



Joining forces to modernise Defence Medical Services

(29 Jan) DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) on the Defence Medical Services (DMS) with the Ministries of Health; Education, Research, Development and Youth; Investments, Regional Development and Informatisation; and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for the Recovery and Resilience Plan and Knowledge Economy during an away-day Cabinet meeting in Červený Kláštor.

In the MOC, the parties declared their readiness to use their professional capacities and expertise to create a collaboration platform for the support, development and modernisation of the J. A. Reiman University Hospital and Polyclinic in Prešov and the Central Military Hospital - Teaching Hospital in Ružomberok, as well as for the education and training of current and future DMS doctors and other medical professionals.

In the coming days, the MOC will be signed by the rectors of the University of Prešov, the Pavol Jozef Šafárik University of Košice, the Catholic University of Ružomberok, and by the directors of the J. A. Reiman University Hospital in Prešov and the Central Military Hospital in Ružomberok.

They fell so that others could live

(31 Jan) DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič attended a ceremony to mark the liberation of Brezno at the WW2 Fallen Soldiers Memorial in Brezno's Gen M. R. Štefánik Square. "They fell in the line of duty so that others could live. We owe them our thanks for their fearlessness, unbreakable spirit, and ultimate sacrifice. They defended the values of freedom and the right to a better life in a country where the nation chose the path it wanted to take," Mr Vojtašovič said in his remarks.

After the wreath-laying ceremony, the City Park featured WW2 battle reenactments. In addition, Brezno City Council prepared a short documentary, now available on Brezno City's website, about the historical events leading to the end of WW2 and the testimony of Brezno resident Ján Pinka, 97, who as a 17-year-old witnessed the city's liberation.

Starting from Sept 1944, the liberation wave swept across Slovakia. German and Hungarian troops were driven out of Brezno on 31 Jan 1945. Ultimately, nearly 500 Soviet and Romanian soldiers laid down their lives in the three-day Battle of Brezno.



International Holocaust Remembrance Day (IHRD) Ceremony in Sered'

(29 Jan) "The Holocaust is one of the greatest tragedies in the history of humanity. It is hard to imagine that it happened only some eight decades ago – which is just the length of a single human life. We must commemorate it so that nothing like that ever happens again," DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič said at the International Holocaust Remembrance Day (IHRD) Ceremony at the Holocaust Museum in Sered' on 29 Jan. Also in attendance at the ceremony and concert marking the 80th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration and death camp were VĽH Director Col Miloslav Čaplovič and SNP Museum Director Marián Uhrin, who have teamed up to cooperate with the Holocaust Museum. At the ceremony, awards were presented to several personalities and institutions for their contribution to the campaign against antisemitism, racism and xenophobia. Mr Vojtašovič thanked Ján Hanák, a then 9-year-old intern at the Sered' and Theresienstadt camps and a Holocaust survivor, for his cooperation with the MOD. He is a long-time serving chairman of the Military Parachutists Club Žilina and the founder of the Jozef Gabčík Memorial Run. The IHRD Ceremony concluded with the opening of the exhibition "Holocaust Survivors' Testimonies".



- A Comd 14 Tnk Bn's Commanders Meeting took place at Trebišov Barracks on 29 Jan. In the presence of COS 2 Mech Bde Prešov Col Peter Hlebaško, Comd 14 Tnk Bn Lt Col Tomáš Korobanič gave his assessment of Phase 1 of the Training Cycle and set out the priorities for the coming period.

- Collaborating closely with the National Transfusion Service, 2 Mech Bde Prešov organised a "Drop of Blood" event. A total of 41 soldiers and civilians rolled up their sleeves to donate blood at the Prešov Garrison Club on 27 Jan.

- Members of 57 Ind Det Martin organised their second charity event for the "Childhood" Civic Association in Dobšiná and gave an Armed Forces presentation at Dobšiná Primary School. This was joined by Sgt Denis Horváth, a member of 2 SVK AF Bde and a long-time member of the Dukla Military Sports Centre.

- After the farewell ceremony for the outgoing ESP troops at Kuchyňa AB and TC Lešt in Dec 2024, a new rotation of ESP Forces – the Corps Forward Element and the HQ NATO Rapid Deployable Corps – have taken over NATO duties in Slovakia. The SVK and ESP Military Chaplaincy Services have continued their joint activities. Kuchyňa AB was visited for the first time by Capt Juan Luis, Chaplain of the Military Archbishopric of Spain, accompanied by Col Miguel Lopez Rodrigues, COM ESPCON MNB-SVK. At St John Paul II's Parish Chapel, they were welcomed by Maj Slavko Ganaj, Chaplain of the Slovak Air Force Roman Catholic (RC) Chaplaincy Service at 46th Wng Kuchyňa. On this occasion, a Holy Mass was concelebrated by the SVK and ESP military chaplains in Spanish.

- SVK Military Forests and Estates (VLM) held a company presentation at the ITF Slovakia Danubius Gastronomy and Tourism Fair at the Incheba Exhibition and Convention Centre in Bratislava on 30 Jan - 1 Feb. In addition to its portfolio of operations and projects, VLM set up a forest fairy tale house for kids.

- The SNP Museum has announced that the owners of the items seized by security personnel at the SNP 80th Anniversary Celebrations on 29 Aug 2024 in Banská Bystrica can recover them at the SNP Museum Box Office until 14 Feb.

