



Bratislava's liberation marked

(6 April) To commemorate the 76th anniversary of Bratislava's liberation, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď laid a wreath at the Victory Memorial in Eugen Suchoň Square, Bratislava. He was joined by Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer and Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko in paying tribute to those fallen in liberating Bratislava and Slovakia in WWII. "We owe our thanks and recognition to all those heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice by laying down their own lives for the freedom and future of next generations. May every human life extinguished as result of war serve as a permanent reminder that freedom is not for granted, which is why we must approach it with utmost responsibility," emphasised the head of the MOD, before adding that "Even today, our future freedom demands a certain personal sacrifice by each of us in the form of following restrictions. Nevertheless, I believe Slovakia is on the right track."

Stadium reconstruction completed

(8 April) Extensive reconstruction and upgrade works are now complete to the Training Stadium which forms part of the Athletics Stadium in the DUKLA Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica. The present MOD leadership improved the project so that the stadium could meet all the stadium infrastructure standards and regulations of the International Sports Federations (ISFs) – UEFA 3 and World Athletics. The Training Stadium was officially opened by Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď and Director of the Military Sports Centre Lt Col Roman Benčík, with the participation of Matej Tóth. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "We are aware of the importance of support the MOD needs to provide to create adequate conditions for our sportsmen and women as an important pre-requisite to enable them to train successfully for top domestic and international sporting events, from where they regularly take home precious medals. Compared to the previous MOD leadership, I am very pleased we have managed to improve the entire project, because a modern stadium must comply with the standards of the 21st century and all criteria of the International Sports Federations." He added the stadium has an all-seated capacity of 8,000 rather than 4,000 as originally planned.

Director of the DUKLA Military Sports Centre Lt Col Roman Benčík said: "The reconstruction of the Training Stadium took seven months to complete and it can now be used by our sportspeople and football players of MFK DUKLA BB. In the future, as the pandemic situation improves, other sports clubs in or around the city will be allowed to use the sporting ground." He added that the stadium will also be open to local community amateur sports clubs and the sporting public. Finally, he thanked the Ministry of Defence for its support and appreciated its interest in improving the training conditions for the DUKLA sportspeople.

Member of the DUKLA Military Sports Centre Matej Tóth said: "On behalf of all sportspeople, I want to thank for the investments in the entire Military Sports Centre which have come with the new MOD leadership. For us, it is crucial that we can make the best of the excellent training grounds we have in the Military Sports Centre. At the same time, this is motivational for us to proudly represent not only DUKLA, but also the whole of Slovakia."

The DUKLA Military Sports Centre Athletics Stadium Reconstruction Project costs a total of €14,165,040 incl. VAT. Complex reconstruction works to the Athletics Stadium are set to be complete by the end of September 2021.

SVK Armed Forces stand up Joint Operations Command in Banská Bystrica

(8 April) The SVK Armed Forces stood up the Joint Operations Command Banská Bystrica (JOC BB), tasked with planning and conducting all domestic crisis management operations, while concurrently supporting international operations and commitments. JOC BB was visited by Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď and Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "The stand-up of the Joint Operations Command is a significant milestone for our Armed Forces, since it brings together all command elements, so to say, under one roof and makes the entire planning and control process a lot more effective. I trust the new component will be a valuable contribution to the entire Armed Forces." Giving further details on JOC BB, Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko revealed that the new C2 capability will undertake key tasks across the entire spectrum of operations, including the conduct of military operations to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Slovak Republic. "This Command is a response to our expertise we have gained from international operations, from our allies, and from the conduct of operations at the operational and strategic levels," he said, adding that JOC BB will reach its FOC on 24 September 2021. JOC BB was established based on the conclusions of complex staff rehearsals, group exercises, and CIMIC Op Shared Responsibility. These have demonstrated the need and importance of standing up a permanent C2 component charged with planning and conducting all operations at the operational level.



- As part of his working trip to Banská Bystrica, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď visited **Matej Bel University** to meet with representatives of his alma mater to discuss joint activities in the field of education, science, research & development, sports and culture.

- Chief of Defence **Gen Daniel Zmeko** promoted Lt Col Karol Novák, Lt Col Peter Sliacky and Lt Col Dušan Svitana to the rank of Colonel with effect from 7 Apr 2021.

- The SVK Contingent's Sector 4 of **UNFICYP** in Cyprus was visited by Miroslav Jenča, Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia and Americas, UN Department of Political Affairs. Accompanied by Head of UNFICYP Elizabeth Spehar and UNFICYP'S Chief of Staff Col Neil Wright, he and his delegation visited the town quarter of Varosha in Famagusta, where they were welcomed by SLOVCON Commander Lt Col Ján Hric.

