



Defence Minister visits Spain

(31 May) DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák met Spanish Minister of Defence Margarita Robles Fernández in Madrid for talks on the current security situation and efforts to deepen SVK-ESP cooperation. He also visited the Spanish troops soon to be deployed with the NATO Battlegroup in Slovakia. Spain will take over command of the BG from Czechia this July. The Spanish Contingent has been arriving in Slovakia in stages since January 2024. From July onwards, up to 780 Spanish soldiers along with equipment will be deployed to Slovakia.

In their conversation, Minister Kaliňák and Minister Robles paid particular attention to the priorities of the upcoming NATO Washington Summit, shared their assessment of SVK-ESP cooperation on military training, exercises and education, and examined ways to enhance defence industrial cooperation. SVK arms manufacturers produce the munitions components that are then assembled by Fábrica de Municiones de Granada (FMG) in Spain. To this end, Minister Kaliňák noted emphatically that this cooperation takes forward the good name of our defence industry and brings job opportunities to Slovakia's regions. FMG is one of the oldest facilities for gunpowder production in Europe.

30 years of INNG-SVK efforts

(27 May) To mark 30 years of cooperation between

the Indiana National Guard and the Slovak Armed Forces under the U.S. DOD's State Partnership Program (SPP), Deputy Defence Minister Igor Melicher visited Indianapolis, USA. Mr Melicher used his trip to meet Adjutant General of Indiana Maj Gen R. Dale Lyles and Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb to thank them for their support and help to Slovakia. Igor Melicher and the SVK delegation also toured the Fort Wayne and Muscatatuck bases, where they became familiar with the maintenance of F-16 fighter jets and Black Hawk helicopters.



On the European Union's security

(28 May) Deputy Defence Minister Igor Melicher attended the Foreign Affairs Council (Defence) in Brussels. The FAC (DEF) addressed three key themes: the EDA's review, EU support to Ukraine, and the EU's defence readiness. The EDA's Long-Term Review (LTR) was approved unanimously by all member states. Ministers underscored the focus on implementing the tasks of enabling collaborative defence research, technology, and innovation. On Ukraine, Mr Melicher made clear that Slovakia will refrain from supplying weapons to the country and will continue to assist it with demining and CBRN equipment. The Brussels meeting gave a strong backing to the European Defence Industrial Strategy (EDIS), which is also expected to bring new opportunities to the SVK defence industry.

President visits Military Academy

(30 May) President and Commander-in-Chief of the Slovak Armed Forces Zuzana Čaputová visited the General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy (AOS) Liptovský Mikuláš. Addressing the academic community at the Academy's Main Hall, the President said: "I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to those who created this institution, those who are currently leading it, its staff, and all those who have dedicated their lives to the defence and security of the Slovak Republic and its citizens."

The Deputy Defence Minister joined a meeting between the President and the Academy's leadership, where AOS Commandant Maj Gen Aurel Sabó presented the Academy's pillars, 50-year-long tradition of military education and training, portfolio of courses, and modernisation projects.

In her visit to the Academy, President Čaputová received a tour of the AOS Simulation Centre, with a focus on educational, scientific research, and training activities aided by simulation technologies and synthetic instruments. She viewed radar and ATC simulators, and was keen to learn more about simulation-based training and course requirements.

The President then visited the Academy's departments and a scientific conference hosted by officer cadets. She was very much interested in their motivation for being an officer, experience with training, and expectations.



- The CZE Military Police Training and Educational Facility Strážště hosted a **working meeting** between Col Karel Fiala (CZE A), Head of the Military Police Operations Coordination Dept, and Lt Col Jaroslav Slančík (SVK A), Director of the Military Police Activities Dept, in the presence of Chief of the CZE Military Police Gen Jiří Roček. The topics covered criminal investigation, mobility support operations, Host Nation Support (HNS) to Allied forces, unmanned aerial aircraft, and new technical systems for the protection of military facilities and VIPs.

- NATO School Oberammergau (NCO), based in Germany, hosted the annual Partnership Training and Education Centres Commandants Conference (PTEC CC). Slovakia was represented by Lt Col Martin Chovanec of the Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš. Participants, representing 25 PTECs, familiarised themselves with military education and training across the institutions. The Qatari Joint Warfare Training Centre joined the PTEC network of institutions as its 35th member in Mar 2024.

- In a medal presentation at EUMM Georgia's Field Office Mtskheta, Slovak military personnel received the **EUMM Georgia Medal** from the hands of Bettina Patricia Boughani, Head of EUMM Georgia, and Ewa Suwara, Head of Field Office Mtskheta.

- The **Zuzana 2 SPH** and **Tatrapan APC Driver Courses** took place at the Training and Mobilisation Force Generation Base Martin. A week of theoretical training was followed by a week of practical driving during the day and at night. Participants put their theoretical knowledge to good use as they drove on and off road and overcame obstacles.

