Tiger Reserve, nestled in Karnataka, India, is a sanctuary for wildlife lovers. Spanning lush forests and rolling hills, it hosts a diverse range of plants and animals. Visitors can embark on safaris to catch glimpses of majestic tigers, elephants, deer, and various bird species in their natural habitat. The reserve is known for its successful tiger conservation efforts, aiming to protect this endangered species. With its picturesque landscapes and rich biodiversity, Bandipur Tiger Reserve offers an immersive experience in nature, allowing visitors to connect with the wild and support ongoing efforts to preserve India's natural heritage.

St. PHILOMENA'S CATHEDRAL CHURCH



St. Philomena's Cathedral Church, situated in Mysore, Karnataka, India, is a stunning architectural marvel. Inspired by the Cologne Cathedral in Germany, this majestic church stands tall with its twin spires reaching towards the sky. Built in neo-gothic style, it boasts intricate carvings and ornate stained glass windows depicting biblical scenes. The grandeur of its interiors, adorned with elegant pillars and vaulted ceilings, leaves visitors in awe. Named after Saint Philomena, a revered Christian martyr, the cathedral is a symbol of faith and

spirituality for believers. It welcomes worshippers and tourists alike, offering a serene sanctuary for prayer and reflection.

MYSORE'S FAMOUS SILK SAREE AND SANDALWOOD



Mysore, Karnataka, India, is renowned for its exquisite silk sarees and aromatic sandalwood. The Mysore silk saree is a symbol of elegance and craftsmanship, known for its soft texture and intricate designs. Local artisans meticulously weave these sarees using traditional methods, often incorporating vibrant colors and intricate motifs inspired by nature and mythology. Additionally, Mysore is famous for its high-quality sandalwood, prized for its fragrance and medicinal properties. The city's sandalwood products, including incense sticks, soaps, and oils, are highly sought after worldwide. Together, Mysore's silk sarees and sandalwood products showcase the city's rich cultural heritage and artisanal excellence.

MYSORE PALACE



Mysore Palace is a big, beautiful building in India. It looks like a fairytale castle with colorful domes and intricate designs. People visit to see its grand halls, elegant rooms, and royal treasures. Inside, there are stunning paintings, luxurious furniture, and sparkling jewels on display. The palace is famous for its stunning architecture and rich history. It's like stepping back in time to when kings and queens ruled. At night, the palace lights up with thousands of twinkling lights, making it even more magical. Mysore Palace is a must-see for anyone who loves history and beauty.

KEMPEGOWDA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



Kempegowda International Airport is a major airport in Bangalore, India. It's a large place where airplanes come and go, carrying people to different parts of the world. The airport has many buildings, runways, and parking areas for planes. Inside, there are shops, restaurants, and places to wait for your flight. People check in their bags and get tickets before boarding their planes. Staff is there to help travelers find their way and keep things organized. Kempegowda International Airport is an important spot for travel, connecting Bangalore to cities worldwide. It's a busy place full of excitement and adventure for travelers.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND LEARNINGS

The study trip was amazing for all of us. We learned a lot about India's many differences and similarities, its history and culture, different environments like forests and deserts, how different parts of the country are governed, and the challenges and opportunities in various industries. We also got better at working in teams, managing our time, dealing with unexpected problems, and adjusting to new situations. Plus, we made some great friends and memories.

Here are some important things we learned:

- India is full of surprises, with old and new things mixing together, and both rich and poor people living side by side.
- India has a long and impressive history and culture, shown in its buildings, art, music, and celebrations.
- India's natural world is incredibly diverse, with lots of different landscapes and animals.

The study trip was a big part of our training, and we want to thank everyone who helped make it happen. We're especially grateful to the people who organized the trip and our fellow participants who made it so enjoyable. We'll use what we learned on this trip in our future work and lives, and we hope to come back to these places again someday.