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## **DLO DAILY MEDIA UPDATE**

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### **CURRENT NEWS 29 SEPTEMBER 2011**

#### **DLIFLC commandant examines language mission in Afghanistan**

*(DLIFLC)*...Natela Cutter

Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Commandant, Col. Danial D. Pick, spent a week during the Sept. 11 ten-year anniversary examining the Institute's language mission in Afghanistan. "I wanted to take a look at how effective our language training had been down range, and to be able to take those lessons learned back to the Institute to help improve our programs," stated Pick. DLIFLC has an active role in teaching language and culture to members of the Afghanistan/Pakistan (AFPAK) Hands, a program initiated by Adm. Mike Mullen in 2009 to train officers and senior enlisted servicemembers language and culture, enabling them establish rapport with the Afghan people and aid in the transition of power from coalition partners to the Afghan government.

#### **Afghan colonel provides security, language assistance**

*(DLIFLC)*...Natela Cutter

"I have about 500 students passing through here every two months," said Saberi, with a broad smile, but simultaneously shaking his head while working with his remote control to catch the evening news, this time about an insurgent rocket firing into the U.S. Embassy compound. Despite the news, Saberi has patience with his guests, several U.S. officers who have come to seek his help with support in language training for a group of newly minted Afghanistan/Pakistan (AFPAK) Hands. The AFPAK Hands program, initiated by Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2009, is designed to provide language and culture training to officers and senior enlisted servicemembers for the areas they will be deployed to, thereby accelerating the transition of responsibility to the Afghan National Security Forces and Afghan government.

#### **Lack of language skills costing British firms £21 billion**

*(Fresh Business Thinking)*...Marcus Leach

The Forum of Private Business is warning that poor foreign language skills cost British businesses £21 billion per year, leaving them behind large companies which are increasingly investing in multilingual staff. Cardiff University's 2007 '*Costing Babel*' research revealed that UK businesses miss out on £21 billion annually in lost contracts. It followed an earlier study showing that the demand for non-English language skills in large European companies is greater than the demand for English — often seen by UK small and medium businesses (SMEs) as the international 'lingua franca' of business.

#### **Female shura seeks education solutions**

*(RC-East.com – Combined Joint Task Force – 1)*...1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Jeff M. Nagan

In post-Taliban Afghanistan, many women are emerging from the shadows after decades of oppression to meet unique challenges of a developing government. Despite years of progress, women still struggle to have a voice. In an effort to strengthen communication between women living in the villages of Surkh Rod, a district just west of Jalalabad, and the Department of Women's Affairs, community leaders held an all-female shura at the district center Sept. 19. "We want to get communication flowing between the districts and the provincial line directors," said U.S. Army Maj. Patricia Poindexter, Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team female engagement team leader, "and that's exactly what happened here."

#### **Minorities seeking recognition in new Libya**

*(Press TV)*...Johnny Miller

Music is being played and the flags are being waived by the Tamazight people of Libya, also known as Berbers. With their own distinct language and culture, there's an estimated 700 000 of them in Libya or 10 percent of the population. They joined the revolution right from the beginning and now they want their

rights. Gaddafi, also, effectively banned the speaking of the Tamazight language and refused to allow it to be taught in schools. The repealing of this ban is central to the Tamazight demands in this new Libya. Tamazight fighters have been instrumental in helping to overthrow Gaddafi's forces. Many of them are currently battling loyalist resistance in the southern town of Sabha. Meanwhile on the political front, the first Libyan National Tamazight Conference in Tripoli is a sellout. Their politicians and activist are pushing hard already for recognition of their culture.

### **Hit movie stirs up more interest in Aborigine culture**

*(Taipei Times)*...Staff Writer

The film *Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale* has not only been a huge hit at movie theaters, but it has also attracted much attention in the nation's college classrooms. In addition, interest in Aborigine culture has started to blossom in higher education institutions. The Department of Ethnology at National Chengchi University has seen a surge in the number of students attending its long-standing Aboriginal languages course. Although the department has offered the course since 1997, student registrations increased threefold this year.

### **An indigenous Taiwanese woman working to save her culture**

*(BBC News)*

Paicu Luheacana is a member of the Tsou tribe, one of 14 officially-recognised indigenous tribes in Taiwan. They lived on the island for thousands of years before the majority Han Chinese arrived, but now make up only two percent of the population. With many young indigenous people moving to the cities to make a living, the language and culture have not been passed on. Many young indigenous people cannot speak their tribal language or understand the culture.

## **PREVIOUS NEWS**

### **App helps travelers speak in foreign languages**

*(The Baltimore Sun)*...Natasha Baker

Communicating with local people in a foreign country can pose difficulties, whether it is asking for direction or making a special request at a restaurant. But Vocre, a new iPhone app released by translation company myLanguage, aims to ease those problems by enabling users to translate their spoken voice into foreign languages. It leverages crowd-sourcing to continually improve the accuracy of its translations to allow people to express themselves in the same way as native speakers. It's like asking your friend down the street, "How would I say this in Spanish?" said Andrew Lauder, founder and CEO of myLanguage. "It might not be something that's expected by a dictionary -- but it is the right way to say it when you go to that specific part of the world. It has the colloquialisms or slang of the area."

