



With President on soldiers

(20 April) Despite their extensive response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the SVK Armed Forces' operational readiness has been maintained. For it to be sustained and gradually increased, it is important for the SVK Armed Forces to switch from performing assistance tasks to the full regime of preparation and training exercises, including the international ones. SVK President and Commander-in-Chief of the SVK Armed Forces Zuzana Čaputová was briefed on all aspects of this transition by Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' and Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko. Among the topics discussed with the Head of the State were the issues related to the preparedness of the Slovak Republic to deal with crisis situations of non-military character. On the situation in the Czech Republic, the President was interested in the state of security at our munitions storage depots. Both MOD officials assured her that the security of the depots receives the maximum attention of the SVK Armed Forces. Also discussed was the build-up of Russian military presence on the Ukraine-Russia border.



First SVK F-16 fighter jet pilot

(23 April) 1Lt Lukáš Kúdela became the first SVK Air Force pilot to fly the F-16 fighter jet. His first flight happened under the supervision of a US instructor at a United States AFB in Arizona. Four SVK AF pilots took turns in flying the F-16. They are undergoing training in the USA.

DDM Majer visits Lisbon

(23 April) EU Defence Ministers met in Lisbon for talks on common goals in preparation of the Strategic Compass as part of the strategic dialogue phase. The SVK Ministry of Defence was represented at the meeting by Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer. The meeting was organised under the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The primary goal of the Strategic Compass is to set out how best to assure the EU's ability to respond effectively to challenges in the field of security and defence. "The discussions of EU Defence Ministers were aimed at addressing three particular areas of the Compass which will form part of the document under development. The aim was to delineate the baseline policy and goals on EU crisis management, resilience and partnerships," said Mr Majer, noting the importance of reinforcing the EU's cooperation with strategic partners, including with NATO. In this context, he touched on the collective interest in advancing collaboration between the EU's military and civilian instruments across all phases of potential crises and all levels. He added that intense sharing of information with NATO Allies is a necessary prerequisite for us to face security threats together.

MOD supports proposal for one-off payment for WW2 veterans

(20 April) The SVK Ministry of Defence welcomes the initiative of MPs for a one-off payment of €630 for WW2 veterans. The payment is being introduced symbolically in recognition of their dedicated service in WW2 as we commemorate the 77th anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising on 29 August. The proposal must still be approved by Parliament. Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' said: "Our veterans as members of the Czechoslovak Army and the Allied Armies, and as partisans and their aids risked their own lives and the lives of their close ones, while making a contribution, on an indisputable scale, to victory over Nazism. That's why we fully support the effort to reward them with a lump sum payment to mark this year's anniversary of the national liberation struggle whose heroes they became."



As Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security and one of the MPs submitting the proposal Juraj Krúpa said, this is a mark of gratitude and respect to Slovak WW2 veterans. The one-off payment for Slovak WW2 veterans comes part of an initiative by MPs to pass a law supplementing Act No. 285/2009 on provision of payments to WW2 veterans and their surviving widows and widowers and on amendment and supplementation of certain acts as amended and supplemented, which supersedes Act No. 461/2003 on social insurance as amended and supplemented.

- A SVK Air Force Commander Military Council meeting was held on 22 Apr. The meeting was opened by Commander SVK Air Force Brig Róbert Tóth. He presented the SVK Minister of Defence Memorial Medal to Col Josef Hausner for his special contribution to developing the Armed Forces.

- The third Director of the Office of the SVK Armed Forces Surgeon General Military Council meeting, chaired by Brig Roman Jantoš, was held on 20 Apr.

- Mayor of Prešov Andrea Turčanová received Commander 2nd Mechanised Brigade Col Slavomír Verčimák for their first bilateral meeting at Prešov City Council on 21 Apr.

- SVK military personnel serving with NATO's eFP in Latvia have handed durable food packages over to the Red Cross to distribute them to families in need.

- The Dukla Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica welcomed the SVK wrestlers returning from the 2021 European Wrestling Championships in Warsaw. Akhsarbek Gulaev (SVK) and Tajmuraz Salkazanov (SVK) won the Gold medals in their weight categories and claimed the European Champion titles.

- The Ružomberok Residents Civic Association and the Central Military Hospital Ružomberok invite people to take part in the "Drop of Blood" blood donation drive at the Haematology and Transfusion Clinic from 07:00 to 11:00 on 28 Apr. Blood donors are asked to make an advance phone arrangement on 044 4382401.

- With the easing of the measures to stop the COVID-19 pandemic, the study room of the Military History Archives Bratislava will reopen to the public, starting from 27 Apr, and so will the Military History Museums Piešťany and Svidník in the weeks to follow.

