



A Nepalese soldier prepares for the land navigation portion of the U.S. Army Alaska Warrior Leader Course on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. (Photo by Justin Connaher)

# NCO ‘Backbone’ a Force Multiplier for Nepalese Army

*By Master Sgt. Jennifer K. Yancey*

USARAK Public Affairs

**S**cores of junior-enlisted leaders enter the Sgt. 1st Class Christopher R. Brevard Noncommissioned Officer Academy on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), Alaska, to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for training and leading Soldiers.

What they might not expect is to share a classroom with soldiers from partnering nations from around the Pacific region.

What these visiting soldiers gained from the experience included invaluable training as well as strong bonds with their American counterparts.

Through the Regional Partnership Program, U.S. Army Alaska and its partnering nations — Northern Japan, Thailand, the Philippines, South Korea, Nepal, Australia, Guam and India — are able to take full advan-

tage of a number of training opportunities that will help further cultivate these growing relationships.

Five noncommissioned officers from the Nepal army — Sgt. Basnet Jayaram, Sgt. Giri Upendra Lal, Cpl. Khadka Jeewan Kumar, Sgt. Shrestha Dilip Kumar and Cpl. Shrestha Mangal — attended the Warrior Leader Course on JBER to not only further develop their own leadership skills, but to use those skills to stand up their own NCO Academy in Nepal.

“These (courses) are my diamonds,” said Nepal Army Capt. Adhikari Bikash, Nepal Rangers Battalion. Bikash went through the training along with his NCOs, and he will oversee the training back in Nepal.

Once the Nepalese soldiers completed WLC, they moved on to the Foundation Instructor Facilitator



Nepalese army rangers rush into an ambush during the Situational Training Exercise portion of the U.S. Army Alaska Warrior Leader Course with U.S. Army Soldiers and U.S. Air Force Airmen on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. (Photo by Justin Conna-her)

Course. This weeklong course teaches students basic facilitation and instruction techniques, first through interactive multimedia instruction, second through lessons given in U.S. Army schools.

The class also allowed the Nepalese students to focus on their strengths and mitigate their weaknesses prior to teaching a class back in Nepal. Bikash said that before FIFC, “We had no idea what our mannerisms were, we never thought about that.”

“It’s the soldiers who are going to benefit from you and your experience,” said 1st Sgt. Jennifer L. Myers, NCOA deputy commandant. “As an instructor, you are now the subject-matter experts.

People are going to come to you, (asking), ‘Hey, what’s the best way I should give a class?’ or ‘How can I conduct the training, how can I prepare for it?’”

Introduction of this newly-acquired training to the Nepal army will be gradual. An inaugural class will be given to the other instructors back in Nepal by the five NCOs who attended the course at JBER. If the class proves successful, it will be added to the curriculum.

“For our rangers, our main job is to ‘train the trainer,’” Bikash said. “It is a force multiplier for what we do over there.”

Nepal is currently the only partner nation that

sends its soldiers to JBER for WLC. Maj. Gen. Michael H. Shields, U.S. Army Alaska commanding general, said the plan is to expand on these professional development opportunities after graduation, giving these soldiers more avenues upon which to put the skills they’ve learned into practice.

“What we’re trying to do is actually take it a step further, where their NCOs get to go through WLC, then embed with a unit here for further adaptation of those leadership skills, then send them north for the Northern Warfare Training Center experience,” Shields said.

“It will be a very valuable program once we get going. That probably won’t be until sometime in 2015,” he added.

These successful partnerships enable the U.S. to develop a greater appreciation for the unique cultures of each partnering nation, as well as an appreciation and understanding for the professionalism of their leadership.

“We saw a different aspect to training, different techniques other cultures use as a method,” said Sgt. 1st Class Ernest Moore, Instructor Training Course instructor at the Academy.

Sgt. 1st Class Jerry Hyatt, also an ITC instructor, noted that the relationship-building aspect of student-instructor interaction here was a dynamic that the Nepalese students appreciated.

“If I need some help, (the instructors here) are ready to help,” Bikash said.

This unique training environment also comes with challenges, such as the language barrier.

“It takes you outside of your comfort zone,” Hyatt said. “You’re teaching not only to the American students but also the Nepalese. You’re training skill level one tasks while also trying to meet the intent of the lesson.”

The positive rapport between the Nepalese soldiers and their American classmates helped diminish some of those challenges.

“We are so proud to be over here and we feel lucky that our country has a good relationship with the U.S.,” Bikash said.

The multiple levels of partnership within USARAK also include humanitarian assistance and disaster-relief efforts. But Bikash said there may come a time when the U.S. and Nepal join forces for other purposes.

“(The U.S.) has been doing a lot outside the country to help keep the peace,” Bikash said. “One day we may find our two countries working side-by-side to keep the peace, so what we are doing here is a good start to that.” ■

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