### **Students are being introduced to a second language**

*(Fremont Tribune)*...Brett Ellis

Officials with Arlington Public Schools have expanded Spanish education to all elementary students. The program began last year for students in kindergarten through second grade. This year lessons are provided for students in grades 3-6 as well. "The biggest push for this is if you think about our society and how many Spanish-speaking families we have in the United States and kind of where the world is going," elementary principal Chad Radke said.

### **State gets \$10.5M for English learner assessment**

*(The Capital Times)*...Bill Novak

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has been awarded a \$10.5 million grant to develop technology-based assessments for students learning English. The four-year grant from the federal Department of Education will be used to develop an online assessment system to measure student progress in attaining the English language skills they need to be successful in school and, ultimately, post-secondary studies and work.

### **Ruling Affirms Right to Apply in Swedish for Academic Posts in Sweden**

*(New York Times)*...Jonathan J. Li

Three Swedish universities, which had placed job advertisements requiring certain applications to be filed in English, are now being told to change their approach after a recent decision that gives a primary role to the national language. According to the decision, which was handed down late last month, Swedish universities cannot demand applications only in English without the possibility of applying in Swedish. "According to the Language Act, common citizens should be entitled to communicate with Swedish authorities in Swedish," she said in a telephone interview from Stockholm last week.

### **Chinese Taught in Icelandic Elementary Schools**

*(Iceland Review Online)*

Last school year 23 pupils in Icelandic elementary schools studied Chinese, which has not been taught before at compulsory school level in Iceland since [Statistics Iceland](#) began collecting data on foreign language studies in 1999. English is the first foreign language taught at compulsory school level and also the most common language, followed by Danish.

### **Latin America lures Chinese tourists**

*(CNN)*...Brian Byrnes

Maria Jose Martinez Waldner grew up speaking Spanish and English at her home in Buenos Aires. Several years ago she decided to learn Mandarin Chinese, a language that is rarely heard in Argentina. In 2010, she won a scholarship and traveled to China to perfect her language skills. Now, her knowledge of both Chinese language and customs aids her considerably in her job at the Park Tower Hotel in Buenos Aires, where she welcomes Chinese tourists arriving in the Argentine capital. "They act like they never thought that someone here in the hotel could speak their language. They say to me "Oh you speak Chinese? Where did you study? Did you go to China? Would you like to go back?" So it is beautiful to receive those kinds of comments from the Chinese guests," Waldner says.

### **New Mandarin test for native speakers stirs up debate in China**

*(Xinhua)*...Deng Shasha

China's new Mandarin test has raised public debate, as some experts doubt its effectiveness in enhancing native speakers' language abilities. The National Education Examinations Authority (NEEA), a body affiliated with the Ministry of Education, said in August that the Chinese Proficiency Test, which will debut after three years' preparation, is designed to promote people's interest and ability in their native language. The test evaluates listening, speaking, and reading and writing abilities at six different levels, while also providing advice to examinees on how to improve their Mandarin. The test was conceived amid the perceived withering popularity of Chinese culture and language, as more and more Chinese people have rushed to English training classes instead of perfecting their native language, because better English can mean a higher salary.

### **Thousands protest language law**

*(The Baltic Times)*...TBT Staff

Thousands of ethnic Poles have again taken to the streets in Vilnius to protest a new language law that would force all schools in the country to teach certain classes in Lithuanian. Lithuania has a huge Polish minority and a number of schools that teach in Polish. The new law would introduce standardized testing in Lithuanian at the highest grades, as well as making Lithuanian language and history courses mandatory for younger students.

### **Culture hangs on language, art**

*(The Durango Herald)*...Heather Scofield

"Ich nuu'apag'apü uruskwa'èi." The sentence means, "The Ute language is disappearing." Experts and tribal leaders say culture is a critical component of American Indian life, affecting tribes' interactions with government, family, the environment and their neighbors. But some say the practices and teachings of their heritage are fading within the Ute Nation's tribal membership, and it could have painful effects for both the tribes and their neighboring communities. "The language identifies who we are," said Lynda

Grove D'Wolf, who teaches workshops on language and culture for Southern Ute tribal members. "If we lose the language, we lose our identity."

### **English easily the most popular foreign language in Bulgarian schools**

*(Sofia Echo)*...Sofia Echo Staff

In Bulgaria, in 2009, 77 per cent of primary and lower secondary school pupils were studying English as their first foreign language while the second most studied language was German with 15 per cent. In Bulgarian upper secondary schools 100 per cent of pupils were studying English as their first foreign language followed by 41 per cent who were studying German. The information on language learning of school pupils was released by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union. In 2009, among the European Union's 27 member states as a whole, 82 per cent of pupils at primary and lower secondary school level and 95 per cent of those in upper secondary level general programmes were studying English as a foreign language.

### **Airman experiences Lajes culture through LEAP**

*(Af.mil)*...Staff Sgt. Olufemi Owolabi

To increase the Air Force's bilateral relations capability, an Airman is benefiting from the cultural richness of the Azores at Lajes through the Language Enabled Airman Program. LEAP is used to develop Airmen who already speak a foreign language, but have a desire to increase their knowledge of the language and culture, said Gilley. "It's a career-long program designed to sustain and enhance language and cross-cultural skills, with the end goal of producing a language speaker who can perform their core job duties in their respective foreign language," said Gilley, who applied for the program in September of 2010 and was selected in November.