- The MOD Personnel and Social Welfare Section has released the **'End of Regular Soldier's State Service'** brochure in which servicemen and women can read about their rights and duties as they transition to civilian life. The brochure can be downloaded from web1.mil.sk.

- The **64th International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes**, with participation of soldiers from 47 countries, culminated with a Holy Mass at the Basilica of Saint Pius X in Lourdes on Sunday 26 May. Slovakia was represented by 210 pilgrims from the Bishopric of the Armed Forces and Armed Corps led by Bishop František Rábek. The head of the SVK military delegation was Commander Special Operations Forces Major General Jaroslav Krám.

- With her win in Thailand's Bangkok helping her qualify for the Summer Olympics, boxer Jessica Triebelová is among the **12 Dukla Military Sports Centre athletes to travel to Paris**.

- **Dukla slalom canoeist Marko Mirgorodský** took silver in the men's C1 category in the first round of the Canoe Slalom World Cup in Germany's Augsburg.

- Beating the old Slovak record set in 1998 by Martina Moravcová by 0.73sec, **Dukla swimmer Tamara Potocká** placed 9th in the women's 200m medley swimming race at the 2024 Mare Nostrum Swim Tour in Barcelona. With his time of 1:57.26, Dukla swimmer Samuel Košťál broke the Slovak record in the men's 200m butterfly.

- After taking silver in the criterium and bronze in the 17km time trial, **Dukla cyclist Nora Jenčušová** added gold in the mass start to her collection of medals at the World University Championships in Costa Rica's San Carlos. Dukla cyclist Denis Hoza finished 4th in the time trial.

An information day for Ex Slovak Shield is held at MTC Lešť

(27 May) With Ex Slovak Shield 2024 (SLSD24) nearing its end, an information day for Ex SLSD24 was held at MTC Lešť. The event was opened by Exercise Director Maj Gen Martin Stoklasa. For the first time, troops from Georgia are taking part in the exercise. They have a strong fighting spirit and a wealth of experience in the planning and C2 processes.

The information day incorporated a presentation of the main aspects of Ex SLSD24, including its structure and timeline, and a situational brief. In addition, the organisers introduced the Main Command Post (MCP) for the Slovak Army's 2 Mechanised Brigade Prešov as the primary exercising audience, followed by a tour of the individual sections of the MCP. After an unmanned aerial system (UAS) attack, the situation required that the Main Command Post be moved immediately – the relocation of the MCP was witnessed by the invited guests. Yet still, there was another presentation of the Polish Army's 1 Tank Battalion MCP by our Polish partners.

Spiritual services for Ex SLSD24 were provided by the Roman Catholic (RC) Bishopric of the Forces. Military Chaplain Capt

Indiana Guardsmen in Rožňava



(27 May) 19th CBRN Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) Commander Lt. Col. Ben J. Wegner and Command Sergeant Major Craig W. Davis from the Indiana National Guard paid a visit to

Rožňava Garrison during Ex Slovak Shield 2024. While 103rd CBRND Bn Commander Lt Col Ondrej Iliško introduced the Indiana Guardsmen to the Battalion's history, mission and tasks, our soldiers showed their newly fielded equipment and weapons to them.

72-hour intensive training

(31 May) Members of 42 Supply Base and subordinate munitions depots completed 72-hour intensive training at Martin Garrison's Sučany-Turany training ground on 28-31 May. The training was dedicated to military topography, orienteering, tactics, defensive activities, reaction to visual enemy contact, indirect fire, and medical evacuation. Next up was shooting. They then proceeded to carry out engineer and CBRN taskings and concluded with a 5km speed march.

Gold for SVK shooters



(30 May) Shooter Patrik Jány, member of the SVK National Team and the Dukla Military Sports Centre, won a gold medal in the men's 50m Rifle Prone at the European Shooting Championships in Osijek, Croatia. Patrik Jány, Štefan Šulek and Ondrej Holko won the team event. There was also bronze for Jány in the 3x20 shot smallbore rifle event. He has qualified in both disciplines for the Paris Olympics. Šulek, Jány and Holko placed 2nd in the 50m Rifle 3 Position Trio Men. In the mixed team 60-shot smallbore rifle prone event, Ondrej Holko and Daniela Demjén Pešková took gold, while there was bronze for Štefan Šulek and Miroslava Kyselová.

Soldiers through children's eyes

(1 June) To mark International Children's Day, the primary school pupils' winning drawings and paintings that made it to the finals of the MOD Drawing and Painting Competition 2024 – Soldiers Through the Eyes of Children are on display in the foyer of MOD Main Building. A total of 2,335 drawing and painting entries – the third highest number of entries in the history of the competition – were submitted this year. The competition was officially announced by Defence Minister Robert Kaliňák, Chief of Defence Daniel Zmeko, and the Defence Magazine Editorial Staff.

Slavomír Krajňák deployed with 2 Mechanised Brigade Prešov

Military Dean Capt Stanislav Dulák and Staff Chaplain Lt Dávid Šturák provided spiritual support for Allied and partner forces.

