



## Paying tribute to veterans

(11 Nov) The official Veterans Day commemoration took place at Petržalka - Kopčany WW1 Cemetery in Bratislava. "It is our duty to remember veterans. I am delighted that three WW2 veterans are here with us, as are contemporary veterans who have served on international crisis management operations," Secretary General of the MOD Service Office Peter Kozák said. Veterans Day ceremonies were also held at the WW2 Western Resistance Fighters Memorial in Bratislava's Šafárik Square and at the SNP Museum in Banská Bystrica. On 13 Nov, State Secretary Marian Majer and British Ambassador Nigel Baker attended a Remembrance Day ceremony at the RAF Memorial in Čunovo, paying tribute to the RAF service personnel who fought against Nazi troops and sacrificed their lives in the line of duty in Slovakia. "With their sacrifices, these heroes, too, wrote their names into the history books, bringing better future to us all and the free democratic world. They put their lives on the line as airmen beyond the borders of their homeland – for that, we owe them a tremendous debt of thanks and respect, and we pledge never to forget their actions," State Secretary Majer said. 40,000 red poppies, as a symbol of the blood shed by the fallen soldiers in wars, were handed out by military personnel across Slovakia's cities. In addition, red poppies were projected onto Bratislava Castle.



## Run in Honour of War Veterans

(11 Nov) Speaking after the 7th Run in Honour of War Veterans, Jaroslav Nad' said: "The losses incurred in combat during WWI and other conflicts are a scar on mankind that reminds us that peace is not a matter of course. All the brave men and women who defended or are defending the principles of freedom and democracy are deserving of our recognition, thanks and respect." He thanked the racers for taking part in the 5.2km running event. A record number of 253 racers turned up this year. Pte Mário Košťút of AOS LM and Hana Hačundová of DUKLA BB were the fastest runners. Among the soldiers who ran with their small field kit and personal weapon was Pte Benjamin Pirc (SVN A) of NATO MN BG SVK.



## Laureates of the 25th Military Deed of the Year Awards announced

(11 Nov) In their 25th year, the Military Deed of the Year Awards, honouring the extraordinary achievements of those in and close to SVK Defence, saw their laureates announced for the previous year during today's Awards ceremony in the presence of members of the SVK Cabinet, WW2 veterans, and military personnel at Bratislava Castle's Winter Riding Hall. The winners were singled out by a panel of judges comprising representatives of the MOD, presided over by Commander-in-Chief and President Zuzana Čaputová. The Assistance to the Public Award went to Pte 1C Miroslav Demeter, of 902 Engr Bn Michalovce, who volunteered to support the recovery effort in the aftermath of the devastating tornado in South Moravia for over 40 days during an off-duty period last summer. The Friend of the Armed Forces gong went to Brezová pod Bradlom, represented by Mayor of Brezová pod Bradlom Jaroslav Círan, for the town's long-time remarkable efforts to raise awareness of military history and putting across a positive message about the Slovak Armed Forces to the public. Airmen of 46 Wing Kuchyňa and members of 5 SOF Regt Žilina took home the Service to the Country Award for evacuating Slovak citizens and our Afghan aides from Kabul Airport in Afghanistan, under extremely complicated and unpredictable circumstances. MSgt Róbert Prôčka of MP won the Rescue of Life Award for helping a person involved in a road traffic accident and another one suffering from a sudden medical indisposition, as well as for his record of blood donations. Among the attendees at the Awards Gala Evening were Prime Minister Eduard Heger, Foreign and European Affairs Minister Rastislav Káčer, Health Minister Vladimír Lengvarský, State Secretary Marian Majer, Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko, friends of the MOD and, of course, the men and women of the Slovak Armed Forces.



- Poland's Land Operational Centre Land Component Command (LOC-LCC) Krakow hosted **Battle Staff Training (BST)** dubbed Autumn Challenge 22. 12 SVK soldiers (11 staffers of SVK Joint Operations Command and a servicewoman of Military Unit 3021 Martin) assigned to the V4 EU Battlegroup, led by Col Jaroslav Marko, joined the BST training.

- In the presence of COM SVK ARMY Maj Gen Ivan Pach, HQ 2 Mech Bde Prešov hosted a COM 2 Mech Bde Col Róbert Kecsó's **Meeting of Commanders**, to take stock of the training tasks accomplished over the past year and to outline new core tasks.

- 72-hour survival training took place for trainee soldiers undergoing initial military training (IMT) at the Training and Mobilisation Force Generation Base Martin. The IMT programme will culminate with a passing out parade on 18 Nov.

- Žilina-based 5 SOF Regt was visited by **French Defence Attaché Col Jean-Charles Peltier** on 7 Nov. DA Col Peltier and COM 5 SOF Regt Lt Col Peter Zochňák met for consultations on future cooperation, paid tribute to the fallen SOF personnel at the SOF Memorial at the base, and spoke with French learners on a French language improvement course.

- Topoľčany-based Jaselské Barracks hosted **Command Staff Training (CST)** for HQ 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany staffers on 9 Nov. They were briefed by MP personnel on possible indications of drug misuse and ways of detection, as well as on the prevention of alcohol-related minor offences and crimes in the military.

