



Op Shared Responsibility

(25 October) Trial mass testing of the Slovak population for COVID-19 culminated in Orava and Bardejov district as part of Op Shared Responsibility last weekend.

When launched on Friday, Op Shared Responsibility saw 61,905 people tested and 2,225 confirmed positive, while 59,613 people were tested on Saturday, with 2,207 being identified as infectious. Over the three-day period, a total of 136,904 people were tested in Bardejov, Dolný Kubín, Námestovo and Tvrdošín. Of these, 5,298 had a positive result, equating to 3.87% of all people tested.

According to Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad, testing went off smoothly on Saturday. All 182 testing sites opened this morning. "We've strengthened the testing teams. While yesterday at some testing sites we had one team, today we have two teams to make the testing process faster. This is because we have more medical personnel available for testing," he explained. 2,003 people formed the testing teams and staff supporting Op Shared Responsibility. Nearly half of them were regular soldiers, police, firefighters, healthcare workers and employees of local self-governing bodies. Compared to Friday, more aids, 277 volunteers to be exact, turned up to help on Saturday.

Speaking on Saturday afternoon, Minister Nad said: "It is with great pleasure that I can confirm there are no problems in terms of testing. We've strengthened the testing teams, because additional medical staff have signed up to help on Saturday. As a result, you can see smaller queues for testing. Yet, I am kindly asking our citizens from other districts to consider whether it is necessary to get tested here." Apart from military personnel, police, firefighters and medical professionals, he extended a special thanks to self-governing authorities. "It was far from easy for them, but it has turned out to work well together. Local authorities and central government are doing a fantastic job and I'm thankful for that," he said.

From the perspective of Op Shared Responsibility Command, Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko said that the situation is stabilised and no security incidents have been reported. He appreciated the commitment of the men and women of the Armed Forces and their cooperation with their colleagues from the ranks of medical personnel, police, firefighters, public and central government authorities and last, but not least, volunteers. Appearing on TA3's Politics, Prime Minister Igor Matovič said that testing in Orava and Bardejov district has gone far beyond expectations. He praised the efforts of all those involved. According to the Prime Minister, thanks to the test pilot, it was possible to identify all challenges in testing, so that the country can go ahead with nation-wide testing for COVID-19 as planned over the coming two weekends.



Turnout in trial testing of SVK population for Covid-19 reaches 91 per cent

(26 October) Orava and Bardejov saw the first weekend of country-wide testing of the Slovak population for COVID-19. 140,945 people were tested for coronavirus, of which 976 were tested in hospitals and care homes. Antigen tests revealed 5,594 (3.97%) positive cases. Providing an update on Operation Shared Responsibility, Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad said: "The Armed Forces have once again demonstrated that they are here for Slovakia, always and wherever needed. In record time, they have managed to put plans into action and are carrying out this demanding task. Swabbing in Orava and Bardejov was the first test for them and they stood the test excellently. Looking ahead, another challenge we are now facing is that of country-wide testing." The Minister added that the lessons learned from Orava and Bardejov are immensely important for preparing the nation-wide testing phase. Antigen tests on 139,969 people in Bardejov revealed that 1,569 (3.25%) were diagnosed positive. The most critical situation was in Tvrdošín district, where there were 1,078 positive results, equating to 4.85 % of all people tested (22,250). The second highest infection rate was recorded in Námestovo district, where maximum turnout estimates were roughly at 155,000 people and 91 per cent did turn up indeed. In Orava and Bardejov, most people got tested on Friday. Over the period, 1,835 military personnel supported Op Shared Responsibility, including providing logistics and supporting Regional Commands, while 444 soldiers and military medical professionals worked at the testing sites. Apart from them, 3,228 police, firefighters, healthcare workers, employees of local authorities and volunteers were involved in the operation.



- Due to the unfavourable COVID-19 situation in Slovakia, the study room of the **Military History Archives** will be closed to the public from 24 Oct until further notice. Also closed to the public will be the Military History Museums in Piešťany and in Svidník.

- To stop the spread of coronavirus, the Col Ján Lipský **Topographic Institute** in Banská Bystrica temporarily halted its aerial imaging services as of 23 Oct until further notice.

- Director of the SVK **Military Police** Col Valentín Cebo met with Chaplain General of Ecumenical Pastoral Service in the SVK Armed Forces Col Viktor Sabo and Managing Director of the Military Support Foundation Milan Gajdoš on the premises of the Military Police Department Trenčín on 21 Oct.

