



Big Crystal Globe for Petra

(21 March) Petra Vlhová, member of the Dukla Military Sports Centre, picked up the overall Crystal Globe at the Alpine Skiing World Cup Finals in Switzerland's Lenzerheide.

25-year-old Vlhová triumphed in the prestige event, topping the final rankings with 1,416 points, followed by Lara Gut-Behrami and Michelle Gisin. Both recorded six wins, but Vlhová finished World Cup overall standings with 160 points ahead. Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' said: "I can hardly describe in words how proud I am of our top skiers – Petra Vlhová, Adam Žampa and his brothers, Andreas and Teo. By winning the overall Crystal Globe, Petra has forever changed the history of Slovak and world skiing. And so has Adam, the first SVK skier to have made it to the World Cup Finals giant slalom. And Ivona Fialková took an excellent 7th place in the women's pursuit race at the Biathlon World Cup Finals. I want to say a huge thank you to them all for representing our Dukla and the whole of Slovakia so well and I'm looking forward to meeting them in person, so that we can discuss how we can support our sportspeople even more."

Looking for IFVs

(19 March) The MOD launched the processes in support of the Infantry Fighting Vehicle Programme to deliver a replacement fleet of BVP-1, BVP-2 and BVP M Tracked Infantry Fighting



Vehicles in service with mechanised infantry units. As Defence Minister Nad' confirmed, the selection criteria will cover the requirements of the SVK Armed Forces, demands for a transparent procurement process and the SVK defence industry's share in the programme.

MOD leaders are set to hold a series of negotiations and attend presentations on this variant of IFVs. The first such event was today's live-action demonstration and static display of the LYNX KF41 Tracked Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV), developed and manufactured by Rheinmetall AG. In attendance on LYNX KF41 Capabilities Demonstration Day at the VTSÚ Záhorie were Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad', Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer, Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko, and representatives of the SVK Defence Industry. The aim of the presentation was to introduce the LYNX KF41's technical capabilities and functional parameters through live firing and driving scenarios and a guided close-up look at the AFV. Alongside this, MOD leaders and representatives of Rheinmetall AG addressed ways to get SVK defence firms involved in the manufacture and delivery of the new tracked armoured fighting platforms. The Rheinmetall delegation received a tour of the manufacturing facilities at state-owned DMD Holding JSC.

Mr Nad' said: "Our aim is to select and procure fully compliant, advanced and reliable armoured fighting vehicles, with SVK firms expected to take on an active role in this programme." The head of the MOD appreciated the interest of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Eduard Heger, Minister of Interior Roman Mikulec and Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security Juraj Krúpa in this project. They joined him in observing the first in a series of scheduled AFV capabilities demonstrations.

Defence Minister meets US Ambassador and new US Defence Attaché

(16 March) Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' and Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer held talks with the US Ambassador to Slovakia, Her Excellency Ms Bridget A. Brink. On this occasion, Ambassador Brink introduced the new US Defence Attaché to Slovakia, LTC Casey D. Shuff. During the meeting, they discussed ways to take their bilateral cooperation forward and provided updates of current actions taken by both countries in the fight against COVID-19. Mr Nad' said: "The United States of America is our strategic partner. I am therefore all the more pleased that the new US administration intends to strengthen the transatlantic partnership between the United States and Europe. I see this as an opportunity to intensify our existing cooperation in the field of defence and security and to explore new areas of cooperation." Central themes of the talks included the MOD's ongoing modernisation projects, with special focus on F-16 fighter jets and UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters for the SVK military. On conventional weapons destruction (CWD), Minister Nad' and Ambassador Brink hailed the cooperation of both countries on safe disposal of conventional weapons. Minister Nad' provided an update to Ambassador Brink on the current taskings of SVK Armed Forces personnel in the fight against the pandemic and extended the warmest of thanks to the US Embassy Bratislava for gifting 245 ozone generators to primary schools in Martin.



The FULL FIELD KIT radio programme on Radio Regina, live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will focus on highlights from the training of our soldiers serving with NATO's eFP Latvia. Please, forward your suggestions and opinions to plnapolna@mod.gov.sk.

- Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' initiated a conversation with Chairwoman of the Office for Protection of Crime Informants Zuzana Dluhošová. As fighting corruption is his priority, he is determined to use all the available institutions to eliminate corruption across Defence. The MOD provides an anonymous hotline to receive tip-offs on suspected corruption and criminal activity.

