



New training range at Lešť

(29 February) Over the past 4 years, Training Centre Lešť has turned into a state-of-the-art training facility not only for domestic armed forces, security and rescue components, but it has also been in high demand by our foreign partners. Under its modernization scheme, a number of training ranges, simulation technologies and accommodation facilities have so far been built, upgraded or reconstructed. While on training, soldiers, policemen, fire-fighters and rescuers can now access a most advanced shooting range known as the Infantry Shooting Range Berm, a Demolition and Mine-Laying Training Range, a Mobile Workstation for Research into Prevention and People and Property Rescue, and a modernized "Terčot" Target Set Control and Monitoring System, as well as making the best of extended software applications of the available simulation technologies. Yet, the latest addition to TC Lešť is the Orem-land Tactical Range.

"This marks Phase I of a new cutting-edge range, designed for military operations in urban terrain, whereas its use in the future will be extended to cover training with infantry fighting vehicles," said SVK Minister of Defence Martin Giváč. He went on to remind that the modernization of TC Lešť has remained one of the priorities of the current SVK government.

The 2nd Vice-Chief of the General Staff of the SVK Armed Forces, Maj Gen Pavel Macko, explained that the SVK Armed Forces need comprehensive training, one that corresponds to the current security developments: "I can see that urban warfare is not a short-term trend. This facility is unique insofar as it is to deliver training of armed forces for relevant tasks alongside other subject matter specialists, whether they are from reconnaissance or intelligence branches." He believes that a further development of TC Lešť will enable armed forces to comprehensively train alongside their domestic partners for domestic crisis management operations, as well as with their foreign ones to prepare for operations abroad.

On Monday, 29 February, the head of the MOD introduced a modernization intent to upgrade Accommodation Camp Slávia, which should be handed over for use in the course of next year. "To be constructed are new accommodation facilities for 740 persons, classrooms, research and development facilities, as well as an information security office," he explained, adding that the current accommodation facilities of TC Lešť are inadequate in terms of capacity, and often in terms of quality as well. "Thanks to the new accommodation capacity, also the use of the six new simulation trainers we have built there will be more efficient," said the Minister.

The director of Training Centre Lešť, Mr Ján Rausa, added that the requirements of our foreign partners for the year 2016 surpass the training capacity of TC Lešť threefold. In view of the counter-terrorism measures package adopted by the SVK government, the training requirements of policemen, fire-fighters and rescuers have increased considerably.

Military oath taken by 185 soldier trainees and cadets in Martin

(26 February) Having taken the military oath and marked the passing-out ceremony, 185 new professional soldiers completed their preparation for service with the SVK Armed Forces at Martin-based Training Battalion on 26 February 2016. The festive ceremony was attended by the Chief of Staff Headquarters SVK Land Forces, Col Karol Navrátil, the Command Senior Enlisted Leader of the SVK Land Forces, Command Sergeant Major Miroslav Ferenc, a representative of the Generals' Club, Maj Gen (rtd) Ján Pančík, the Chairman of the SVK Soldiers' Association in Martin, Lt Col (rtd) Jozef Lovás, and other guests. The best graduate of the basic military training was Private 1st Class Lukáš Gazda. Apart from the 154 male soldier trainees, the training was successfully passed by 31 women – female soldiers. At the conclusion of the passing-out parade, Col František Počurek, the Senior Chaplain of the Training Battalion Martin, blessed the far-from-easy destinies of the new SVK Armed Forces professional soldiers.



- On 29 February, Director of Military Police Col Milan Hamar, ordered a **muster of members of MP** on the occasion of promotion to a higher military rank, bestowal of a higher military rank, handover of MP medals to the members of the SVK Police Corps and on the occasion of the end of service in the ranks of MP. Equally, Director of MP handed over the Military Police medals to the members of the SVK Police Corps for significant contribution to cooperation with MP. He bid farewell to those members of MP whose service in the ranks of MP had been terminated. They were awarded MP medals for special merits in the development of Military Police.

- On 29 February, Col Vladimír Kováč ended his term as **Deputy Commander of the SVK Air Force**. At the same time, after 36 years of service in the armed forces, he decided to terminate the same. SVK Air Force Commander Brig Gen Miroslav Korba extended to him his acknowledgement for the professional approach, dedication and expertise he had provided. The post of Deputy Commander of the SVK Air Force was taken up by Col of the GS Miroslav Lorinc.

- On Monday, 29 February, the top officials of the helicopter wing bid farewell to the two members of technical personnel who are about to be deployed to perform tasks in the **Air Advisory Team (AAT) in Kabul, Afghanistan**. The main task of AAT is to provide the flying and technical personnel of the Afghan National Army with Mi-171 and Mi-24/35 helicopter training.

