



Defence athletes at Winter Olympics

(25 January) 15 athletes of the DUKLA Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica are joining the SVK National Team delegation to the Beijing Winter Olympics. Historically, this is the second highest number of athletes to represent DUKLA at the Winter Olympics. They will be competing in three sports – skiing, luge and biathlon.

Director of the DUKLA Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica Lt Col Matej Tóth said: "25 individual athletes are going to Beijing. This means that the majority of them are from our Centre. Alongside the four skiers and seven biathletes, our luge racers, too, have made us feel absolutely delighted. Four of them will be competing on three sledges under the five Olympic rings."

The DUKLA Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica has announced its medal ambitions for Beijing 2022. The aim is not to come home empty-handed from the Games and with at least two top ten placements. The Centre's and Slovakia's highest expectations are on Petra Vihová.

Lt Col Matej Tóth continued: "Petra is in great shape and in high spirits, and so we just hope to see her winning at least one medal." In addition to skiing, he said that our hopes are pinned on Slovakia's historically most successful winter sport – biathlon – before adding: "Sisters Paulína and Ivona Fialková's form is steadily growing and we believe they are going to give it all they have at Beijing."

Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď wished the DUKLA Olympic team the best of luck and every success ahead of their journey to Beijing.



NATO discussions in media spotlight

(27 January) The growing tensions over the conflict between Ukraine and the Russian Federation require that we prepare responsibly for scenarios on all potential developments. This is true both at national level (by hosting special briefings for the highest constitutional representatives, meetings of the Security Council and sessions of the Parliamentary committees) and at NATO level.

As standard practice in the event of crisis, NATO considers all possible alternatives to situational developments. Military experts have put forward a proposal for allied reinforcements to be deployed alongside NATO's eastern border, which follows on from the experience NATO has gained from its presence in the Baltics and Poland in response to the illegal annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation and to the armed conflict that has been underway in Ukraine's Donbas and Luhansk and which is only one of the potential alternatives to further developments.

As tensions rise, the aim of military experts is to process a complete list of options that are available to NATO as a defensive alliance. NATO wants and must be ready for all possible scenarios including the worst case scenarios, although we all wish the situation calms down. And this is exactly how the strongest defensive alliance in history should act. Based on the military scenarios and recommendations, specialist and political discussions will now get underway to determine which of the proposed measures are most appropriate in this situation and with which all NATO Member States identify themselves.

It applies that not NATO but SVK constitutional bodies will decide on the presence of foreign armed forces in SVK territory. Slovakia's highest constitutional representatives as much as Cabinet members continue to honestly follow the security situation in every detail and to evaluate the measures that need to be adopted for delivering Slovakia's security.

No decision has been made in relation to the deployment of Allied troops to Slovakia. If necessary, decisions will be taken by Slovakia's constitutional bodies, depending, as a priority, on how the situation develops.

Design of 52 Airborne Battalion Trebišov Insignia approved

(26 January) The 52 Airborne Battalion Trebišov Insignia has been approved in accordance with Article 13 of MOD Directive No. 50/2017 on Military Symbols and Minister of Defence Regulation No. 1/2022, as well as keeping with national and military traditions.

Placed in the black field of the Gothic shield with a silver (white) border is an open parachute with silver (white) suspension lines and black seams on the canopy. A golden (yellow) fox head with the inner parts of the ears, eyes and the contours of the nose in black colour is placed in the middle of the parachute. The fox signifies a continuation of the tradition after the disbandment of 23 Motorised Battalion. Two airborne knives in silver (white) colour are placed symmetrically along the lower part of the parachute. The head of the emblem in the black field reads the unit's name and location – 52 AIRBORNE BATTALION TREBIŠOV – written in capital silver (white) letters in two lines.

Based on the SVK Minister of Defence's decision of 27 Jan 2015 and the SVK Army Commander's Order to execute organisational changes across the SVK Army in 2015, the stand-up of 23 Motorised Battalion at Trebišov Garrison, falling under 2 Mechanised Brigade Prešov, was approved. The Chief of Defence's Order of 2019 saw the Battalion resubordinated under the newly established Slovak Special Operations Forces Command (SOCOM) and the unit was renamed 52 Airborne Battalion, with effect from 1 Sept 2021.



- The SNP Museum Education Centre Banská Bystrica hosted the final online conference on the Improvements in Pupil Competencies in the Field of Human Rights and Values Project. The project, supported by the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund, is being implemented by primary schools and grammar schools in Banská Bystrica. Also in attendance at the online conference was Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer.

- The latest *Azimuth 24/7* edition, available on YouTube, brings the SVK artillery's best wishes for the New Year.

- A meeting chaired by SVK Military Police Director Col Valentín Cebo with MP leaders took place at the MP Dept Trenčín on 26 Jan, taking stock of the tasks performed and the security situation across Defence in 2021. As part of the programme, Col Cebo handed the MP Trophy over to the MP Operations Section Martin for the best overall performance.

