



IFC AS TRAINING GROUND FOR THE RECONSTITUTED IFS



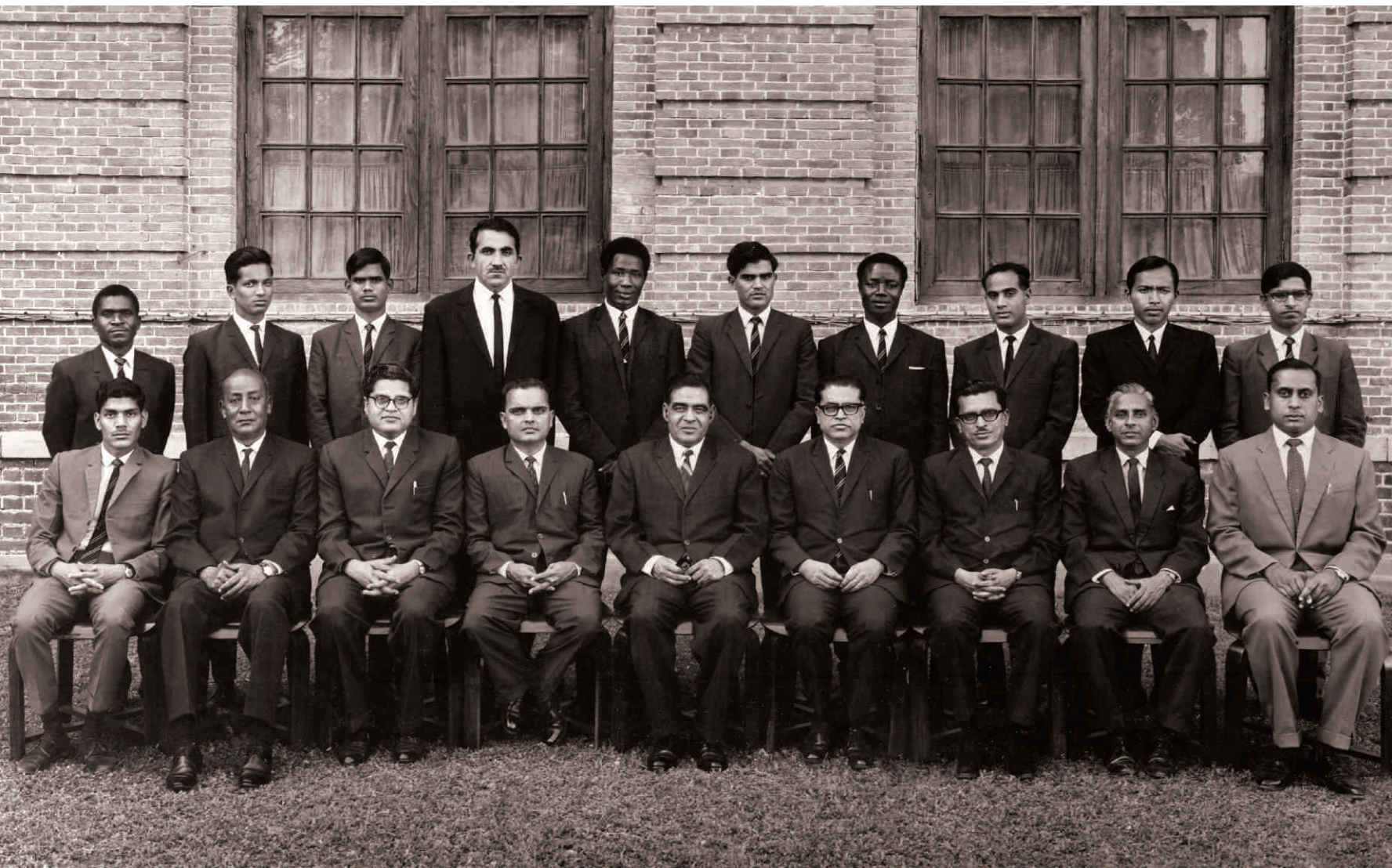
CHAPTER

07

IN THE EARLY 60s, THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA BEGAN RECOGNISING HOW VITALLY IMPORTANT THE FORESTS ARE FOR THE NATIONAL ECONOMY. THIS UNDERSTANDING RESULTED IN THE DECISION TO RECONSTITUTE THE INDIAN FOREST SERVICE (IFS) AS AN ALL INDIA SERVICE. SO THE 1951 ALL INDIA SERVICES ACT WAS AMENDED IN 1963, EMPOWERING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO CONSTITUTE THREE NEW ALL INDIA SERVICES.