- On 29 February, Nitra based mechanized battalion organized the **methodology workshop** for the units subordinated to the 1st mechanized brigade, which workshop was aimed at preparation of persons, ground equipment, service and rolling stock equipment for summer operation. The theoretical part was followed by practical demonstration of the prescribed procedures to be used with the certain items of equipment in the rolling stock facility.

- Maj Gen Mehmet Cahit Bakir, the Turkish Commander of the Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) Base in the operation Resolute Support in Afghanistan, **awarded a commemorative coin to the member of MP and MMA instructor** First Lieutenant Marek Kornaj, for his active engagement in preparation of personnel, with a focus on sporting activities.

- On 29 February, 2nd Deputy Commander of the **engineer battalion** Maj František Mihalovič terminated his service in the battalion. During the ceremonial muster, Brig Gen Vladimír Kubáň, Commander of the 1st mechanized brigade based in Topoľčany, and Lt Col Ladislav Kisel, Commander of the engineer battalion, extended to him their thanks and acknowledgement for an excellent performance of tasks and wished him every success in his new assignment of Lead Senior Officer – Specialist at the Combat Preparation Division at the Land Forces HQs in Trenčín. To the position of the battalion Deputy Commander was appointed Maj Jozef Kasl.

Commemoration in Nováky

(3 March) On the day of 9th anniversary of the tragic event in the Military Repair Plant (MRP) Nováky, a commemoration ceremony was held in memory of those whose lives were claimed in the explosion of the delaboration hall. State Secretary Miloš Koterec, Deputy Commander of the SVK Land Forces Brig Gen Juraj Kríštofič, representatives of the higher territorial unit and the town itself, dependants of the victims, their colleagues and residents of the town of Nováky paid tribute to the victims of this particularly sad event and laid wreaths to the memorial in the park bearing the name of Š. Moyzes.

Meeting in Zvolen

(2 March) On Wednesday, Commander of the SVK Air Force Brig Gen Miroslav Korba met with Commander of the Hungarian Air Force Brig Gen Albert Sáfár in the premises of the SVK Air Force Headquarters based in Zvolen. They discussed the possibilities of training of the air force units in 2016 in the framework of joint exercises. They also raised the issue of preparation for negotiation of expert groups on MATC 2 project (Multinational Aviation Training Centre), which negotiation is to be held in Prague. They also addressed the issue of Mi-17 simulator training of members of the Hungarian Air Force in the helicopter wing Prešov. Brig Gen Korba informed the guest of a new training scheme for pilots and technical personnel at the Technical University in Košice.

Cross for commander

(1 March) On 1 March, Gen Hans-Lothar Domröse, Commander Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum, made a visit to the Office of the Military Representative of the Permanent Delegation of the Slovak Republic to NATO. From the hands of Military Representative Maj Gen Miroslav Kocian he took over the Commemorative Cross of Chief of the General Staff of the SVK Armed Forces, awarded to him by Gen Milan Maxim for significant contribution to cooperation with the SVK Armed Forces on the occasion of the end of Gen Domröse's term in his capacity as Commander JFC Brunssum and his retirement.



Distribution system for soldiers' clothing items is inefficient

(1 March) After the historically most extensive modernization projects, the MOD leadership fulfilled yet another commitment they had made to service personnel. They purchased materiel for military clothing warehouses worth several millions of euros. Despite this, the system for allocating clothing items to soldiers proved to be inefficient. Consequently, the MOD leadership have adopted a new concept to address this long-term problem. "After launching defence modernization, we allocated funds for purchasing military clothing items because we had been listening for long to soldiers, identifying money as being the main problem. However, it turned out that the whole system of how soldiers could access military clothing was wrong. As a result, we've decided to change it so as to enable purchases of specific items for real soldiers, rather than making ad hoc purchases in unnecessarily large quantities," explained Minister of Defence Martin Giváč.

Shortages in the re-distribution of clothing items became evident

even during a visit of the Minister of Defence to the warehouses and storage facilities in Nemšová. Although a warehouse may be full of clothing items, these often come in sizes which are currently not on demand. As early as last year, the warehouses had been resupplied with military shirts and tunics, strap belts, field boots, working clothing, winter field jackets, berets, socks and thermal socks, sports clothing, woven or knitted mesh items, and boots for demanding climatic conditions.

The MOD concluded several framework contracts, including for purchases of different types of soldiers' footwear to the value of € 4.8 million; for purchases of hats, balaclavas, gloves, pullovers worth € 210,000; for purchases of service uniforms, mess uniforms and distinctive representative uniforms worth € 780,000. Other framework contracts were also concluded, including for combat uniforms worth € 4.8 million; sports clothing worth € 1.497 million; shirts and tunics worth € 420,000; and thermal underwear worth € 1.497 million.