- Pte Marek Ferencák and Pte Tomáš Kriš, cadets of the Armed Forces Academy (AOS), specialising in Weapons Systems, Weapons and Their Components at the AOS's Engineering Department, participated in the **22nd AFSTUD 2021 International Student Conference**, organised by the Henri Coanda Air Force Academy in Brasov, Romania. Their scientific papers won first and second place in the Weapons & Defense Technology category.

- Maj Jozef Krivka assumed the post of **Chief of the Repairs Centre**, Supply Base Martin, with effect from 1 Apr 2021.

- Two soldiers of the SVK Armed Forces joined in with the European Union Training Mission in the **Central Republic of Africa (EUTM-RCA)**.

- The MOD has issued a **traffic warning** to motorists as ten Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 12 to 18 Apr, and so are SVK military road movements to/from: Nitra – CV Lešť, Prešov – Veľké Ozorovce, Veľké Ozorovce – Ruská Nová Ves, Hlohovec – Martin, Prešov – Trebišov and back, Nemecká – Topoľčany, Sklené – Rašov and back, Prešov – Zemianske Kostolyany and back, Nitra – Zemianske Kostolyany and back, Sliach – Žilina, Nováky – Sklené, Zemianske Kostolyany – Sliach and back, Zemianske Kostolyany – Levice and back, Zemianske Kostolyany – Hlohovec, Zemianske Kostolyany – Martin and back, Žilina – Sliach, and within the city of Nitra. Also scheduled are rail movements to/from Kuchyňa – Zemianske Kostolyany and Nitra – Sása-Pliešovce.

The FULL FIELD KIT radio programme on Radio Regina, live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will present the training of SVK Air Force pilots in the USA. Your suggestions and opinions are much appreciated by email: pinapolna@mod.gov.sk.

Constitutional Court to rule on soldiers' right to union representation

(6 April) Taking good care of and creating a quality environment for performance of Active Duty Soldiers State Service in all its respects, including the guarantee and protection of soldiers' rights, interests and legal certainty, is treated as a priority by the MOD leadership. In the interest of enhancing the protection of soldiers' individual human rights and interests, the MOD is preparing an alternative to afford military personnel the right to defend themselves against any unlawful action by their superior or the State. Towards this end, the Armed Forces Ombudsman is the right institution. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "I must admit the public rights defender and I have different opinions on introducing the right to association in trade unions for service personnel or on how to fulfil this right. For this reason, I also welcome her initiative to review the constitutional legality of the legislative obstacle to the right to union representation for servicemen and women. We'll see what the ruling of the Constitutional Court on this matter will be. Of course, we'll fully respect it." He continued: "I firmly believe that the ex-service personnel's increased interest in trade unions is motivated by their sincere interest in further improving Service conditions rather than being driven by their desire for personal benefit and vision of their own employment prospects. Indeed, soldiers and their Service conditions are our priority. However, when considering any changes, we must take into account their systematicity and full compliance with

Minister visits SVK AF units

(9 April) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď and Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer toured selected SVK Air Force units. On Day 1, they met with members of the military band based at the Tactical Wing Sliach. On Day 2, accompanied by DCHOD Lt Gen Lubomír Svoboda and Commander of the SVK Air Force Brig Róbert Tóth, they visited the 4th Radar Surveillance Company Močiar.

Training for CREVAL

(9 April) Members of the Trebišov-based Motorised Battalion undertook training for the Combat Readiness Evaluation (CREVAL) process at TC Lešť.

The Battalion's successful CREVAL is a pre-requisite for joining the Intermediate Reserve Force on Op EUFOR ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the Battalion is expected to replace UK forces and be on stand-by from 1 July 2021 to the end of July 2022.

New dog runs for MWDs

(9 April) On completion of reconstruction works, the Military Working Dog (MWD) Training Unit, Military Police Department Vlkánová – Hronek, has 70 new dog runs for MWDs. In the refurbished grounds, the Crisis Management, Training and Canine Branch can now reopen MWD training courses in the days to come. Accompanied by Director of the SVK Military Police Col Valentin Cebo, Minister Naď came to see for himself the refurbished MWD facility. The newly-built runs have an extended life span, offer easy maintenance of floors, and are of a high utility value.

Live firing of BVP-1 gunners

(6 April) BVP-1 IFV operators and gunners, from 22nd Mech Bn Michalovce and 21st Mech Bn Trebišov, fired 9M14M anti-tank guided missiles during a live fire exercise on Kamenica

nad Cirochou Training Area. The exercise was directed by Commander 22nd Mech Bn Lt Col Július Čepela and inspected by Commander SVK Army Maj Gen Ivan Pach, accompanied by Commander 2nd Mech Bde Col Slavomír Verčimák. Although the live fire exercise was a baptism by fire for 11 crews, they achieved good and excellent results.