1. THE INDIAN FOREST SERVICE
2. THE INDIAN SERVICE OF ENGINEERS
3. THE INDIAN MEDICAL AND HEALTH SERVICE

1968–1987



It took 3 years, but on 1st July 1966, the Indian Forest Service was officially constituted as an All India Service (the other two services could not yet be established). When it came to the selection of a venue for training the recruits of this newly reconstituted service, the obvious choice was the IFC, which by now had acquired international renown as a forestry training institute. Up until the 1967-1969 batch of students, all candidates for SFS training at the IFC were selected and recruited by their respective state governments. But with the reconstitution of the IFS in 1966 as an All India Service, this recruitment responsibility would now rest upon the shoulders of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) of India. So in 1967, the UPSC conducted an open, all India competition in search of talented trainees for the Indian Forest Service. This competition generated a select group of 51 candidates. Out of these qualified candidates, 34 had previously undergone training at the IFC as SFS trainees and were already active in service. Another

seven were current students at the IFC, taking training as part of the 1966-1968 SFS course. These already trained probationers were exempted from any additional training, and admitted directly into the IFS. From the remaining ten selected candidates, only nine joined the IFC in April 1968, forming the 1968-1970 course of IFS probationers. Later, three of these probationers resigned, leaving only six IFS trainees in the new batch at the IFC. There were also five foreign trainees who took the programme as members of that course.

Recruitment to the SFS was suspended after 1967, but only for 3 years. In 1971, the training of State Forest Service (previously Superior Forest Service) probationers was revived, and for 5 years the IFC was carrying out the training of both IFS and SFS probationers. In May 1976, a new State Forest Service College was opened at Burnihat, Assam, for the SFS trainees, so from that point on, the IFC was occupied exclusively in the training of IFS probationers.

Born with Silver spoon

Above: 1968-70 course, the first one of the reconstituted Indian Forest Service

The Training

The Government of India was responsible to define and develop the IFS Probation Rules, which guided the training of IFS Probationers. According to the Rules of 1966, every person recruited to the Service through competitive examination would be on probation for a period of 3 years. The monthly salary of a newly appointed probationer was Rs. 400.

For designing the training curriculum, "The Indian Forest Service (Probationers' Final Examination) Regulations, 1968" served as the guide. These rules had come into force on 1st April 1968 and, among other things, divided the final examination into three parts:

- i) Written and practical examinations
- ii) Exercises
- iii) Qualifying tests

9. THE INDIAN FOREST SERVICE (PROBATIONERS' FINAL EXAMINATION) REGULATIONS, 1968

In pursuance of rule 8 of the Indian Forest Service (Probation) Rules, 1968, the Central Government, in consultation with the State Governments and the Union Public Service Commission, hereby makes the following regulations, namely:—

1. **Short title and commencement.**—(1) These regulations may be called the Indian Forest Service (Probationers' Final Examination) Regulations, 1968.
(2) They shall be deemed to have come into force on 1st April, 1968.
2. **Definitions.**—(1) In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, "Schedule" means a Schedule appended to these regulations.
(2) All other words and expressions used in these regulations and not defined shall have the meanings respectively assigned to them in the Indian Forest Service (Probation) Rules, 1968.
3. **Final Examination.**—(1) Every probationer shall, during and at or about the end of the period of training at the Institute, appear at the Final Examination comprising:
 - (i) written and practical examinations,
 - (ii) exercises, and
 - (iii) qualifying tests.
- (2) The written and practical examinations shall be held as follows:—
 - (i) First year Examination at or about the end of the first year of training at the Institute, and
 - (ii) Second year Examination at or about the end of the second year of training at the Institute.
- (3) Exercises in field work shall be held during the course of training at the Institute and during tours undertaken according to a phased programme.
- (4) The Final Examination shall be conducted by the President in the manner laid down in these regulations.
- (5) The dates on which and the places at which the various examinations and tests shall be held shall be fixed by the Central Government in consultation with the President.

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"----- If you accept this offer, you must report to the Dean, Indian Forest College, Prem Nagar Post office, Dehradun, Uttar Pradesh, not later than 1st April, 1968. --- Government of India wishes you a successful career in the Public Service.

Yours Sincerely,
M R Bhardwaj,
Deputy Secretary, DoPT, New Delhi"

We were six in the first batch of IFS, to be trained. DFE, Mr R C Kaushik, in his first address, termed us as 'born with silver spoon'. IR (Initial Recruit) was yet to be finalised. Thus we were the only IFS in the campus. Salary and TA of IFS constituted a substantial portion of FRI budget. Full first class bogey reserved for tours with bearers travelling in the same coach all through.

