



Jozef Gabčík's legacy

(29 May) The 79th anniversary of Op Anthropoid – the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich was commemorated during a ceremony in honour of Maj Gen (in memoriam) Jozef Gabčík in Poluvsie. Also in attendance was Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď who paid tribute to his legacy. As part of the official programme, the 27th Jozef Gabčík Memorial Run was organised in full compliance with the coronavirus guidelines. As usual, military personnel joined the 11-km run. To enrich the programme, 5 Special Forces Regiment personnel staged a static display of SOF equipment and dynamic demonstrations.

Mr Naď said: "Jozef Gabčík's unabating heroic legacy – the struggle for freedom and democracy forever entered our military history and our members of 5 Special Forces Regiment, which carries the honourable title of Jozef Gabčík Regiment Žilina, have been its proud bearers to date." The ceremony and memorial run in honour of Jozef Gabčík took place in Poluvsie, where he was born on 8 April 1912. In the summer of 1941, Jozef Gabčík, ranked Staff Sergeant of Infantry, agreed to undertake special operations training in the UK. After passing several courses, as one of the first Czechoslovak paratroopers he volunteered for special missions in his Nazi-occupied homeland. In October 1941, he became the leader of the Anthropoid team tasked with the assassination of Reichsprotektor Reinhard Heydrich.

Stepping up cooperation with Ukraine

(28 May) Slovakia is ready to step up security and defence co-operation with Ukraine. The MOD sees a space for this in areas such as defence industry, science and research, and training. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď announced as a member of the official delegation of Prime Minister Eduard Heger to Ukraine.

Mr Naď said: "I am convinced that the bilateral military technical cooperation with Ukraine has the potential to grow. We can build on the past successful projects, for example, Ukraine's investment in the Slovak-made Božena mine clearance system." As he clarified, alongside the MOD delivering significant SVK Armed Forces modernisation programmes, it also plans to follow through with science and research projects as an effective framework for advancing bilateral cooperation. As a good example of partnership, Minister Naď underlined Slovakia's role of Lead Nation (LN) in the NATO-Ukraine EOD/C-IED Trust Fund. "This is a mark of solidarity and testament to our capabilities through which we contribute to building trust and security in the region," said the Minister, noting that the project is entering its final phase and will be successfully concluded this summer.

Defence Minister Naď plans to make an official visit to Kyiv this August to pay tribute to the 30th anniversary of Ukraine's Independence Day, while SVK armed forces, including SVK Air Force C-27J Spartan aircraft and UH-60M Black Hawks, will take part in a military parade there.

In service of peace and security

(29 May) Over 11,000 SVK Armed Forces personnel have served under the United Nations (UN) flag since the establishment of the Slovak Republic on 1 January 1993. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď congratulated them on the International Day of UN Peacekeepers. Since its establishment, Slovakia has supported 16 UN Peace Support Operations (PSOs) to date. Currently, 240 SVK servicemen and women are deployed with UNFICYP in Cyprus and with UNTSO on the Golan Heights.

Commanders of five military units and formations take over battle flags

(25 May) The commanders of 1 Mechanised Brigade Topoľčany, Self-propelled Artillery Battalion Michalovce, Transport Wing Kuchyňa, Air Operations Command Brigade Zvolen and Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Defence Battalion Rožňava took battle flags over from President and Commander-in-Chief of the Slovak Armed Forces Zuzana Čaputová.

Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "The act of giving a battle flag on loan to a military unit or formation is an hour and recognition accorded to our Service personnel for their dedicated work and long-term achievements in execution of assigned tasks and training. I am rightly immensely proud of them for their determination and commitment."

Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko congratulated the recipients.

The act of giving battle flags on loan to military units and formations is grounded in the historical tradition of the Czechoslovak Legion in Russia, Italy and France during WW1. It is in keeping with the tradition that the battle flag must be protected and prevented from being desecrated or seized by the enemy, both in peacetime and wartime. Under current legislation, battle flags are issued on loan from the Slovak President on the recommendation of the Defence Minister.



- 102 trainee soldiers, of whom 14 were female trainee soldiers, completed a 7-week **initial military training programme** by swearing the Oath of Allegiance to the SVK Armed Forces at TMMB Martin. The passing out parade took place without the presence of family members and the public.

- **Ms Ailsa Doman**, the widow of the WW2 veteran Alexander Doman and the initiator of the WW2 Western Resistance Memorial in Bratislava's Šafárik Square, celebrated her 94th birthday on 24 May and received a Letter of Congratulations from the Minister of Defence. The letter was presented to her by Director of the Social Policy Branch at the MOD's Human Resources Dept Lúbcia Fúsková.

- **SVK AF HK staffers** practised their soldiering skills in such areas as marksmanship, weapons handling and first aid procedures at Mičiná infantry firing range.

- Observers from SVK Special Operations Forces Command (SOCOM), Special Operations Forces Training Base (SOTB), and 23 MTR Bn took part in **Ex Swift Response** in Romania, with the training audience of over 7,000 paratroopers.

- Specialists from the EOD and CBRN National Centre Nováky, joined by permanent bomb disposal personnel of the **Záhorie Firing Range** and engineers from the EOD Unit Sereď, undertook unexploded ordnance (UXO) deep search training at MD Záhorie.

- **Intense training** for 13 Mech Bn troops has begun at TC Lešť. While the deployed units are attending tactical, engineering and CBRN training in the first week of June, the Battalion's mechanised companies are also undergoing specialist training.

- 4th-year cadets pursuing the State Security and Defence (G-30) studies at the Gen M. R. Štefánik **Armed Forces Academy** and Eng Bn members attended mining training with the use of live mines. Cadets of the L10 specialty got placements with the logistics battalions operating under CSS Bde Trenčín.