- Capt Ladislav Čáni and Lt Richard Knotek from the International Courses Dept of the SVK Military Academy took part in the NATO Systems Approach to Training (SAT) Course at NATO School Oberammergau (NSO). They became familiar with NATO requirements for processing NATO-certified course documentation, designing and hosting courses based on an educational and training needs analysis, and NATO's Global Programming within an educational institution.

- At the invitation of Comd 1 Mech Bde Topoľčany, Lt Col Milan Turaj from the Military Tactics and Art of Operations Dept of the SVK Military Academy lectured on the theme "JTAC Capabilities Development" as part of the Brigade commanders' training in Topoľčany on 29 Jan.

- As part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, on 24 Jan, a joint ecumenical worship service was held at St Michael the Archangel Chapel at SVK AF HQ Zvolen. The Word of God was preached by Military Deans Maj Pavel Lukáč from the RC Bishopric of the Forces and Armed Corps and Lt Katarína Zaitková from the Ecumenical Pastoral Service (EPS) Office.

- The SVK Defence Language Institute (DLI) has made its NATO STANAG 6001 SLP 1 English Language Guidebook for Beginners available on the DLI page on the Defence Intranet (DefNet). Alongside this, the DLI has been preparing texts about the Slovak Armed Forces and NATO. Each text, written in three different levels of English (SLP 1, 2 and 3), contains a glossary of terms and a short vocabulary exercise. The latest "English in a Minute" article can be found on DefNet.

Recce PI joins MNB-SVK at Lešt'

(27 Jan) A new Reconnaissance Platoon (Recce PI) – comprised of 21 soldiers from 12 Mech Bn Nitra and 1 soldier from 13 Mech Bn Levice under the command of Lt Peter Balla – joined the NATO Multinational Brigade Slovakia (MNB-SVK) to serve side by side with ESP, SVN, PRT, CZE and ROU troops. To make sure they follow a set of tactical SOPs, the Recce PI soldiers have been practicing the required skills and capabilities. They have already completed a 20-km foot march with the modular webbing systems, extra metal weights, and the rucksacks full of military materiel. And this is what still awaits them: a nighttime shooting session, mounting an ambush, setting up a trap against an enemy unit, and fighting in built-up areas (FIBUA). In doing so, they will fire a variety of firearms and operate modern-day equipment such as night vision devices. Yet, among the most challenging training activities will be the survival techniques and operational tasks in mixed pairs with fellow soldiers of other Armed Forces.

Company-level TACEX



(2 Feb) As part of a tactical exercise (TACEX) during the last week of Jan and the first week of Feb at the Training Centre Lešt', members of 1 Mech Coy from 13 Mech Bn Levice conducted training on movements, foot

marches, base defence and security, preparation of a defensive position without enemy contact, an attack in a built-up area, and marking of and operating safely in areas contaminated by radiological, toxic and chemical warfare agents. The company-level live fire TACEX and a 96-hour-long intense training with the Company's coordination and synchronisation checks thoroughly tested the Company's readiness to carry out missions and tasks. All of them have been successfully accomplished by the Company's members. 2 and 3 Mech Coys from 13 Mech Bn Levice will undertake such training in the coming days.

"Carpathia" Military Society

(30 Jan) While meeting in Bratislava, members of the General Assembly of the "Carpathia" Military Society took stock of the Society's activities over its first 18 months of existence, describing them as very successful and promising. "We hosted 32 events, of which 12 took place across primaries and secondaries to get the civilian populations ready for the defence of the State," Col (Ret'd) Eduard Csongai said, appreciating cooperation with the MOD Personnel and Social Affairs Dept, the Defence Staff, and schools. As well as this, the Society ran discussion clubs for soldiers in Bratislava, Dunajská Streda, Liptovský Mikuláš, Nitra and Jelenec, covering topics such as military history, MOD and Armed Forces promotion events, and medical and health awareness issues.

UK Army convoy deploys on Ex Steadfast Dart 2025 (STDT25)

(29 Jan) A convoy of British troops and armoured vehicles has transited through Slovakia, heading to Romania for STDT25. The aim of the exercise is to practice the deployment of the NATO Allied Reaction Force (ARF) and the Alliance's readiness in peacetime.

While in transit across Slovakia, the UK Army convoy was provided HNS by our Forces, MP, Border and Foreign Police, Customs Office, and Rescue Services. This movement of the British logistical and support elements is an example of how Allies cooperate to bolster Europe's collective defences. The UK and SVK militaries have close links. Another recent example of SVK-UK cooperation is the Logistics Enabling Node in Slovakia, which operated for three years – from Russia's invasion of Ukraine in Feb 2022 to Dec 2024.



"Ex Steadfast Dart is the largest and most visible exercise of NATO's Allied Reaction Force in 2025. 10,000 personnel, 1500 military vehicles, more than 20 aircraft, and 17 naval assets have converged in Romania for this vigilance

exercise, which includes the UK's 1st Division Logistics Force, which transited with around 100 vehicles and 350 personnel through Slovakia en route to the exercise area. It demonstrates NATO's ability to activate and strengthen the ARF, coordinate rapid movements, and focus, at the right time and place, on securing strategic deterrence. The United

Kingdom is grateful to Slovakia for its continued support and commitment to helping meet its commitments to NATO. Together, as NATO members, we are capable and determined to defend the populations and territories of our countries," UK DA Col Jonathan Kitson said.