



Slovakia takes delivery of first two F-16s

(1 Mar) A delegation of the SVK MOD and Armed Forces officials, led by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Robert Kaliňák, attended the Slovakia F-16 Block 70 Delivery Ceremony for the first two SVK F-16 fighter jets at Lockheed Martin's facility in Greenville, South Carolina. Both aircraft – a single-seat C-model and a two-seat D-model – will be used for the training of SVK technicians in the US. This training is crucial as SVK AF personnel take the steps necessary to ensure the smooth integration and effective operation of the F-16 fleet. While in Greenville, Minister Kaliňák and OJ Sanchez, Vice President and General Manager of the Integrated Fighter Group at Lockheed Martin, agreed that the delivery of the aircraft marks the start of a new supersonic aviation era for Slovakia, which is the first European country to receive this newest and most capable version of the Fighting Falcon. Thanks to the F-16s, the Slovak Air Force will fly Air Policing missions and safeguard SVK airspace with its own capacities. The F-16 Block 70 aircraft, featuring advanced 21st Century Security capabilities, will bring the highest standards of airspace security to Slovakia for decades to come. The first group of aircraft is due to arrive in Slovakia by mid-2024. "Without skilful and courageous men and women of the Armed Forces, we would not be able to guarantee the security of the Slovak Republic and its citizens. It is our duty to do everything we can to ensure the highest level of protection to our Armed Forces, and so minimise the potential loss of life. These advanced F-16 fighter jets are a guarantee of the highest quality standards and, hence, of keeping our servicemen and women safe," Mr Kaliňák said. During his trip to the US, Defence Minister Kaliňák also met his counterpart, Lloyd J. Austin III, for talks at the Pentagon and visited the Department of State. In the meeting with the US Secretary of Defense, Minister Kaliňák reaffirmed Slovakia's determination to ensure the continued delivery of its modernisation programmes and to enhance the SVK defence industry's competitiveness. The Secretary praised Slovakia's responsible approach and many contributions to the Alliance and systematic efforts to ensure the security of NATO's Eastern Flank. On Ukraine, Mr Kaliňák clarified the SVK Gov't's position, stressing that Slovakia does not see a military solution to the conflict and that it is inevitable for the international community to contribute to the earliest possible start of peace talks. Both leaders reaffirmed their interest in working together to develop national defence industries as a necessary basis for building up defence capabilities.



Army family made bigger with over 200 new Junior Soldiers

(1 Mar) By taking the Oath of Allegiance during the Pass Off Parade in a public square in Martin, over 200 Junior Soldiers (JS) who passed seven intensive weeks of Basic Military Training have enlarged the ranks of the Slovak Armed Forces. In his speech at the parade, Deputy Defence Minister Martin Vojtašovič said: "The Oath of Allegiance is not only a commitment but also a key step on the path towards responsibility and patriotism, whilst the willingness to defend our homeland is, undoubtedly, its true manifestation. Your decision to join the Army family is so greatly appreciated, especially in this worsened security situation." After specialised training in the days to come, the JS will be assigned to their home units. About 70 new soldiers will undergo further training to become officers before assuming junior command appointments.



- As the CZE Air Force is in the process of procuring F-35 fighter jets on order from Lockheed Martin, the IPT-TL **Czech Armed Forces Integrated Project Team**, led by Brig Gen Jaroslav Mika, invited their SVK colleagues with experience of helicopter and fighter jet procurement through the US Gov't's Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme to Prague for consultations, where they and a seven-member SVK team, led by DCOM SVK AF Brig Gen Martin Kuterka, discussed issues regarding the FMS process, including the setting up of the operation and maintenance support system, the training of specific military occupational specialties (MOSs), the procurement of air munitions, the construction and adaptation of the main operational base (MOB)'s infrastructure, and the arrangements for a reserve airfield.

- The Training and Mobilisation Force Generation Base Martin hosted the **Basic Readiness, Combat Readiness and Mobilisation Course** to improve the theoretical knowledge and practical skills of soldiers and civil servants. 12 soldiers and 1 civil servant passed the three-week course's written and oral tests.

- 2nd-year Officer Cadets of the Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš completed **multi-module training** on Kamenica nad Cirochou Training Area. They practiced dismounted tactical combat during which they conducted offensive and defensive operations as well as mounted combat with mechanised infantry combat vehicles from 22 Mech Bn Michalovce. After full preparation, they carried out the final attack on a defensive position, supported by the IFVs, at the level required of them.

