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## **DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE**

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### **CURRENT NEWS 2 NOVEMBER 2010**

#### **The Army's future looks less special**

Lt. Gen. John Mulholland, chief of the Army's Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, believes his soldiers are "our nation's most relevant force" and said as much in a Raleigh press conference recently. Ordinarily this claim could be dismissed as the type of chest-thumping any commander does to boost morale back at the unit. The difference is that Mulholland is right - at least for now. The future, however, may be quite different. Gen. David Petraeus, our commander in Afghanistan, literally wrote the Pentagon's book on counterinsurgency, casting Army special operators in a lead role. He values units like Mulholland's because they add a handful of unique capabilities - civil affairs, psychological operations, intelligence, language skills and region-specific knowledge. These skills help them to train foreign security forces and interact with locals, the bread and butter of counter-insurgency.

#### **Thai cabinet approves co-op on development of Chinese language**

The cabinet meeting on Tuesday permits the Ministry of Education to prepare the framework of cooperation of Chinese language teaching and learning in Thai higher education institutes. Thai Ministry of Education and China National Office for Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language (Hanban) will work together in preparing the cooperation framework. The project is aimed at enhancing teaching capability of Thai academics as well as developing Chinese language curriculum in Thai universities.

#### **Language skills management**

The National Languages Education and Training Institute will broaden the language study scopes of the educated youth. Under this program special language training courses have been designed by the Institute. Since it has been observed that there is a dearth of qualified interpreters and translators though the particular service is considered a very important assignment in the Government, a one year diploma is being introduced to train English and Sinhala language translators and interpreters at the Institute's Agalawatta languages training centre. Those who get qualified at the final test are offered the diploma.

#### **Albion kids learn to love languages**

Albion elementary students are getting tidbits of **foreign language** and culture thanks to a new program that began this fall. Albion's Nancy Lewis, parent of six past or current Albion Public Schools students, said she was thrilled with the exposure to culture her children saw at the district and wanted to make sure everyone had the same experience. So she wrote a \$1,500 Albion Community Foundation grant to begin a "Learning to Love Languages" program at Harrington Elementary. The program brings 18 Albion College language students into second- through fifth-grade classrooms for 15-minute lessons in Japanese, Spanish, French, Hindi, Chinese, Vietnamese and Arabic on the tail end of humanities, fine arts and physical education classes.

#### **Over 200 Teach India volunteers get to brush up their language skills**

Teach India is The Times of India's social responsibility initiative that has seen tremendous response ever since its launch in 2008. This year, the initiative focuses on spoken English courses for the youth for jobs. The idea is to coach sets of dedicated trainers who will in turn coach underprivileged young men and women in language skills needed to land jobs in retail, hospitality so on and so forth - in essence a skills-for-employability programme with focus on English language spoken communication.

### [Language check for ITians to land jobs](#)

For the past four months, graduating batches at the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IIT-B) have been taking rigorous seven-minute oral tests that have nothing to do with what they have studied in class. They are having their English language and comprehension skills evaluated.

### [Simple Tips on Learning a New Language - It's Easier than You Think!](#)

Learning a new language can be fun and exciting. Knowing more than one language can help you advance in your career. People who can speak Arabic are valuable employees. People feel more at ease when you are able to say a few words to them in their own language. If you are a business owner, you should try to learn a new language in case you need to speak with customers who are not from here. If you are trying to learn Arabic online, you should make use of all the course materials and practice listening and speaking a few times per day. If you follow some simple tips, you will be speaking your new language within a few days.

## [PREVIOUS NEWS](#)

### [American female troops engage Afghan women](#)

Some great work being done by our female service-members. In the Afghan culture, it is only accepted that women would work with women. Across Afghanistan, "Female Engagement Teams" of U.S. military women are working to [strengthen relationships with rural Afghan women](#). It's something that their male counterparts aren't able to do given the cultural roles of women in the country.

"Very rarely are [women] allowed to go outside the compounds without a male escort, so it's imperative that we get the female Marines to go to them," said 1st Lt. Quincy Washa, a Female Engagement Team platoon commander.

### [Navy College enacts changes in Southwest region](#)

Due to reduced staffing, Defense Language Proficiency Tests (DLPT) and the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) are now offered at 10 locations worldwide. In the Southwest region, these defense language tests are available at Naval Base San Diego.

### [Mandarin Chinese taught in Berks from remote site: BCIU uses electronics to link teachers, students in 5 school districts](#)

The BCIU is using three guest teachers from China, each a college student pursuing a degree in education. And part of a \$900,000 federal Foreign Language Assistance Program grant was spent to hire a full-time teacher, although that money will run out in 2012. The idea behind the distance-learning program is that by joining forces, cash-strapped districts can still provide a multitude of options to their students. "A small group of teachers can service a large group of students," said William F. Miller, the BCIU chief information officer. "It's really very cost effective."

### [NHS Checks on EU Doctors to Get Centralized](#)

The control of evaluating the competence and language skills of doctors will be handed over to the NHS in England from EU, as some imperfections have come out in the current system of inspections. As per the plans of the Health Secretary, Andrew Lansley, the management and control of primary care services will be shifted to GP consortium from local NHS trusts, but for the checks on foreign doctors, which are currently carried out by Europe, a new central board will be established.

### [Learn as many languages as possible](#)

I refer to "History must be balanced," (*The Star*, Oct 2) in which MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek suggested Malaysians master three languages, namely Bahasa Malaysia, English and Mandarin. I fully support his idea and share his sentiment. Malaysia is a unique country blessed with a variety of religions, races, languages, cultures and ways of life. All the world's major religions can be found here.

