



UDCG meeting at Ramstein AB

(19 Mar) Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Robert Kaliňák took part in the 20th meeting of the Ukraine Defence Contact Group (UDCG), hosted by Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III, at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Over 50 defence leaders gathered to discuss our eastern neighbour's immediate security assistance needs to deter Russian aggression. On the margins of the 'Ramstein Group' meeting, Defence Minister Kaliňák met Ukrainian Defence Minister Rustem Umerov for talks on Slovakia's assistance to Ukraine and presented the SVK Gov't position. In a separate meeting, he also spoke with the Defence Ministers of Denmark, Norway and Sweden about Slovakia's humanitarian demining efforts in Ukraine, strengthening Slovakia's production capacity of 155mm artillery munitions, and seeking ways of developing defence industries.

Before departing for UNFICYP

(21 Mar) As part of a regular rotation of forces to support Slovakia's commitment to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), 12 Mech Bn Nitra conducted a deployment ceremony for SVK peacekeepers deploying to Cyprus.



Among those bidding farewell to 110 soldiers were Deputy Defence Minister Igor Melicher, Deputy Chief of Defence Lt Gen Lubomír Svoboda, Commander SVK Army Maj Gen Martin Stoklasa, Deputy Commander 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany Col Štefan Leja, Chief of Staff 11 AF Bde Lt Col Ľubomíra Švecová, commanders of subordinate battalions, representatives of local government, security and rescue services, families and friends.

In his remarks, Lt Col Martin Doležaj, the new DCOM SLOVCON to UNFICYP, said that our military personnel are now ready to undertake UN peacekeeping duties, and thanked their families, friends and colleagues for support. The soldiers, standing in formation, received a collective blessing in a service conducted by Padre Maj Ján Ostapčuk before heading to Cyprus.

NCO Academy's Fanfare

(22 Mar) The NCO Academy's Fanfare, composed by Sgt Jakub Laco, member of the Slovak Armed Forces Band Banská Bystrica, made its debut during the OR-5 NCO Course graduation ceremony, in the presence of CSEL of the SVK Defence Staff Sgt Maj Peter Kuka and the CSELS of the Forces. The sheet music for the Fanfare was presented to the Commandant of the NCO Academy, Sgt Maj Jozef Antolík, at the ceremony.



Good news from NATO Multinational Battlegroup Slovakia

(23 Mar) His Excellency Mons Nicola Girasoli, the Apostolic Nuncio to Slovakia, and His Excellency Mons František Rábek, the Bishop of the Forces, paid a visit to the NATO Battlegroup in Slovakia based at MTC Lešť on 23 Mar. After a tour of the facilities and a brief on the NATO task group, they celebrated a Holy Mass and engaged in a discussion with soldiers. Elsewhere, Prešov hosted the main planning conference for Ex Strong Cohesion 2024, an MTC Lešť-based certification exercise (CERTX) for the NATO Battlegroup's rotational forces. The conference was chaired by Chief of Planning and Ops 2 Mech Bde Maj Slavomír Demjanovič. Meanwhile, CZE engineers of the Battlegroup have been continuing their intensive training at MTC Lešť. And soldiers of the Battlegroup, including Spanish troops, passed a tough physical test in the crossfit competition. Three-member teams of servicemen and women competed in a wide range of disciplines such as pull-ups, dips, deadlifts, burpees, tyre dragging using a rope as their colleagues cheered enthusiastically.



- The Training and Mobilisation Force Generation Base Martin delivered the **Readiness, Combat Readiness and Mobilisation (K-3) Course** for military leaders, with the aim of improving their theoretical knowledge in this field and creating the prerequisites for the professional growth of Commanders and Chiefs of Staff up to the level of Brigade and Base.
- Taking advantage of the Live, Virtual, & Constructive (LVC) Simulation capability, members of **54 MLRS Bn**, part of 5 Arty Regt Rožňava, underwent marksmanship training at the Military Academy's Simulation Centre in Liptovský Mikuláš on 18-22 Mar. To develop their practical competence with their firearms, they carried out shoots at planned and unplanned targets and suppressed enemy fire at request in English.
- To mark **79 years since the village of Kalište was burnt out in WW2**, the Slovak National Uprising Museum Banská Bystrica hosted a memorial service and a cultural event.

- Major changes are being made to the Combat Vehicle Gallery at the **Museum of Military History Svidník** to allow for new installations of large exhibits. The Combat Vehicle Gallery will reopen to the public as early as this summer.
- Bratislava Garrison Club would like to invite the public to see the **Albin Brunovský Graphic Art Exhibition** on Mon to Thur from 08:00 to 14:30. The graphic prints are on loan from the Slovak Armed Forces Personnel Office Liptovský Mikuláš. You can request an in-person visit reservation by phone.