- Director General and Chair of the Board of Directors of Horezza JSC Július Kolocsányi and President of the SVK War Veterans Union Col Daniel Kostra signed a **cooperation agreement** on price discounts for veterans at the hotels run by Horezza. The text of the document is available to the public on the website of the SVK War Veterans Union.

- The MOD has issued a **traffic warning** to motorists as five Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 26 Oct to 1 Nov 2020. Over the same period, the SVK Armed Forces will conduct convoy movements from/to: Sliach – Moldava nad Bodvou and back, Sered' – Hlohovec and back, Hlohovec – Prešov, Prešov – Michalovce and back, Prešov – Dubnica nad Váhom and back, Koliňanský Vrch – Nitra, Nováky – Sliach, TC Lešť – Sliach, Zemianske Kostolany – Michalovce and back, Zemianske Kostolany – Topoľčany and back, Zemianske Kostolany – Trenčín and back, Nováky – Záhorie, Zemianske Kostolany – Levice and back, Trebišov – Zemianske Kostolany and back. Also scheduled are SVK Armed Forces rail movements from Zemianske Kostolany to Vlkánová and from Zemianske Kostolany to Kuchyňa.

This week Regina Radio's Full Field Kit live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will focus on the SVK military's role in nation-wide testing for COVID-19. Please, send your suggestions and opinions to plnapolna@mod.gov.sk.

Flying giant delivers tests for purposes of COVID-19 country-wide testing

(22 October) An Antonov An-124 Ruslan heavy transport aircraft touched down at Milan Rastislav Štefánik Airport in Bratislava in the early hours of today, bringing in nearly 3 million pieces of antigen tests for the upcoming country-wide testing of the SVK population for COVID-19. Members of the SVK Armed Forces took over emergency equipment from the State Material Reserves warehouses, including 187,200 test sets, 40,800 face masks, 14,096 respirators, 467,900 disposable surgical gloves, 16,850 overalls, 2,350 shields and glasses, 7,045 shoe covers, 7,050 protective head gear and balaclavas, and 710 kidney dish sets, to be distributed by



the SVK military to respective Regional Commands and redistributed to the testing sites across Orava and Bardejov. Meanwhile, military personnel continued the preparations for the test pilot phase. On the provision of material for this purpose, the Ministry of Defence appreciated any aid in the form of donations, such as the paper tissues and office paper gifted by Mondi SCP from Ružomberok. These were used for the test pilot in Dolný Kubín, Námestovo, Tvrdošín and Bardejov. Medical personnel and volunteers willing to help could register at www.korona.gov.sk. Updates on the nation-wide testing for COVID-19 are available to the public on the MOD website at www.mosr.sk.

No militarisation of space

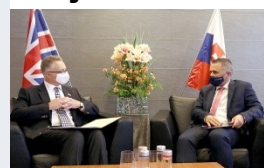


(23 October) The tasks of NATO and Allied armed forces in bringing the coronavirus pandemic under control, delivery of international commitments, including defence expenditure, and current defence and security challenges in the international environment. These were among the themes discussed by Defence State Secretary Marian Majer on the first day of the virtual NATO Defence Ministers Meeting on 22 and 23 Oct 2020.

Defence investment of NATO Member States was a major topic as well. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg presented progress on fair burden sharing, confirming the sixth consecutive year of increased defence spending.

Allied Defence Ministers underscored the importance of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Equally important, they underlined the importance of NATO's adaptation to all military domains, including space, and reiterated that the Alliance does not seek to militarise space. Also in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Ministers paid their attention to traditional and non-traditional threats at all levels – allied, national and societal.

Majer meets British Ambassador



(20 October) Defence State Secretary Marian Majer received the British Ambassador to Slovakia, His Excellency Mr Nigel Baker OBE MVO, at the Ministry of Defence for talks on the priorities of both countries in the field of security and defence policy, as well as discussing areas of further cooperation after the United Kingdom's transition period and withdrawal from the EU. Another part of the discussion was dedicated to the UK's involvement in the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and operations. Focus of today's meeting was also on the ongoing measures being applied by both Governments to limit the spread of COVID-19. Secretary Majer updated Ambassador Baker on current actions taken by the SVK Armed Forces to support the biggest operation in the history of Slovakia, codenamed Op Shared Responsibility, to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. Defence State Secretary Majer informed British Ambassador Baker about work underway to complete the SVK Defence Strategy and the SVK Security Strategy in close cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. He also provided an update on current deployments of the SVK Armed Forces as part of international crisis management.