- Since the beginning of Mar 2021, four members of the SVK Armed Forces have been posted to MHQ EUTM in Bamako. Since 2016 this marks another contribution of the SVK Armed Forces to EUTM Mali, tasked with advising, training and supporting the Malian Armed Forces. EUTM also provides military assistance to the G5 Sahel, aimed at supporting the operational capabilities of the following African countries – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger.

- Due to the quarantine restrictions in place at the Service Vehicle Registration Workstation (MP Activity Section), no official procedures on registration of Service vehicles will be carried out from 15 Mar until further notice.

- On Michalovec Garrison's Biela Hora Training Ground, members of the 22nd Mechanised Battalion Michalovec underwent training on forced separation from unit. Over the course of 24 hours, they tested their ability to resolve critical situations that may occur during such forced separation: looking after the injured, moving to safety, practising survival skills, including building a shelter.

- The Zuzana 2 Self-Propelled Gun Howitzer was tested in driving and fording on Martin Garrison's Sučany Training Ground. This will be followed by the Zuzana 2's gun and machine gun tests at Kamenica nad Cirochou.

- The SNP Central Military Hospital – Faculty Hospital Ružomberok placed first in Dôvera insurer's patient satisfaction survey in the category of faculty hospitals. Over the past ten years, this is the fifth time that the Central Military Hospital has held the top rankings.

- The MOD has issued a traffic warning to motorists as seven Allied road movements by US and POL troops are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 22 to 28 March 2021, and so are SVK military road movements from/to: Nemšová – Nemecká, Hlohovec – Martin and back, Ruskov – Kamenica nad Cirochou and back, Zemianske Kostolany – Bratislava and back, Zemianske Kostolany – Topoľčany and back, and Zemianske Kostolany – Kuchyňa; as well as rail movements from/to: Zemianske Kostolany – Vlkanová, Zemianske Kostolany – Kuchyňa, and Trenčín – Vrútky.



Prešov-based pilots help

(19 March) Prešov-based pilots of 1st and 2nd Helicopter Squadrons, working Search and Rescue (SAR) Service shifts, joined by other Helicopter Wing (HW) personnel, raised money for the J. A. Reiman Faculty Hospital with Outpatient Clinic (FHOC) in Prešov. They bought 20 pulse oximeters and handed them over to the hospital to be used to measure the patients' blood oxygen saturation levels. Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' said: "I am immensely proud of our service personnel for everything they are doing for Slovakia and its citizens during this demanding pandemic period."

Beware of fraudsters!

(19 March) Chief of IB ZaSKIS Trenčín Lt Col Boris Zemek warned the CIS users in Defence of threatening email scams, with fraudsters demanding payments in bitcoins. The campaign targets the users of the MIL network under the false pretext that the attackers have gained access to the users' PCs. The criminals request a one-off payment to delete or to stop compromising information on the users from being released. The MIL.SK users should not respond to such emails, nor pay any money to the fraudsters, but they are advised to report such scams immediately to the ZaSKIS Call Centre Trenčín on 0960 401 111.

Green Monday in Cyprus

(15 March) On Green Monday, Christian Orthodox believers come to visit the Agia Marina Church, some 3km away from Deryneia in the buffer zone of the divided island of

Cyprus. The security of the church in Sector 4 is provided by 3rd Guard Platoon, SLOVCON UNFICYP. Given the circumstances, this year's Green Monday festivities were assessed as sensitive. There was a certain level of risk represented by opposition forces. HQ Sector 4 took responsibility for the festivities. 23 SLOVCON personnel were deployed on the ground alongside UNPOL members to oversee security in the area. No incidents were reported.

Command Support Battalion helps combat Covid-19 pandemic



(19 March) Members of the Command Support Battalion have cooperated intensely in combating the spread of the Covid-19 virus by supporting the SVK Police Corps on mixed patrols; monitoring the county borders; checking people at the border crossings at Vrbovce, Moravské Lieskové, Horné Srnie, Lysá pod Makytou and Drietoma; carrying out tasks in the Trenčín Faculty Hospital and the Ilava Hospital with Outpatient Clinic; supporting the regional Public Health Authority and the vaccination centres in Trenčín; deploying as drivers and mobile team members and performing PCR and AG tests for immobile patients in the Trenčín region. During the weekends, members of the Battalion carry out testing across cities, towns and villages. On one occasion, they joined railway police on a train, where they found an unconscious person inside a train compartment, called the rescue service, and saved a human life.