### [Parents agree: Foreign language skills are valuable](#)

The Williamson County School Board has been developing a strategic plan that would serve as a road map for the district during the next five to seven years. One aspect of the vision statement regarding student programs sets as a goal that the county will graduate students fluent in English and at least one foreign language. It doesn't state what language that might be, or how the district will go about growing a program that would move children toward fluency in a second language. County middle schools offer foreign language, and high school students are required to take at least two years. Some of the offerings include Spanish, German, French and Latin.

### **OVU expands Chinese language course**

In 2011-12 OVU will offer Chinese courses ranging from I-IV to allow students to continue their foreign language education. "Statistics show that one fourth of the planet's population speak Chinese as their first language and by speaking both English and Chinese you will be able to converse with one-half of the entire human race," said Steven Hardy, OVU dean of the college of arts and sciences. "OVU requires a diversity experience before graduation, and two semesters of Chinese can fulfill this requirement."

### **First in Print: Police officers find uses for foreign language abilities**

When a local restaurant was robbed at gunpoint recently, Springfield police faced a daunting task: interviewing employees who speak only Mandarin Chinese. Fortunately for those detectives, Springfield Police Officer David Tan is fluent in the language and was able to translate. Tan is one of three city officers who can speak languages other than English. That is the highest number of bilingual officers in the department's history, according to Deputy Chief Cliff Buscher.

### **Teaching for a Shared Future: Think Global**

American students' lack of knowledge about the world is unsettling. According to surveys by the National Geographic Society and the Asia Society, young Americans are next to last in their knowledge of geography and current affairs compared with peers in eight other countries, and an overwhelming majority of college-bound seniors cannot find Afghanistan, Iraq, or Israel on a world map. Fewer than half our high school students study a foreign language, and while a million U.S. students may study French, a language spoken by some 80 million people worldwide, fewer than 75,000 study Chinese, a language spoken by some 1.3 billion.

### **American female troops engage Afghan women**

Across Afghanistan, "Female Engagement Teams" of U.S. military women are working to [strengthen relationships with rural Afghan women](#). It's something that their male counterparts aren't able to do given the cultural roles of women in the country. "Very rarely are [women] allowed to go outside the compounds without a male escort, so it's imperative that we get the female Marines to go to them," said 1st Lt. Quincy Washa, a Female Engagement Team platoon commander.

### **Woman to Woman in Afghanistan**

In February 2009 Marine Capt. Matt Pottinger set out to do something about that. He helped organize and train a team of women Marines to meet with Afghan women, just as male soldiers had been meeting with Afghan men for years to drink tea and discuss those ill-conceived "infrastructure" projects. A handful of female Marines and a civilian linguist, led by Second Lt. Johanna Shaffer, formed that first Female Engagement Team (FET). Its mission was a "cordon and search" operation in Farah province that included "engaging with" Pashtun women and giving them some "humanitarian supplies"—known in COIN jargon as PSPs, or Population Support Packages, which might contain anything from a crank radio to a teddy bear—to earn their "goodwill." That's the point of protecting the populace—to win them over to our side so the forsaken insurgents will shrivel up and die. These tactics failed miserably in Vietnam, and they appear to be failing in Afghanistan, but with counterinsurgency as our avowed "strategy," Pottinger's idea of engaging the hidden half of the populace was way, way overdue.

### **A language barrier of our own making**

When it comes to foreign language instruction in America, there is a lot we don't seem to understand. Nationally, the share of elementary schools offering language classes fell from 31 percent to 25 percent in the 11 years ending in 2008; the share of middle schools dropped from 75 percent to 58 percent. The

percentage of high schools offering language classes was about the same. The numbers come from a survey published this year by the Center for applied Linguistics in Washington, D.C.

### **Call for Students to Take Up Many Languages**

Students should be encouraged to learn many languages to help motivate them in their careers, Deputy Higher Education Minister Dr. Hou Kok Chung said Friday.

### **Big powers "imposing" their culture on others**

"If Arabs were in a position of power and strength we would not have seen this big engagement in learning the English language....moreover, learning the Arabic language serves the interests of the students, irrespective of the consequences of imposing a foreign language." But she stressed the need to become proficient in foreign language in order to be open to other cultures.

### **The English-only movement in America**

A conversation about making English the only official language in the United States. Tim Schultz, lobbyist with Washington-based [US English](#) makes the case for this, ahead of an English-only vote in Oklahoma. This is not the usual fare on *The World in Words*: we don't often offer the microphone to people who discourage the use of other languages. But Schultz argues that English is what keeps America — a land of immigrants and therefore of many languages — intact.

### **Science Grows on Acquiring New Language**

Recent studies on how language learning occurs are beginning to chip away at some long-held notions about second-language acquisition and point to potential learning benefits for students who speak more than one language. "We have this national psyche that we're not good at languages," said Marty Abbott, the director of education for the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in Alexandria, Va. "It's still perceived as something only smart people can do, and it's not true; we all learned our first language and we can learn a second one."

### **Teachers train for bilingual program**

The curriculum is the same; Cristina Ortega's kindergarten class at McCormick Elementary only sounds different. Ortega constantly switches between English and Spanish. She tells the students the lesson in English, and when a student asks her "Por qué?" she clarifies in Spanish. At their desks the 5- and 6-year-olds sometimes pause from their coloring books to translate their teacher's English to each other.