- At the invitation of the Slovak Ambassador to Northern Macedonia, Ordinary of the Slovak Armed Forces and Armed Corps **Mons František Rábek** and Archbishop Mons Cyril Vasiľ participated in the celebrations of Saints Cyril and Methodius on 18-21 May. On this occasion, the Proglas magazine was published in the Macedonian and Slovak languages.

- On 17-21 May, the Military Topographical Institute Banská Bystrica organised the **IMINT-IX Course for Imagery Intelligence** (IMINT) specialists to improve their skills in imagery assessment and exploitation in line with NATO STANAGs.

- Refurbishment works to the Athletics Stadium in Banská Bystrica's Štiavničky are in progress, with artificial grass carpet and Tartan surfaces being laid at the **Dukla Military Sports Centre's facility**.

- **Vajnory Barracks** hosted **concentrated training for administrators of SVK Armed Forces garrisons**, aimed at presenting the protocol procedures across garrisons, with focus on military funerals and wreath-laying ceremonies, including practical demonstrations.

- This year has seen a record-breaking number of 4,043 paintings and drawings from 367 primary, arts and special needs schools entering the 20th MOD Painting and Drawing Competition named **Soldiers Through the Eyes of Children**, by which the Defence Monthly editorial staff and the Defence Staff commemorate International Children's Day. The previous record number of competitive entries was 2,236 in 2013.

- The MOD has issued a **traffic warning** to motorists as 27 Al-ied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 31 to 6 June 2021. Over the same period, the SVK Armed Forces will conduct road movements across Slovakia from/to: Zemianske Kostolyany – TC Lešť, Poprad – Sklené, Zemianske Kostolyany – Nováky and back, Nováky – Sklené, Martin – TC Lešť, Hlohovec – Martin, Kamenica nad Cirochou – Michalovce and back, Nitra – Koliňanský vrch, Nitra – Trenčín, Sliac – Martin, Hlohovec – TC Lešť, Sereď – TC Lešť and back, Sereď – Trenčín and back, Martin – Sučany and back, Hlohovec – Prešov, Veľké Ozorovce – Trebišov, Prešov – Kamenica nad Cirochou, and within Kamenica nad Cirochou. Also scheduled are SVK military rail movements from/to: Prešov – Zlatovec, Zemianske Kostolyany – Prešov, and Zemianske Kostolyany – Vrútky.

On strengthening cooperation in Lisbon

(28 May) Continued work on the drafting of the EU's Strategic Compass and on the strengthening of EU-NATO cooperation in light of current security challenges was the central theme of the EU Defence Ministers Meeting in Lisbon. Deputy Defence Minister Marian Majer represented the SVK MOD at the event on behalf of Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď.

The meeting's focus was primarily on the defence capabilities development of EU Member States. Ministers also held a meeting with representatives of the United Nations and officials of regional African organisations. There was much discussion on reinforcing regional security and defence ties as well as on the EU's CSDP missions and operations.

Active Reserves training in 2021

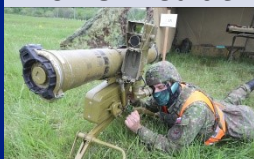
(24 May) Trebišov Garrison's Veľké Ozorovce Training Ground welcomed Active Reserves (AR) soldiers to its facilities. The training, led by members of 21 Mech Bn Trebišov, was aimed at executing duties according to specialities, developing artillery and CIS skills, logistics, CBRN, military management and training, military medicine, special operations, and engineering support. The SVK military is set to train 330 AR soldiers in 2021. Also scheduled is the training of AR soldiers for the Defence Staff, SVK Army HQ Trenčín, HQ 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany, HQ 2 Mech Bde Prešov, TMMB Martin, 5 SOF Regt Žilina, Eng Bn Sereď, and CBRN Bn Rožňava. 23 AR soldiers will begin their Military Police (MP) training on 24 May at the MP Dept Vlkánová – Hronsek. Over the next 2 weeks, they will familiarise themselves with the MP organisational structure, tasks and equipment, as well as honing their marksmanship skills and receiving training in incident response.

St Barbara Warrior Competition

(27 May) The Saint Barbara Warrior Competition for artillery and reconnaissance troops took place under the auspices of the SVK Contingent as the Lead Nation (LN) for fire support in NATO's eFP BG on Ādaži Training Area, Latvia. The aim of the competition was to practise the firing skills of artillery systems crews to hit targets and the reconnaissance and correction skills of artillery forward observers, and to test the coordination of all fire support elements in support of the eFP BG. The Arty Fire Crew Category was won by 5 Arty Fire Team, led by SSgt Patrik Mihalčín. He was also named the Defender of the Week by COM NATO BG LVA.

The Artillery Forward Observers Category was won by the SVK Fox Team – PFC Slavomír Kešeľ and Cpl Jozef Krišo. The CZE Lion Team was the best mortar team in the competition.

ATGMs fired at TC Lešť



(28 May) Personnel of the Topoľčany-based Mech Bde units fired the Konkurs man-portable anti-tank guided missile (MPATGM) systems using anti-tank guided missiles

(ATGM) at TC Lešť in the last week of May. The aim of the training exercise was to improve the anti-tank missile firing skills of selected personnel from the Brigade; to give operators practice in firing the BVP-2-mounted 9M113 ATGM launchers and in firing missiles from the Konkurs MPATGM systems at stationary targets; and to reinforce soldiers' practical skills in executing firing tasks. Apart from members of the Nitra-, Martin- and Levice-based Mech Bns, instructors from TMMB Martin, too, were involved in the firing training. The firing training involved a total of 52 TO-based Bde operators of the BVP-2-mounted 9M113 ATGM launchers, 1 operator of TMMB Martin, and 18 operators of the Konkurs MPATGM systems.