



Troops welcomed home

(7 June) A homecoming ceremony for 336 SVK troops returning from missions and operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Latvia, Cyprus, Iraq, Middle East countries, the training missions in Belgium and Poland, and a naval mission in the Mediterranean took place at the Levice base, home to 13 Mechanised Battalion, where Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Robert Kaliňák and Chief of Defence Daniel Zmeko gave their personal thanks to them for their service to and representation of Slovakia. In his remarks, Mr Kaliňák said: "Serving on international missions and operations means far more than just undertaking military tasks. Above all, it is a sign of togetherness, unity and solidarity with our Allies." To celebrate the homecoming of troops, our soldiers were awarded operational medals and more than 100 of them received the War Veteran Commemorative Cross.

D-Day celebrations on Omaha Beach

(6 June) Three-day celebrations to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day landings in Normandy on 6 June 1944 culminated in France. Omaha Beach – which saw the fiercest battle – was the venue for the official D-Day 80th Anniversary Event, with President and Commander-in-Chief Zuzana Čaputová, Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko, and others in attendance.



In a statement in tribute to the men and women who played their part in opening a second front in Europe and defeating Nazi Germany among whose victims was the only paratrooper of Slovak origin known to us so far, Gen Zmeko said: "It is an honour for me to be part of this historic milestone and to pay homage and respects to all Allied heroes who laid down their lives in these holy places."

Changing of the Guard in Latvia

(5 June) The enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) forces based at Camp Ādaži testify to the alliance, commitment and unity of NATO nations. As the planned rotation of our units in the eFP is underway, Deputy Defence Minister Martin Vojašovič turned up in Rožňava to support our troops with words of thanks ahead of their departure to Latvia. Since 2018 the Slovak Armed Forces and other Allied troops have served with NATO's eFP BG LVA, demonstrating their strength and readiness to defend our common values and freedom.



Cooperating closely with local military engineers, firefighters, military and national policemen, 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce opened its gates to children and their families to enjoy themed activities.

Cooperation without borders

(4 June) Deputy Defence Minister Igor Melicher took part in a meeting of the SVK-CZE Steering Committee on Defence Cooperation Coordination. At the meeting, Mr Melicher highlighted the historical and cultural importance of the SVK-CZE special relationship. Two recent examples – Czechia's lead role in the NATO Battlegroup in Slovakia and Air Policing (AP) mission in SVK airspace – are helping to strengthen our defences and deliver on NATO and EU goals.

A new information panel on US and UK special operatives in SNP

(6 June) In the village of Polomka, DEPMINDEF Igor Melicher took part in the unveiling of a new Visitor Information Panel providing information about the story of the American and British special operatives from the US Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the UK Special Operations Executive (SOE) who came to support the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) 80 years ago. Polomka also hosted a memorial service for the US and UK victims who aided the SNP, in the presence of Chargé d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Slovakia Nicholas Namba, British Ambassador Nigel Baker, and the son of Maj John Sehmer (SOE), 81-year-old James Sehmer. The OSS and SOE teams were inserted into Central Slovakia in the autumn of 1944 to link up with Slovakia's WW2 Resistance fighters. But with the SNP suppressed, they were forced to retreat into the mountains. One of the OSS teams took refuge in Polomka, where they met up with their SOE colleagues, found shelter in a small cabin on a hill above the village, and celebrated Christmas with their Slovak colleagues. The next day their position was overrun by 300 Nazi troops and Slovak collaborators. The entire group of 14 Americans and 3 Britons were captured and sent to Mauthausen concentration camp, where they were tortured and executed. American war correspondent for the Associated Press Joe Morton was among the victims.



- The Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš organised the **26th Scientific Conference for Officer Cadets**. 80 OCs competed in seven professional areas. President Zuzana Čaputová and DEPMINDEF Igor Melicher turned up to support the contestants. The results of the conference can be found on the internet.

- **Ex Ramstein Legacy 2024**, organised by NATO AIRCOM Ramstein in Germany, took place in Romania and Bulgaria on 2-13 June. On the exercise, SVK AF personnel operated out of the Control and Reporting Centre Bucharest and Smardan TA and Boboc AB in Romania.

- The **NATO Military Police Centre of Excellence** (NATO MP COE) Bydgoszcz hosted a ceremony to mark the 10th anniversary of the Centre's accreditation and operations as an international military organisation. Col Mirosław Łabecki ended his tenure as Director of the NATO MP COE. Lt Col Jaroslav Slančík, head of the SVK delegation, presented him with the Director of the SVK Military Police Medal.

- The Central Office of Ecumenical Pastoral Service (EPS) in the Armed Forces and Armed Corps was visited on 3 June by **DEPDEFMIN Martin Vojašovič** who was shown around the facility and was briefed on the Office's most important activities and plans by Bishop Col Viktor Sabo and Administrator of the Military Support Foundation Milan Gajdoš.

- Pavol Vitko, editor-in-chief of Defence Magazine, and Maj Vladimír Zelený, deputising for the commander of 21 Mech Bn Trebišov, handed out prizes to the winners of the **'Soldiers Through the Eyes of Children'** MOD Drawing and Painting Competition at 21 Mech Bn Trebišov's Hall of Honour and Fame. The winners and their parents were addressed by Mayor of Trebišov Marek Čizmár. The Battalion's mechanised and tank platforms were on display for the guests.

- The Defence Language Institute Liptovský Mikuláš hosted an international conference called **AT EASE 2024** for some 50 English language teachers from five Allied countries on 3-5 June. The conference, the first of its kind in the region, was aimed at improving service personnel's English language skills.