Camps had the real attention to details with no let up in cutlery/crockery and the manners in dining. Strict discipline, incisive eyes of instructor and thorough coverage of syllabus both in the class and in field kept us busily engaged and we did not know how 2 years have passed. (We had no foundation course in Mussoorie as the details were yet to be worked out). We had 5 foreigners in the batch one each from Afghanistan, Indonesia and Malawi and two from Nigeria who gave us excellent company.

There were lighter moments too. I recall our Dean Mr H C Dey asking us not to forget to write the question number in silviculture examination since 'all the questions had the same answer'; getting stranded in Simla due to heavy snow fall and no money to pay hotel bill; losing route during return from Thadiar to Mundali; instructor telling us the sequence of tree species near rest house, from the old tour journal, without knowing that one of the trees has been cut

DoPT took time to decide our Cadre allocation. Nearly at the end of the training, I was informed of my allocation to Madras cadre; Ram Prasad, Ramesh Sharma and Suresh Jena to MP Cadre; Kidar Nath Baidya to Karnataka and Ganesh Prasad Shukla to UT - first posting in a division in NEFA which did not find place on the map. Despite colleagues lamenting on my cadre, I enjoyed every moment of my stay in Tamilnadu.

Training period in IFC was the best part of my career which I will cherish always. I had also the fortune of giving away the Diploma to IFS Probationers from the same dais in the convocation Hall where I received my diploma from.

J C KALA
Former DG Forests and Secretary to GOI

Above: Syllabus for IFS training in 1968



→ **Acquiring different skills**

- 1 Learning the forest management in a forest
- 2 Weapon training in IMA
- 3 & 4 Survey exercise
- 5 Visit to a forest industry
- 6 During a field tour
- 7 Mensuration Exercise in Chakrata Forest
- 8 Horse Riding in IMA

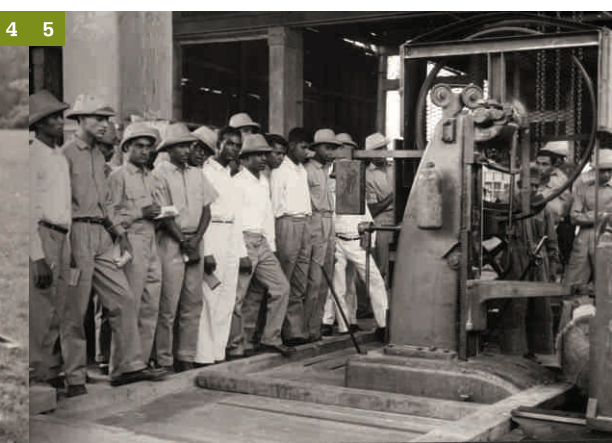
Written and Practical Examinations

The IFS Regulations defined a detailed syllabus for these three areas of training. For the written and practical examinations section, the subjects immediately included in the syllabus had remained largely unchanged from the SFS syllabus of 1961. But in 1971, the syllabus was reviewed in consultation with the Panel on Forestry Education, and modifications were made in order to keep the probationers current with modern developments in forestry. This resulted in the addition of subjects like Forest

Economics, World Forestry and Environmental Conservation to the diploma training of IFS. About 60% of the training period was spent on lectures and the remaining 40% was spent on laboratory practicals, field tours, excursions and exercises.

Exercises

The Exercises included Botanical and Entomological Collections, Engineering and Survey Plates, a Working Plan exercise, a Field Engineering course with the Army, Forest Road Alignment and Dissertation (thesis).





Qualifying Tests

The Qualifying tests were First Aid and Ambulance Drill, Weapon Training, Riding, Regional Languages, Hindi, Motor Mechanics and Swimming.

The IFC dedicated more than 30 weeks to tours in order to expose the probationers to the different forest types of the country, the national parks, sanctuaries and zoological parks and also to visit wood based industries. Tours during the first year included Summer tour, Autumn tour and two Winter tours. Then in the second year, there was another Summer and a

Winter tour. Dynamic training activities like physical training, games, extracurricular activities, wildlife club, etc. continued to develop during this stage in the IFC's life.

Examinations were conducted throughout the program and a 50% score in forestry subjects was required to pass, as well as a 40% mark in all other subjects. On successful completion of the 2 years course, a diploma titled "Associate of Indian Forest College (AIFC)" was given to the Probationers who secured 55% aggregate marks. Probationers securing more than 75% marks were awarded an

honours diploma. If a probationer failed to reach pass marks, he would be given another chance in a supplementary examination. However, the marks obtained by the probationers in the supplementary examination did not qualify for determining their final seniority placement.

