



Final farewell to Anna Bergerová

(23 Feb) Anna Bergerová, one of the last participants and heroines to fight in the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) in WWII, passed away at the age of nearly 94 on 19 Feb.

The full military honours funeral service for Anna Bergerová was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Robert Kaliňák and Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko at Nightingale Valley Cemetery in Bratislava on Fri 23 Feb. Anna Bergerová (née Daňová) was born on 3 Mar 1930 in the Ruthenian village of Habura, Slovakia. With the outbreak of the SNP in Aug 1944, Anna (15) along with her mother and older sister joined the Chapayev partisan group, where they worked as nurses and "runners" or messengers. She survived the harsh winter of 1944-1945 in the mountains with soldiers and partisans. After crossing the front lines, she treated wounded soldiers of the 1st Czechoslovak Army Corps and the people who had returned from the concentration camps. Her two brothers, too, joined Slovakia's WW2 Resistance against the Nazis. One of them lost his life in the Prague Uprising shortly before the end of WWII.



Slovakia is part of Demining Coalition

(20 Feb) The aim of this year's first meeting of Allied Defence Ministers at NATO HQ in Brussels, attended by the SVK delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Robert Kaliňák, was to discuss the current issues and challenges the Alliance is facing. It is in Slovakia's interests to play a part in the solutions improving the security situation. It is for this reason that Slovakia along with 19 NATO Allies formed the Demining Coalition for Ukraine, led by Lithuania and Iceland, to clear mines and explosive devices in the country.

To support this aim, the BOŽENA demining unmanned ground vehicle (UGV), made by Slovakia's Way Industries, is much sought after by our partners and is not losing out on international competition. In addition, Slovakia offers the UDS Multi-Purpose Excavator by Tisovec-based CSM Industry and the Falcon 4G Long Range Chemical Reconnaissance Detector by Liptovský Mikuláš-based SEC Technologies.

Mr Kaliňák also used the occasion to meet his ministerial partners for informal talks.



Effective defence is based on modernity and international ties

(19 Feb) Enhancing and expanding defence ties with our international partners is essential to the success of our Armed Forces' modernisation. That's why exploring the potential to procure new advanced technologies and opening the doors of international markets to the SVK defence industry were among the key topics discussed during the Defence Minister's recent series of working trips abroad.

On his official visit to Saudi Arabia, Defence Minister Kaliňák met his counterpart, His Royal Highness Prince Khalid bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and other officials for talks on SVK-SAU defence cooperation, even through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) initiated by Slovakia. As part of the programme, Mr Kaliňák toured the World Defence Show (WDS) Riyadh, where he took the opportunity to discuss the latest developments with UK Defence Secretary Grant Shapps, Estonian Defence Minister Hanno Pevkur, and Azerbaijani Minister for Defence Industry Vugar Mustafayev.

Arriving in Hungary, Minister Kaliňák held talks with Defence Minister Kristóf Szalay-Bobrovniczky about the two nations' defence industrial co-operation, generation of the Reserves, Armed Forces deployments abroad, and opportunities for the Visegrad Four (V4). On Ukraine, they agreed that it is essential to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

Mr Kaliňák's series of trips abroad culminated with his visit to the World Governments Summit (WGS) Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) upon the invitation of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, His Highness Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan. While there, he held a bilateral meeting with the Minister of State for Defence Affairs, His Excellency Mohamed Mubarak Fadel Al Mazrouei. The UAE Gov't places great emphasis on the modernisation of defence capabilities, which presents opportunities for SVK defence manufacturers too.



- Military personnel of the fourth rotation of the NATO MN BG SVK rolled up their sleeves in support of **free blood donations** in Slovakia. While 120 soldiers donated blood at the Roosevelt Hospital in Banská Bystrica, the same number of CZE, DEU and SVN soldiers gave blood at the Nitra hospital.

- Over 50 SVK SOF personnel embarked on **Phase 1 of the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC)** at 51 Training Base Žilina. Among the participants were military personnel of SOCOM Trenčín, 5 SOF Regt Žilina, and 52 Abn Bn Jamnik. Much of the course's focus has been on specialised physical training and shooting. On completion of Phase 1, selected SOF personnel will take 13-week-long Phase 2 of the SFQC at the end of Feb.

- This February the Armed Forces Academy (AOS) Liptovský Mikuláš saw 13 SVK soldiers completing the **Comprehensive Physical Training Course**, including 15 military functional exercise programmes to build up mobility, strength, speed, endurance, and proprioception abilities.

- This year's first **Slovak Air Force Commander Maj Gen Róbert Tóth's Military Council Meeting** took place on 21 Feb. Participants in attendance included guests from the Defence Language Institute, the Military Aviation Authority, and the units subordinate to the Slovak Air Force Headquarters.

