



Bratislava celebrates liberation anniversary

(4 Apr) Deputy Defence Minister Igor Melicher attended a ceremony marking the 79th anniversary of Bratislava's liberation at the Slavin WW2 Memorial in Bratislava. Participants in attendance included members of the SVK Government, MPs, representatives of societal organisations, and the Ambassadors of the Russian Federation, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.

From 25 Mar to 4 May 1945, the Battle of Bratislava claimed 742 Soviet, 470 German and Hungarian troops and 121 civilians. A great number of buildings were damaged and burned down in fighting. 6,846 of 63,517 Red Army soldiers who had died in liberating Slovakia and Europe from the Nazis lie in rest at Slavin WW2 Cemetery.

President and Commander-in-Chief Zuzana Čaputová commemorated Bratislava's liberation in a ceremony in the centre of the capital city.

Elsewhere, remembrance events to mark the liberation of Liptovský Mikuláš took place at the Red Army Memorial on Liberators Square and at Háj-Nicovô WW2 Cemetery, organised by Liptovský Mikuláš City Council. Wreaths were laid in the ceremonies by officials and cadets of General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy (AOS), led by AOS Commandant Defence Staff Col Aurel Sabó, representatives the Anti-Nazi Fighters Union, and members of the public.



Fill rates proposal under consultation

(3 Apr) 20,982 service and 4,500 civilian personnel will have worked in the Armed Forces by the end of this year, according to the updated Defence Manpower Proposal which is now subject to MOD-initiated interdepartmental consultation.

The MOD's rise in military and civilian manpower requirements is justified with a raft of measures being rolled out: Phase 1 of the formation of the Mantis air defence unit, construction engineering activities in support of Armed Forces bases and Force Protection, defence infrastructure maintenance, training activities and exercises, the formation of 11 Independent Regiment with the aim of securing the capabilities to administratively support, coordinate and conduct all military tests and trials on new equipment, weapons and vehicles.

More service personnel are also required for the roles in the MOD, Military Policy, Military Academy, and other departmental organisations to tackle the increase in the workload of staff at the MOD Welfare Office, to support the Service Complaints Ombudsman (SCO), to build up the capabilities of the Military Academy's Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Operators Training Programme, and to deliver pastoral and religious support to soldiers and their families.

Together we are stronger

(5 Apr) To commemorate and celebrate Slovakia's 20 years in NATO, Trenčín Garrison organised a sports day out in Trenčín.

Speaking at the Sports Day opening ceremony, Maj Gen Martin Stoklasa, Commander of the Slovak Army and Trenčín Garrison, underlined the significance of Slovakia's accession to NATO and commended the garrison units for making a considerable contribution to NATO structures, missions and operations. Nearly 600 Trenčín-based military and civilian personnel took part in the sports day, including from SVK ARMY HQ, SOCOM, JNT SPT BDE, MP, NATO EOD COE, 4 LOG REGT, 6 SIG REGT, CNTRL LOG OFC, DUKLA MSC, COM SPT BN, and 41 and 42 SBs.

To keep up their physical fitness levels, the garrison community enjoyed a day full of sporting activities such as swimming, hockey, hiking, cycling, floorball, squash, bowling, table tennis, badminton, and a symbolic 20km mixed team relay run.



- Officials of the MOD's Veterans Welfare Service Section and Communications Office met with Slovak National Uprising (SNP) veterans to discuss this year's **preparations for the SNP 80th Anniversary celebrations** in Banská Bystrica, including video tributes with WW2 veterans Anton Lovásko, Otto Šimko, Július Molitoris and Branislav Tvarožek, who will also attend the SNP 80th Anniversary National Event.

- The NATO Multinational Battlegroup in Slovakia successfully completed **Ex Charging Bear**. The goal of this intensive exercise was to enhance the capabilities of the Battlegroup staff to command and control manoeuvre (MVR), combat support (CS), and combat service support (CSS) units.

- **SVK SOCOM Trenčín** is looking for new Special Operations Forces (SOF) operatives from among the ranks of regular soldiers. Those interested in working with dynamically evolving warfighting capabilities can find more information on the selection process [on the internet](#).

- Soldiers of **71 Com Spt Bn Trenčín** underwent intensive training on Turkish Hill Training Area. Taking place in adverse weather conditions, the tactical exercise marked the culmination of the Platoon-Level Training Phase. As well as getting a Command Post (CP) up and running, the training saw the deployment and operation of the Logistics Support Elements (LSEs), field warehouses, and a field kitchen. The soldiers' skills were also tested in marksmanship, tactical engagement situations, combat engineering, and topography.

- Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) for the SVK troops to be deployed as part of a regular **NATO eFP BG Latvia** rotation of forces in June kicked off with the theory module at 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce on 2 Apr. Under Phase 2 PDT, artillerymen of the Fire Battery trained on the ranges at Michalovce Garrison training ground in White Mountain. Among others, they covered taking up firing positions, executing firing tasks and moving to avoid counter fire. Artillery recon teams carried out patrolling, observation and recon missions.