- The **shuttle service** from BARMO (Pri Šajbach, Bratislava) to the MOD has been suspended since 25 Mar until further notice.

- To mark **World Water Day**, from Mon to Wed on 25-27 Mar, the Military Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology Bratislava will test water samples taken from the private wells of military and civilian staff for free, to examine the levels of nitrate in water, conductivity, turbidity and absorbance at 254 nm. For more info, go to the MOD intranet.

- 3rd-year students of Secondary Technical Aviation School Trenčín visited **Aircraft Repair Company Trenčín (LOTN)**, where they applied theoretical knowledge of defectoscopy in practice at the Non-Destructive Testing (NDT) Services Section. Following the NDT methodology, they detected defects on the spare parts through visual, capillary and magnetic testing and measured the materials' strength limit with burst testing.

- Military and civilian staff of 1 Mech Bde and its subordinate units, members of the Fire and Rescue Service and the Regional Police Directorate reflected on the **Stations of the Cross** led by Staff Chaplain Maj Ján Ostapčuk as they walked up the Calvary Hill in Topoľčany on 20 Mar.

- A traditional Way of the Cross procession, organised by Officer Cadets and members of **St Joan of Arc Parish** from the Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš and led by Dean of the RC Bishopric of the Forces Maj Tomáš Huda, took place at St Nicolas Parish Church in Liptovský Mikuláš on 22 Mar.

- The **European Cadet Judo Cup** took place in Šamorín (SVK) for the first time. Kristína Lili Krížová and Nina Filkorová, judokas of the Dukla Military Sports Centre, won bronze medals in their categories.

FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme presents an interview with Service leaver Col Tomáš Novotný on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

MP soldiers share insights from conflicts and training

(21 Mar) The aim of the week-long training for a team of MP instructors and Special MP Operations experts – overseen by an international instructor at the Training and Military Working Dog (MWD) Branch of the Military Police Dept Vikanová - Hronsek and the Military Training Centre Lešť – was to take new learnings from fighting in built-up areas (FIBUA) in the ongoing conflicts.

With extensive urban warfare operations underway in Ukraine and the Gaza Strip, a lot of insights can be taken from the conflicts. Based on feedback from the frontlines, such information must be processed and exploited through training. To that end, MTC Lešť hosted a training activity dubbed SWAT Spring TRNG 2024 for the SVK Special Military Police Operations Group 3 and the CZE Military Police Special Reaction Team (SRT).

The SVK and CZE MP teams practiced operating in mixed teams, consistently executed tactical SOPs for entering and searching buildings to detain dangerous suspects, and tested

their skills in Close Quarter Battle (CQB) drills. Throughout the training, they shared their insights from international crisis management operations and special training activities.



Helicopters over AWR Záhorie

(20 Mar) Personnel of 46 Wng Kuchyňa supported airmen of 2 Heli Sqn, part of 51 Wng Prešov, in carrying out live fire shoots with Mil Mi-17M helicopters at the Air Weapons Range (AWR) Záhorie on 19-20 Mar. Working closely with a Tactical Air

Control Party (JTAC) of 5 SOF Regt Žilina, pilots of Mil Mi-17M helicopters fired S-5KO unguided rockets against multi-target sets on the ground.

Army HQ staffers' shooting practice

(21 Mar) 54 members of the SVK Army HQ Trenčín underwent marksmanship improvement training with the standard issue weapon at the barrier-free firing range on Sučany TA near Martin. For the HQ staff, this marked the first improve-

ment training in marksmanship this year, as well as serving as an opportunity to maintain or improve their marksmanship assessment. During the day-long training at six different places, they practiced offensive and defensive close quarters combat (CQC) techniques, treated a wounded soldier under fire, fine-tuned their weapon handling, and conducted the firing line drill.

72-hour artillery training

(21 Mar) During Stage 2 of training under the theme of 'Platoon in Performance of Specialist Tactical Tasks', 1 Fire Bty of 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce underwent 72 hours of intensive training on Kamenica nad Cirochou TA in preparation for a certification exercise (CERTX). The training test-

ed the coordination between 1 Fire Pl, 2 Fire Pl and Command Pl. Soldiers also covered throwing grenades, firing the CZ P-09 pistol and the Sa vz. 58 submachine gun, camouflage techniques, live fire tasks, combat lifesaver (CLS) procedures at a first aid station, CBRN warning signals, and life in the field.