The second batch of IFS probationers joined in 1969 and experienced a slightly different training track from the previous batch of probationers. They did their first 4 months of training, from April to July, 1969, at the IFC, but then they were sent to Mussoorie to take 4 months of the



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Foundation Course (FC) at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA). In the FC, probationers from the three all India services, Indian Administrative Service, Indian Police Service and Indian Forest Service, along with probationers of the Indian Foreign Service and Central Services were trained in the basics of administration and bureaucracy in India. This training feature proved to be very successful, and after this batch the FC became a regular component of the training provided for all IFS probationers.



VINOD RISHI (1969-1971 course)

After the first phase of four months of our training at IFC we were sent to LBSNAA for four months of Foundation Course.

Ours was the first batch of IFS officers sent to the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration at Mussoorie. We joined the Foundation Course training for all new entrants to the IAS, IPS, Indian Foreign Service, IRS and all other Central Services. The pride in our service, consolidated by the previous four months of training at IFC had given a confidence that set us apart from the rest. The Indian Forest Service probationers were adjudged to be the best in many activities, and also as a batch we had received favorable comments from the authorities at the Academy.

NAG TIBBA

But I cherish the winning of a cup in an inter-services competitive trek to Nag Tibba from Mussoorie. The probationers of each service were required to send a team of 6 members for the competition. Our team leader was Balvinder Singh (Assam-Meghalaya Cadre), and I was one of the five in the rest of the team. The terms of competition included the

conditions that the entire team will have to reach the Nag Tibba summit, hand over to the staff at Nag Tibba the slips given to us at Mussoorie, and return together at the end point of the trek, where prizes will be given by the Director of the Academy at camp dinner. The use of ponies or failure of a part of a team in reaching the summit and back to the finishing point would disqualify the team.

We had covered a total distance of 57 km in 17 hours of non-stop walk. We were the first to reach Nag Tibba; all team members had covered the entire trek as a tight band of trekkers. When we had descended a few hundred yards on our way back we found the first member of the following team coming up. Half way down we found one member of his team riding a hired pony. We kept on walking the mountain track through the dark night, ignoring the furious barking of dogs when we passed through hamlets. In the distance the sparkling lights of Mussoorie made the dark mountain slope a surrealist picture. Dawn brought us to a small shop at the base of Nag-Tibba mountain, where we stopped for tea. The shop was crammed with trekkers from other teams who had dropped the idea of climbing up in the gloom of night.

Shortly thereafter we reached the finishing line. After reporting our arrival we relaxed, confident that we were the winners. But in the evening, when the results were declared we were shocked to hear that another team had been named winner. We knew the team was led by the person whom we had met going up on our way down from Nag Tibba. Some of his team members had spent night in the tea shop where we had stopped for a few minutes a few hours ago. It was physically not possible for any of them to have climbed up and return from Nag Tibba in such a short period of time.

We felt crest-fallen, but Balwinder Singh could not accept defeat. We decided to lodge our protest, and he spoke forcefully on the role of a training academy in character building of the officers who are supposed to serve the country setting examples of integrity and professionalism for others to follow. His talk was very impressive, inoffensive, yet full of implications if flaws in integrity are ignored.

A brief and quick enquiry was held. The contention was found justified. The decision changed. And the cherished cup commemorating the win rests on a shelf in my drawing room.

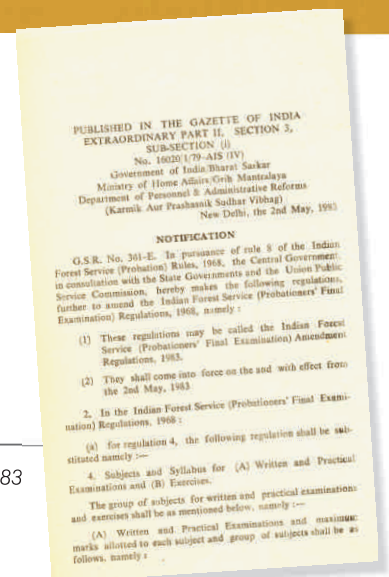
The layout for training was changed a little bit in 1972 as it was decided that the Foundation Course at the National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie, would now be conducted at the end of the 2-year professional course at IFC, Dehradun.

The professionalism and excellence of the IFC program continued to earn wider acclaim, and in 1977, the Himachal Pradesh and Tamil Nadu Universities both recognised the A.I.F.C. diploma as equivalent to a post-graduate degree.