- To mark the 77th anniversary of the liberation of Rožňava, members of 103 CBRN Defence Battalion Rožňava participated in a commemoration for the soldiers who laid their lives in the town's liberation.

- The MP Crisis Management, Training and K9 Branch Vlkňanová – Hronek hosted the MP Crime Investigation Technicians Improvement Training. The aim of the training was to test the skills of the crime investigation technicians in searching for, collecting, documenting and packing crime-related evidence.

- In the run-up to the Beijing Winter Olympics, Petra Vihová, member of the Dukla Military Sports Centre BB, placed 2nd in the giant slalom at the World Cup in Kronplatz, Italy.

- Biathlete Paulína Fialková, member of the Dukla Military Sports Centre BB, placed an excellent 11th in the women's 12.5km Mass Start event at the IBU Biathlon World Cup in Antholz-Anterselva, Italy.

- The ECAV General Bishopric Office hosted a specialist meeting for chaplains of the Central Office of Ecumenical Pastoral Service (EPS) in the Armed Forces and Armed Corps, chaired by Chaplain in Chief Col Viktor Sabo. He stated that the planned spiritual activities in 2021 had been fulfilled without major difficulties.

- The MOD has issued a traffic warning to motorists as 21 Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 31 Jan to 6 Feb 2022. Over the same period, the SVK military will conduct road movements from/to: Plešivec – Lešť, Martin – Plešivec, Trebišov – Hlohovec and back, Martin – Michalovce, Nitra – Koliňanský vrch, Moldava nad Bodvou – Hlohovec, Prešov – Moldava nad Bodvou, Martin – Turecký vrch, Zemianske Kostolány – Nitra and back, Prešov – Zemianske Kostolány and back, Turecký vrch – Viníčné and back, Nemšová – Zemianske Kostolány and back, Zemianske Kostolány – Sliach and back, and Žilina – Sliach.

FULL FIELD KIT

The Full Field Kit radio programme, featured on Radio Regina live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, presents the ongoing basic training for new trainee soldiers at TC Lešť.

Military policemen undergo training for Op EUNAVFOR MED IRINI

(26 January) Slovakia is set to deploy a Military Police Boarding Team on Op EUNAVFOR MED IRINI. 11 Military Police personnel are currently undergoing training ahead of deploying with the German Navy frigate FGS Mecklenburg-Vorpommern to the Mediterranean Sea.

The selected military policemen first undertook specialist training at Slovakia's Military Police facilities and Training Centre Lešť before embarking on an 8-week training course at the German Navy's installations in Eckernförde and Neustadt.

Director of the SVK Military Police Col Valentín Cebo said: "There was highly specialised training at facilities specially designed for survival training in the event of a helicopter crash at sea or a sinking vessel, while in full kit with weapons and under the supervision of experienced

Visit to Sector 4



(24 January) UNFICYP in Cyprus was visited by Deputy Military Advisor to the UN Secretary-General Maj Gen Maureen O'Brien. At Sector 4, Maj Gen O'Brien and Force Commander Maj Gen Ingrid Margrethe Gjerde were accompanied by Commander SLOVCON Lt Col Róbert Plávka, Deputy Commander SLOVCON Maj Martin Novotný, and Chief of the SLOVCON Commander's Personal Section 1Lt Roman Ivor.

EUFOR Althea change of command



(26 January) A change of command (COC) ceremony for Commander EUFOR (COMEUFOR) Althea in Bosnia and Herzegovina was held with Maj Gen Anton Wessely taking over command from Maj Gen Alexander Platzer, in the presence of Operational Commander (OPCOM) for Operation Althea Lt Gen Brice Houdet. On this occasion, OPCOM Lt Gen Houdet also visited the SVK LOT Novo Sarajevo, where he was greeted by Commander of the LOT Coordination Centre/Commander SLOVCON Lt Col Ján Medved' and where he received briefs from Coordinator of the SVK LOTs Maj Radovan Štefančin and LOT Leader Capt Jaroslav Korienek.

Chochlíková victorious again



(29 January) The Slovak Professional Muay Thai League Organisation has experienced a successful gala premier evening. WMC Muay Thai World Lightweight Champion Monika Chochlíková, member of the DUKLA Military Sports Centre BB, fought against Aline Seiberth of Switzerland. In the three rounds, Chochlíková put up a fierce fight against the experienced Swiss fighter, winning a 3:0 convincing victory.



German Navy instructors. On its successful completion, the boarding team is now continuing with the team's certification on FGS Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in the North Sea."

The core task of the vessels operating off the Libyan coast in the Mediterranean Sea is to implement the United Nations arms embargo on Libya, to disrupt the business model of the human smugglers' and traffickers' networks, and to monitor and gather information on illicit exports of crude oil from Libya.

The SVK military policemen will be deployed on Op EUNAVFOR MED IRINI from March to June 2022. Over this period, FGS Mecklenburg-Vorpommern's boarding teams will be involved in Visit, Board, Search and Seize (VBSS) operations under the command of the frigate's Commanding Officer, with the use of helicopter and speedboat insertion and extraction to and from the vessels.