- The **Combat Lifesaver (CLS) Refresher Course** was held in the barracks at 22 Mech Bn Michalovce. Members of Michalovce-based 21 Sp Arty Bn and 902 Engr Bn completed theoretical and practical tests according to the TCCC protocol with the CABC algorithm. Cpl Dávid Fabián of 21 Sp Arty Bn was named Best Combat Lifesaver on the course.

- At 103 CBRN Bn Rožňava, the Training and Mobilisation Force Generation Base Martin organised a **course for the operators of the IPT 12-1/A DEKVOZ vehicle** designed for the decontamination of military equipment, structures and terrain and for the performance of specific tasks in a contaminated area. The course graduates also acquired skills to work at elevated heights, to respond to critical situations of non-military threats, and to perform assistance tasks during natural disasters.

- 300 applicants for Bachelor of Sciences (BSc) and doctoral (PhD) studies took the **entrance exams in mathematics and English language** at the Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš.

- Members of **11 Mech Bn Martin** bade farewell to Battalion Commander Maj Viktor Bari, as his career goes on at Joint Operations Command (JOCOM) Banská Bystrica.

- After their successful performance at the European Championships in Osičej, Dukla Military Sports Centre shooters travelled to the World Cup in Munich, where **Patrik Jány** confirmed his qualities and took silver in the men's 10m air rifle event.

- Wrestler **Aksharbek Gulaev** (Dukla) claimed bronze in the men's U79kg category at the Wrestling Ranking Series in Budapest.

- After moving up to a higher weight category, judoka **Alex Barto** (Dukla) finished third at the European Open in Madrid.

MOD celebrates International Children's Day with a rich programme for kids

(3 June) To mark International Children's Day, 22 Mech Bn Michalovce treated over 700 visitors to a range of sporting activities, contests, displays of weapons and equipment, a demonstration of MWDs, a four-wheeler experience ride, and a night labyrinth where kids searched for hidden treasures using the night vision goggles.

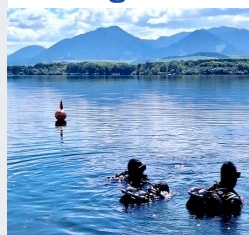
Almost 1,300 visitors turned up at 11 SVK AF Bde Nitra for a programme of static displays of weaponry and equipment, live-action demonstrations and a GOH show, supported by 12 Mech Bn, Slovak Armed Forces Guard of Honour, Institute of Military History, Police Corps, and Prison and Court Guard. Collaborating closely with local military engineers, firefighters, military and national policemen, 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce opened its gates to children and their families to enjoy themed activities.

UNFICYP's SLOVCON along with the SVK Ambassador to Cyprus hosted the 2nd edition of International Children's Day for the Slovak community living in Cyprus. NATO MN BG SVK personnel accepted an invitation from the village of Selce to present

SVK MOD and SIAF

(3 June) Given that the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) 80th Anniversary Celebrations coincide with the date of the Slovak International Air Fest (SIAF), the Slovak Ministry of Defence will not organisationally support the airshow this year. Based partly on the recommendation of the Slovak Air Force, operating military capabilities at the airshow is technically unfeasible from the perspective of high logistical requirements and costs. The MOD informed the SIAF leadership of the decision not to participate in the airshow's organisation as early as January 2024. No Implementing Agreement was signed by the Parties. For the past two years, the event attendance figures at Kuchyňa AB have been down by as much as twofold, compared to those at Sliač AB. In the future, the MOD is interested in organising a military parade with a focus on the capabilities of the Slovak Armed Forces that will appeal to all military lovers with an interest in Air Force aircraft and Army vehicles.

Building trenches, practicing diving



(6 June) One of the tasks of 901 Engr Bn Sereď was to build a trench warfare training facility at MTC Lešť. With an area of 2,000 m², the facility under construction included several counter-UAS shelters, a Command Post bunker, a 20-metre tunnel, and over

300 metres of trenches. The initial task was to define and determine the location of the facility's individual structures. This was followed by the construction of trenches and defensive earthworks with the use of the UDS 214 excavator. Individual objects were then cleaned, reinforced and fitted with wooden supports in the final phase. Despite facing stony soil and adverse weather, the SVK Army engineers brought their knowledge and skills to support this effort and completed the task.

Divers of 901 Engr Bn Sereď and divers of 5 SOF Regt Žilina practiced diving operations. At Liptovská Mara Reservoir and Quarry Lake Kvetnica, they dived in mixed teams. Their task was to familiarise themselves with the hydromorphology of the water environment, which was new to them.

Then it was on to searching for and bringing training munitions to the surface with underwater air lift bags. Next up was underwater navigation to a specific azimuth. To finish the day, participants honoured the memory of the liberators of Liptovský Mikuláš and the contemporary veterans who have completed tours of duty abroad in a ceremony at Háj-Nicovô WW2 cemetery.

their vehicles and equipment to local children. 43 Supply Base Zemianske Kostoľany hosted an open day for children.

Prešov organised a Garrison Children's Day event for young and old with an impressive line-up of air displays from an Mi-17M helicopter, Air Maxev Junior Flight School aircraft, an Aero L-39 Albatros aircraft, and an UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter. In addition, they viewed a Leopard 2A4, a T-72s, an IFV, and a Zuzana 2 SPH in service with 2 Mech Bde Prešov.

After a tour of a new Aircraft Repair Company Trenčín (LOTN) workshop, visitors had a chance to see military equipment at Trenčín airport.

A forestry team of Military Forests and Estates prepared fun activities for children in Rimavská Sobota.

MILMEDCOM Ružomberok and Town Council Ružomberok offered a range of Children's Day fun activities in the Hrabovská Valley. Working closely with medical students of the Catholic University and students of Alexander Dubček University of Trenčín, the Central Military Hospital Ružomberok prepared a day full of activities and surprises for its child patients.