- Through its Education Centre, AOS Liptovský Mikuláš is hosting the **Basic Command Staff Course** No. 29 until 26 Apr. The course covers social sciences, security & defence, logistics, personnel management, military operations, and C2. Among those attending the course are 75 officers from across the MOD. On completion of the course, the graduates will be promoted to the rank of Major.

- Cdr Jnt Spt Bde Trenčín Brig Gen Jozef Ševčík has signed nearly 300 regular donation agreements for the **SOS project of the Military Support Foundation**, as Jnt Spt Bde HQ staffers have decided to donate money to their colleagues in need.

- AOS Officer Cadets have completed the **Basic Air Traffic Control (ATC) Theory Course** at the Flight Training Dept, Aviation Faculty, Technical University of Košice (TUKE).

- To mark the second anniversary of Ukraine's defence against Russia's aggression, a **'Two Years of War in Ukraine'** event took place on 22 Feb in Bratislava, where the Ukrainian Ambassador, His Excellency Myroslav Kastran, recognised three personalities for their humanitarian work in Ukraine. Among them was Lt Col (Ret'd) Milan Gajdoš, head of the Military Support Foundation and director of the Central Office of Ecumenical Pastoral Service in the Armed Forces and Armed Corps.

- Ema Kapustová, biathlete of the Dukla Military Sports Centre, showing clean shooting, secured 2nd place in the women's individual race at the **Youth Junior Biathlon World Championships** Otepää in Estonia.

Spanish soldiers visit Jnt Spt Bde HQ

(23 Feb) Commander Joint Support Brigade Brig Gen Jozef Ševčík welcomed a delegation of the Spanish Contingent of the NATO MN BG SVK to the Joint Support

Brigade Headquarters (Jnt Spt Bde HQ) Trenčín. The informal visit of Chief of Staff of the Spanish National Support Element (NSE) Lt Col Juan Jordan Villarubia, Maj Fermin Colorada Ibáñez, Maj Javier Tornero Cuetos, and Sgt Juan Rougera Soto was in the spirit of familiarisation with the Host Nation (HN)'s next steps to coordinate the ESP Contingent's deployment to Slovakia. The ESP delegation and the Brigade staff responsible for ops and logistics exchanged their views, analysed the HNS activities so far, and elaborated on the plans into the future. Brig Gen Ševčík appreciated the Battlegroup soldiers' interest and approach to undertaking tasks within their role and looked forward to working collaboratively with them.

Driving BVP-2 combat vehicles



(21 Feb) BVP-2 tracked infantry fighting vehicle drivers of 11 Mech Bn Martin underwent training at Martin Garrison's Sučany training ground. The aim of the concentrated training was to maintain and improve

the level of the drivers' readiness to drive tracked platforms in difficult terrain conditions. The key points of Tng Ex No 6A D/N were: driving the BVP-2 IFVs over challenging terrain, a technical check of the vehicle, the utilisation of the self-recovery capability, first aid, casualty evacuation (CASEVAC), and the review of driving rules. All tasks were completed to the highest standard by the exercising troops, according to Maj Peter Lukáč, the officer commanding the training exercise.

Combat Shooting Course



(23 Feb) The Military Working Dog (MWD) and Training Branch of the MP Dept Vlkánová - Hronsek delivered the Combat Shooting Course to improve the live firing performance of Specialised MP Ops Branch personnel.

The course was divided into three blocks. The first one was built around the technicalities of combat marksmanship, with the emphasis on engagement of single and multiple targets from different static firing positions and distances. The second one was focused on firing on the move. And the third one was a comprehensive live fire exercise (LIVEX), emphasising precision and speed of the fire.

Armed Forces Academy Open Doors Day

(23 Feb) During its Open Doors Day event, General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy was visited by over 600 secondary school students who came to find out more about the military roles in the Slovak Armed Forces as well as the Academy's study programmes and admission procedure. The basic information brief was provided by Designate Deputy Commandant for Education Lt Col Michal Turčaník. Another brief on the selection procedure for regular soldier candidates of the State Service was delivered by members of the Slovak Armed Forces Personnel Office. Officer Cadets of the Aviation Faculty, Technical University of Košice, and the Hradec Králové-based Faculty of Military Medicine, Defence University of Brno, presented the specifics of their programmes. The students also met with representatives of the Academy's Departments, Academic Staff, and OCs. To liven up the programme, the students viewed a hand-to-hand combat demonstration, the measurement of somatic

functions and movement performance, and static and dynamic displays prepared by the school units.