- The village of Zázrivá was the venue for a **meeting of commanders** chaired by COM Presidential GOH Col Andrej Tvrdoň. The meeting was divided into three parts, with focus on instructional, topographic and command-specific information. Col Tvrdoň and COS Lt Col Rubuš evaluated the progress made in performance of the GOH's core tasks and set out priorities for the coming period.

- Members of Levice-based 13 Mech Bn attended **specialist training** for Military Order Service (MRS) controllers. The aim of the training was to train the controllers on road traffic management. The controllers, supported by policemen of the Police Road Traffic Dept Levice, rehearsed directing traffic at an intersection in Levice.

- The results of the Defence-wide PhotoAttack and Gallery MIL **Competitive Displays 2022** were announced at the Trenčín Garrison Club. A total of 57 contributors with 222 entries took part in the contests this year. In PhotoAttack 2022, this year's Best Photo was Lt Col (Res) Peter Sobek's "Life in the Saddle". In Gallery MIL 2022, Stanislav Lubina won the Painting & Sculpture category with his painting of "Aspen", Lotka Čunderlíková of Zvolen Barracks scooped the Applied Arts category with her set of crochet animals, and Nina Blizmanová of 51 Wing Prešov triumphed in the Children's Works category with her picture of "Sweet-Tooth".

## FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme presents the 30 years of the Military Social Welfare Office on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

## A newly refurbished gym reopens to elite Žilina-based SOF personnel

(7 Nov) After a €1.8m complex refurbishment project, gymgoers of elite 5 SOF Regt are getting back into their exercise and fitness routine at the newly refurbished gym of their home base in Žilina. The MOD has taken care to establish better quality conditions for

physical fitness and training – these belong to the basic professional attributes and requirements for regular personnel. The gym was reopened by Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad', State Secretary Marian Majer, and Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko in a ribbon-cutting ceremony today. Meanwhile, a number of refurbishment works have been completed on the Žilina base this year. Over €221,000 has been spent towards routine maintenance, marking a more than threefold increase in this area in just twelve months. Among other additional improvements, completed or still in progress, are the replacement of windows and washrooms, the repair of a loading ramp and toilets, hygiene paint coatings and plaster repair, as well as the numerous repairs of electrical and gas installations, lightning rods, and pressure equipment. More investment projects worth nearly €13.5m are planned for the coming



years, including refurbishing buildings, installing new fences, upgrading the heating systems, and constructing an armoury storage facility. Elsewhere, the head of the MOD visited 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany, where he was given a tour of the recently completed works to the base's facilities, to include new doors and floors, repaired toilets, roofs, electrical wiring and fittings, interior lighting systems, and an insulated building. "I am delighted to see the progress being made here too. We have invested over €444,000 in maintenance this year alone, which is a fourfold increase in maintenance expenditure against 2021. Nevertheless, we are aware of the host of challenges that lie ahead of us. That is why, in addition to standard maintenance, an additional almost €3mil will be dedicated to more extensive projects in the coming years," Mr Nad' said. Looking to the future, the MOD is planning to reconstruct a repair workshop and protected spaces, to replace exterior fences and gates, and to upgrade the heating distribution system on the Topoľčany base, Director General of the MOD Estate and Infrastructure Department Ján Bučan added.

## SVN President recognises SVK soldiers

(10 Nov) During a ceremony at the Lešt Training Centre, President of the Republic of Slovenia Borut Pahor recognised service personnel of 51 Wing Prešov for helping to put out a huge wildfire in Slovenia earlier this July. President Pahor presented a Letter of Thank You to seven SVK service personnel, in the presence of Commander-in-Chief and President Zuzana Čaputová and State Secretary Marian Majer. As part of the official presidential trip to meet the SVN Mech Coy integrated into the NATO BG in Slovakia, both Heads of State and their delegations attended a briefing by Commanding Officer Col Ladislav Bujárek and received a tour of the accommodation facilities.

## V4 Defence State Secretaries

(10 Nov) In the first meeting of Visegrad Group Defence State Secretaries or the V4 Senior Body as part of Slovakia's V4 Presidency, State Secretary Marian Majer hosted his fellow counterparts in Pezinok on 8-9 Nov 2022. Among the issues on the agenda up for discussion were the traditional aspects of V4 defence cooperation, the range of initiatives proposed to support Ukraine, and current NATO and EU approaches and actions. According to Mr Majer, the Visegrad Group should make the provision of demining and UXO operations in Ukraine its top priority over the medium to long-term. One of the meeting's outcomes was the approval and signing of the Framework Agreement for Enhanced V4 Defence Planning Cooperation.

## New COM SVK SOF appointed

(7 Nov) Col Jaroslav Krám has been appointed the new Commander of the Slovak Special Operations Forces (COM SVK SOF) with effect from 1 Nov 2022. Col Jaroslav Krám officially assumed command of 5 SOF Regt Žilina from Brig Gen Branislav Benka during today's change of command (COC) ceremony at the Žilina base – home to 5 SOF Regt Žilina. Also in attendance at the official COC ceremony were Slovakia's top Defence officials – Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad', State Secretary Marian Majer, and Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko. COM SVK SOF Col Jaroslav Krám, who previously served as DCOM SVK SOF, has been a long-time member of 5 SOF Regt Žilina.