- The MOD has issued a traffic warning to motorists as 16 Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 26 Apr to 2 May 2021, and so are SVK military road movements from/to: Prešov – Bánovce nad Bebravou, Martin – Prešov, Martin – Trebišov, Hlohovec – Trenčín, Trenčín – Nové Mesto nad Váhom, Nové Mesto nad Váhom – Hlohovec, Sereď – Hlohovec and back, within the city of Sereď, Trebišov – Veľké Ozorovce and back, Bánovce nad Bebravou – Martin, Lešť – Viničné, Trebišov – Moldava nad Bodvou, Michalovce – Kamenica nad Cirochou, Rašov – Lešť, Sliac – Žilina and back, Poprad – Ruskov, Zemianske Kostolány – Trenčín and back, Zemianske Kostolány – Lešť, Poprad – Rožňava, Poprad – Trenčín and back, Zemianske Kostolány – Trebišov, Zemianske Kostolány – Kuchyňa and back, Sklené – Záhorie, Nováky – Záhorie a Veľké Ozorovce – Prešov. Also scheduled is a rail movement from Rožňava to Dubová.

The FULL FIELD KIT radio programme on : RÁDIO REGINA, live on Fri at 21.05 with a broadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will present the latest news from the SVK military and a trip to Romania in honour of Ladislav Škultéty-Gabriš. Your suggestions and opinions are much appreciated by email: plnapolna@mod.gov.sk.

SVK experts on cyber security and defence exercise – Locked Shields 2021

(21 April) The SVK team finished off in the top 1/3 of 22 Blue Teams in the world's largest and most complex cyber security and cyber defence exercise, codenamed Ex Locked Shields 2021, organised under the aegis of the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence (CCDCOE) based in Estonia's Tallinn.

The aim of the exercise was to protect and defend civilian and military IT systems and critical infrastructure systems. The exercise integrated technical and non-technical phases, with dominant focus on the technical one. While the technical phase was aimed at monitoring networks, analyzing malware, conducting forensic analysis and reporting incidents, the non-technical phase consisted of legal, media and analytical tasks. Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad' said: "Military Intelligence that coordinated the SVK National Team on Ex Locked Shields 2021 once again reconfirmed its quality and long-standing

DDM Majer at TW Sliac

(20 April) An L-39NG subsonic jet trainer capabilities presentation was staged at the Tactical Wing Sliac today, with the participation of Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer. The new L-39NG aircraft was officially introduced to the SVK Air Force by representatives of Aero Vodochody. SVK Armed Forces modernisation is a key priority area of the present MOD leadership. One of the planned modernisation programmes is the replacement of the in-service L-39 aircraft, as they gradually reach their end of life. On this occasion, Mr Majer met with airmen to discuss the tasks and activities of TW Sliac, as well as addressing the planned introduction of the US F-16 fighter jets into service with the SVK Air Force.

Zeus 141516 retires from service



(22 April) A seven-year-old Rottweiler called Zeus, a Military Police patrol dog, retired from the Armed Forces on medical grounds. In 2015, Zeus, aged 1, entered service as a loan from MWD handler MSgt Marek Bača. They worked together for 6 years.

For the first three years, Zeus served as a patrol dog with the Facilities Protection Section at the MP Ops Dept Bratislava, participated in MP operations, and protected VIPs. From 2018 to 2021, he served as a MP patrol dog with the Crisis Management, Training and K9 Section at the MP Dept Vlkanová-Hronek. He helped protect public property against looting during floods, fires, air disasters and demonstrations, as well as representing Defence exemplarily at public engagement events.

SOF assessment and selection

(24 April) Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS) was conducted by the SVK Special Operations Forces on 6 Apr 2021. While the candidates for the Combat Arms (CA) units were faced with 11 days full of disciplines, the candidates for the Combat Service Support (CSS) units were tested for a shorter period. Of the 62 candidates, 49 turned up for the selection procedure. 12 soldiers gave up due to either loss of motivation, failure to meet the standards, exhaustion, or on medical and personal grounds. Both SOF instructors and psychologists of the Psychological and Social Activities Section, SVK Armed Forces Personnel Office, gave their undivided attention to all candidates. Finally, 26 candidates qualified for service with the CA units and 11 candidates for service with the CSS units. They will undertake the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC) in the months to come. Given that the selection process took place under pandemic conditions, all candidates were tested and isolated from the outside environment before the selection process, supported by a medic and with all anti-pandemic measures in place.



excellent achievements in the field of cyber security and cyber defence. Even amidst quality competition from Allied competitors participating in the exercise, they demonstrated that in this field Slovakia is in truly good, highly qualified and especially well-prepared hands," before adding that "Ex Locked Shields 2021 contributed to strengthening collaboration at the national and NATO levels". Those represented in the SVK National Team on Ex Locked Shields 2021 were Military Intelligence (MI) officers, i.e. personnel of the SVK Cyber Defence Centre, members of the SVK Armed Forces, representatives of state establishments including from the Data Centre of the SVK Ministry of Finance, academic staffs from the General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy and from the Informatics Department at the Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics of Comenius University, and representatives of the private sector.