- In a farewell ceremony at **53 Field Services Battalion Hlohovec's** Hall of Honour and Fame, Battalion Commander Lt Col Marek Ochaba and Command Sergeant Major (CSM) of the Battalion Sgt Maj Jozef Letanovský thanked MSgt Martin Sikov and Sgt 1C Stanislav Jakubec for their 30 years of service and sacrifice in uniform.

- The Central Military Hospital Ružomberok has joined the **electronic patient appointment system** via www.objednatvysvetlenie.sk. Currently, you can make an appointment electronically to see mammography, ultrasound imaging (USG), breast USG and CT specialists.

- The Radiology Clinic of the Central Military Hospital Ružomberok, based at 21 General Miloš Vesel Street, reopened its X-Ray Dept on 1 Mar. The X-Ray Dept is **now fully operational** without any restrictions.

- Sport shooter Patrik Jány, of the Dukla Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica, took **gold in the men's 10m Air Rifle** event at the European Championships Győr in Hungary.

- Sport shooter Juraj Tužinský (Dukla) made it to the finals and claimed silver in the men's 10m Air Pistol event at the **European Championships Győr** in Hungary, and thus qualified for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

- Biathlete **Ema Kapustová** (Dukla) placed 2nd in the women's mass start and won silver at the Youth Junior Biathlon World Championships Otepää in Estonia.

- Working closely with the Slovak Anti-Nazi Fighters Union, the Slovak National Uprising Museum Banská Bystrica has announced the 16th edition of the **'Paths to the Knowledge of the Past'** Drawing, Painting and Literary Contest for children and youth. More information on the contest and the rules is available online.

FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme presents interviews with Junior Soldiers fresh out of BMT on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

Dog handlers train in realistic conditions on Mt Chopok

(29 Feb) The Training and Military Working Dog (MWD) Branch, Military Police Dept Vlkanová - Hronsek, hosted instructional and methodological training for dog handler instructors in the field of specialist canine (K9) operations (searches for explosives and their precursors, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, and tobacco). The training was attended by participants from Slovakia (Military Police, Police, Prison and Court Guard Service, and Financial Administration Authority), Czechia (Military Police), and Germany (Special Operations Forces Command). The aim was to develop cooperation between dog handling teams, to exchange lessons learned from military and police



working dog (MWD/PWD) training activities and real incident responses, to improve the training and skills of handlers and MWDs/PWDs, and to increase the physical and psychological readiness of dog handlers and service dogs. To ensure the week-long training event was as close to realism as it could be, it was conducted at busy sites keeping things running "business as usual" in the presence of the public, such as an ice hockey stadium open for training sessions, the Europe Shopping Mall in Banská Bystrica, a bus depot, and the Jasná ski resort, where the dog handlers and their MWDs/PWDs took a ski chairlift to the top of Mt Chopok and searched a restaurant for samples of planted explosives, drugs and tobacco.

Military accolade for a veteran



(28 Feb) On the occasion of his 100th birthday in Banská Bystrica, Capt (Ret'd) Ján Štíl received the War Veteran Commemorative Cross, awarded by Defence Minister Robert Kaliňák, from

the hands of Director General of the MOD Human Resources Dept Martin Rímeš. He was also presented with the Armed Forces Veteran Card by Director of the MOD Social Policy Branch Ľubica Fúsková and Head of the MOD Veterans Welfare Service Richard Zimányi.

Avalanche Special 2024



(29 Feb) Military personnel of the Training and Ops Planning Branch, MP Dept Trenčín, completed a challenging four-day **Avalanche Special 2024** training activity in the Great Fatra. The goal was to

improve the soldiers' movement skills across avalanche-prone areas, to become familiar with the specifics of moving across Alpine terrain in winter conditions, to practice individual and team movement using winter equipment, and to work with avalanche transceivers and probes.

Michael Strank Memorial Run

(1 Mar) The honorary title of "Michael Strank" was conferred on 65 Recce Bn Prešov. To mark 79 years since Sgt Strank's death in action during the Battle of Iwo Jima, members of the Battalion took part in a cross country run from Stará Ľubovňa to Jarabiny, where he grew up. Among the runners were members of the Strank family, local residents, AOS Officer Cadets, and others.

Soldiers in military hospital



(26 Feb) Sgt Maj Silvia Simová, head nurse of the Central Military Hospital Ružomberok, convened this year's first working meeting of military non-medical healthcare workers, to clarify the changes in the military

rank requirements and the requirements for the performance of regular soldiers' duties, as well as the procedures for earning qualifications. She presented them with a letter of commendation for performing 'over and above' the standard expected of their role. Specialist nurse Katarína Šimeghová was awarded the SVK Chief of Defence Commemorative Cross 3rd Grade as she celebrated her life's anniversary.