- Asphalt resurfacing works will be underway in the **SNP Memorial** grounds on 8-14 Apr. The SNP Museum has announced that drivers should avoid using its parking lot and affected areas. Members of the public can access the SNP Museum via an adjacent footpath or there is another entrance from the green park below the SNP Memorial.

- The **Armed Forces Academy (AOS) Floorball Championships** took place under the auspices of the AOS Physical Training and Sports Dept, with participation from Officer Cadets (OCs), soldiers on the Professionally Qualified Officer (PQO) Course, and members of the Armed Forces Personnel Office. The Personnel Office team seized 1st place, the 1st-year 'Mt Chopok' OC team took 2nd place, and the 4th-year 'Mt Gerlach' OC team placed 3rd.

- Working in collaboration with 4th-year OCs, the AOS Simulation Centre organised a **marksmanship competition for the 1st-year Cadet Force**. For two weeks, 17 teams, each of 8 OCs, competed in shooting disciplines in the CQB Hall. The 'We'll make it today!' team was the overall winner, followed by the 'Power Girls' team in second place. Cadet Michal Rabatin achieved the title of Best Shot in the 1st-year Cadet Force.

- Serving as the SVK 20km Race Walking Championships, the 92nd edition of the World Athletics Race Walking Tour Gold Event Poděbrady welcomed **Dukla race walkers**. Hana Burzalová finished in 16th place and claimed the SVK Race Walking Champion title with an Olympics place on the horizon. With his tenth-place result, Dominik Černý took his third SVK Race Walking Champion title and secured a place at the Paris Olympics.

FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme visits the CBRN Museum Čereňany on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape Level-C Course has its debut at Lešť

(4 Apr) The Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) Level-C Course to equip soldiers at high risk of capture in combat operations with SERE skills had its debut at MTC Lešť.

For the first time, Slovakia hosted the most difficult and demanding Level-C version of the course with captivity simulations. Week 1 was dedicated to theory and practice in different environments, including evasion of detection by hostile forces and anti-tracking techniques, escape techniques following capture, and psychological and physical resistance in captivity.

Week 2 featured a 72-hour capture & captivity scenario utilising the simulated enemy forces and captivity simulations. The soldiers learned the techniques they can use to disarm the enemy and to handle weapons when handcuffed. They were exposed to high psychological and physical pressure during a series of advanced interrogation simulations.



The SERE Instructor Course, drew inspiration especially from NATO instructors and their CZE colleagues of the Vyškov-based Military Academy.

96-hour intensive training

(4 Apr) 3 Mech Coy soldiers, of 21 Mech Bn Trebišov, completed 96 hours of intensive training at Trebišov Garrison training ground in Veľké Ozorovce. To hone their tactical defensive and offensive skills, they engaged in the planning and decision-making process at all levels of command, a tactical march in rugged terrain, an area defence without enemy contact, a variety of ambushes, actions in response to various types of incidents, and pre-combat rehearsals. To secure an area defence, they set up a minefield with the actual laying of mines in a skirmish line manner. During the tactical march in rugged terrain, they overcame a contaminated area. The training of the Combat Support (CS) elements was concentrated on getting into firing positions and executing firing tasks in tandem with mechanised platoons in support of a company as it took up the defence of an area without direct contact with the enemy.

Future pilots' winter survival training

(4 Apr) After the January survival training for the 2nd- and 4th-year OCs – the future pilots of the Aviation Faculty of the Technical University of Košice, it was now the turn for the 3rd- and 4th-year OCs, with most of the training unfolding in the Poľana

Protected Landscape Area. On Day 1, they were inserted into the Veporské Hills at the Tlstý Javor Mountain Saddle to be mentored by Maj (Ret'd) Juraj Antol, the ex-chief of the Special Training Branch at MTC Lešť, who guided them through the construction of shelters, the making of a fire with a flint stone, the treatment of water for drinking, and a tactical march across difficult mountainous terrain. On Day 2, they practiced the basics of downhill skiing as well as making ski turns in deep snow and in an intact wooded setting. In the early evening, they had a lesson on saving tired and drowning swimmers. Their last task of the day – Basic Casualty Drill (BCD) – was all about first aid.

Nursing students 'on parachutes'

(2 Apr) The Central Military Hospital has been a teaching base for the Catholic University in Ružomberok. At the hospital's lecture hall, combat medics of 5 SOF Regt Žilina delivered lectures to 2nd-year students of the Faculty of Health Sciences of the Catholic University as part of their elective Introduction to Military Healthcare subject. The combat lifesavers impressed the nursing and radiology students with experiential education, which connects theory, demonstrations and activities. Thanks to this, the students could try out the standard SOF equipment of every combat medic, including putting on a parachute and a medical backpack with first aid supplies.