A noteworthy advance in the 80s was the admission of the first female IFS probationer in the 1980-1982 course. The training syllabus was revised again in 1983, making the following changes :

- (1) The optional Botany or optional Elementary Mathematics was deleted.
- (2) Range Management, Mensuration-III, Social Forestry, Tribal Welfare and Forest Machinery were added.
- (3) The number of elective subjects was increased from three to six.

Right: Syllabus of 1983



Left: Foundation course in LBSNAA Mussoorie

In the year 1984 designation of Dean was changed as Director. For the Convocation of the 1982-1984 course, the IFC was privileged to have the Hon'ble President of India, Giani Zail Singh, as the chief guest. There was no Convocation event for the 1984-1986 course, but the diplomas were distributed by the Director of the IFC in his chamber. Again for the 1985-1987 course, no formal Convocation was held, but the diplomas and prizes were distributed in a simple ceremony.



*Sweet fruit of 2 Years hard work
Convocation photos of IFC*

The New Hostel and Old Hostel continued to meet the housing needs for students throughout the 70s and into the early part of the 80s. But by the time we come into the mid-80s, the size of the student batches required greater housing capacity, and they began to be accommodated throughout the campus in the Old Hostel, the New Hostel, the SFS College South Block hostel and, for the lady probationers, in the sisters' quarters. In 1987, three more blocks (the present D, E and F blocks) having 84 rooms were added to the New Hostel to accommodate the growing number of trainees.



→ Family of Foresters

- 1 Lunch in new hostel mess
- 2 Holi celebration in new hostel
- 3 Diwali celebration in new hostel with Dean IFC

Cadre Allocation Policy of the IFS

With the creation of the IFS as an All India Service, cadre allocation to probationers was introduced. From 1968 to 1978, batch cadre allocation was done on the basis of a Roster System. Under this system, each selected candidate was asked to choose three states in order of preference. Cadres were allocated depending on the number of vacancies and maintaining a 1:1 ratio of insider to outsider candidates (i.e. native or non-native to the State in question). Beginning with the 1979 batch, the Roster System was changed to the Limited Zonal Preferences System. In this system, all the cadres were grouped into five zones, and the candidates were given the opportunity to rank the zones in the order

of their personal preference. Then, for each zone, the candidates were to indicate their first and second preferred cadre. The allocation was made in light of the rank and preferences of the candidates, as well as the number of vacancies available to both insiders and outsiders. This system continued through the 1984 batch. Beginning with the 1985 batch, the Roster System was again reinstated, but now changing the ratio of insider to outsider candidates to 1:2. Allocation was made based on rank and on the willingness of the officers to be allocated to their home states. All state cadres were arranged in alphabetical order and divided into four groups. This system continued until the 2008 batch.

Refresher and Special Courses

The IFC had been providing a 6-month special refresher course for rangers promoted to gazetted service since 1965. But in 1975, the IFC suspended this service in light of the new 1-year Management Course that was set to be a part of the newly formed SFS College at Burnihat, beginning in 1976.

Beginning in 1970, the IFC launched the 8 ½ month Wildlife Management Course to provide essential training for forest officers coming from various states. The first 6 months of the course took place at the IFC, then for the final 2 ½ months, the trainees would head to their respective states where they would do their dissertation work. Successful candidates were awarded a Diploma of Wildlife Management (DWM). The FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation) expressed considerable interest in the course, to the point that even their own experts were

contributing valuable suggestions for the course's further development. The first batch of officers joined the program on 1st April 1970 from a number of State Forest Departments, mostly drawn from the Sanctuaries and Wildlife wings of the various States. Subsequently, it was realised that the 6-month training period at the IFC was too short a period for such a course, so beginning with the fifth course, which commenced on 1st March 1973, the training period was extended to a total of 10 1/2 months: 8 months at the IFC, then the 2 ½ months of dissertation work on a selected subject, which was completed by the trainees upon return to their respective states. Officers, such as Shri S.R. Chowdhury from Orissa, were in charge of the Wildlife Management Course at the IFC. In 1977, this valued IFC course was elevated to a full-fledged diploma course, and to the establishment of a separate Directorate of Wildlife,

Environmental Research and Education, that served under FRI, and gave leadership to the Wildlife Management training efforts.

The administration and faculty of the IFC, always eager to keep improving their educational practices, hosted a 2-week course on "Pedagogical Techniques in Forestry Training." This course was conducted by the FAO and the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) in March of 1971. The IFC also held, in late 1976, an international workshop on "Forest Development Planning." This workshop was also jointly sponsored by FAO and SIDA, and drew interested participants from Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Korea and Sri Lanka.

→ **Caring for Wild Life**

→ **Below:** Shri. S. R. Chowdhury faculty of IFC with Wild Life Diploma Trainees

