



Respect and gratitude

(10 Mar) As a way of showing respect and gratitude on International Women's Day (IWD), our servicemen presented flowers to the MOD military and civilian women as they arrived at work after the weekend. This day of appreciation and recognition for all women was observed across the entirety of the Armed Forces, NATO Multinational Brigade Slovakia (MNB -SVK) based at TC Lešť, missions and operations abroad, military clinics and hospitals, and departmental companies and organisations.

Burned-out Skýcov remembered

(16 Mar) The 80th anniversary of the burning of the village of Skýcov in WW2 was commemorated with Mass and a wreath-laying ceremony by residents of Skýcov in County Zlaté Moravce. On 16 Mar 1945, German troops stormed and torched the village in reprisal for being heavily involved with partisans. 39 men from Skýcov had joined different partisan groups and six Skýcov residents the 1st Czechoslovak Army under the command of Gen Ludvík Svoboda on the eastern front. 18 locals were deported to concentration camps. This all tied into the "Never Forget" message DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič delivered at the ceremony: "We can not and must not forget what happened. Though painful, our history reminds us of the importance of freedom, democracy and mutual respect. Therefore, we must always rise up against any manifestation of hatred and be guided by the desire for a better, more just world."



(10 Mar) Since 10 March, the General Štefánik Armed Forces Academy has been delivering Professionally Qualified Officers (PQO) Course No 34. At Liptovský Mikuláš, the PQOs will have mastered the military education and training essentials for their promotion to the ranks of Lieutenant, 1st Lieutenant, and Captain. 75 college graduates in the Preparatory State Service as well as 30 MOD Other Ranks and NCOs in the Temporary and Permanent State Service are now on the course. This commissioning course for the future officers is taught by instructors from the AOS Depts and Education Centre and subject matter specialists from the SVK MOD and Armed Forces.

PQO course at AOS

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Military Hospital: Professional Development Workshop

(14 Mar) Sgt Maj Silvia Simová, the head nurse of the Central Military Hospital - Teaching Hospital Ružomberok, organised the 'Integrated Rescue Services' Cooperation with Other Support Elements' Professional Development Workshop under the hospital's Science, Research and Education Programme. The workshop, opened by Hospital Deputy Director Brig Gen (Ret'd) Vladimír Lengvárský MD MPH and Science, Research and Education Specialist Mgr. Lenka Palcová PhD MPH, involved experienced guests who gave lectures about their work in crisis situations. 85 participants – mainly military medical personnel from the Central Military Hospital and MILMEDCOM, civilian hospital staff, and students from the Health Sciences Faculty of the Catholic University – took part. The first block of lectures provided an overview of the crisis management procedures, the trauma plan rollout across medical facilities, and medical emergency management. The second block of lectures explored solutions to emergencies and larger-scale incidents, followed by a lecture on the SOPs for the Fire and Mountain Rescue Services and a lecture on the nurses' professional readiness to work in crisis humanitarian settings. The workshop was closed by Hospital Director Marian Križko who presented a letter of thank you to all lecturers.



■ DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič took part in the **Space Forum 2025** – hosted by the Education, Research, Development and Youth Ministry in cooperation with the EU Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA) – which featured a live discussion on Slovakia's closer cooperation with EUSPA in an effort to implement the SVK Space Strategy as an engine for growth in 2030 and beyond.

■ 7 Trng Regt Martin runs the **Self-contained Compressed Air Breathing Apparatus Operator Course**. Under the guidance of Regimental Instructors MŠgt Róbert Pardus and Sgt 1C Peter Hričina, trainees have recently completed the theory and practical modules of the course at a fire training facility, as well as strengthening their mental and physical endurance essential to perform tasks in a contaminated environment with subsequent decontamination. The course graduates are now properly trained on safety procedures and are fully qualified to operate and maintain the breathing apparatus.

■ On the ranges at Liptovský Mikuláš Garrison training ground in Kameník, 1st-year officer cadets of the **SVK Military Academy** have completed blocks of training including a series of drills in tactical warfare, life in the field, and movement on the battlefield before navigating through rugged terrain. The training – overseen by Officer Commanding the First Year Officer Cadets Maj Michal Frič and led by experienced AOS instructors – has improved the skills that are key to the cadets' successful performance out in the field.

■ The SNP Museum Banská Bystrica invites the public to visit the virtual **Liberation of Slovakia Exhibition** at <https://oslobodenieslovenska.sk/>.

■ Through 'Academic' Magazine, the official publication of the SVK Military Academy, you can learn more about the Academy and the work and lives of teachers and OCs. Read the digital edition here: <https://weblm.aos.sk/casopis>. Those who prefer the spoken word can listen to the **SVK Military Academy Podcast**, available at <https://weblm.aos.sk/clanok/podcast-aos>, in which AOS teachers appear as guest speakers to introduce the Academy's study programmes and military specialisms.

■ This year **Military Forests and Estates (VLM)** has been distributing 1.2 million tree seedlings from the Jovša Forest Nursery, located on the southern slopes of the Vihorlat Mountains, to four of its branch facilities – most of the tree seedlings are heading to Malacky, Kežmarok, Pliešovce and Kamenica nad Cirochou. While best represented among the conifers is the Scots pine, followed by the Norway spruce, the European larch, the European silver fir, among the deciduous trees are the European beech and the Sessile oak.

■ Military Forests and Estates (VLM) has announced that the condition for buying a **fishing permit for the Rašeliný - Prievaly ponds** will be at least five hours of voluntary work on these sites on 12-26 Apr. For more information, you can contact Patrik Kuriš, head of the Forest Management Area Mikulášov, by telephone on 0911 482 422.

■ **Skimo athlete Jakub Šiarnik** of the Dukla Military Sports Centre finished 9th in the men's Vertical discipline at the International Ski Mountaineering Federation (ISMF) World Cup in Austria's Schladming.

■ Through the **SVK Military Support Foundation**, soldiers from 13 Mech Bn Levice are reaching out to military and civilian personnel in Defence with a request for help for the wife and four children of the deceased, **Sgt Martin Mitterpach**, who unexpectedly passed away at the age of 37 on 4 Mar 2025. You can make a direct contribution into the following bank account: SK17 7500 0000 0040 1992 2046.



Fire control and strike rehearsal

(13 Mar) During a computer-assisted exercise (CAX) at the General Štefánik Armed Forces Academy (AOS)'s Simulation Centre in Liptovský Mikuláš, gunners of 54 Multiple Launch Rocket System Battalion (MLRS Bn) Rožňava – the Army's Deep Fires capability within 5 Artillery Regiment Rožňava – undertook a battalion-level MLRS fire control and precision strike rehearsal. In addition to strengthening their precision marksmanship and fire control skills, gunners of 54 MLRS Bn showed off their skills in getting accurate fires on planned and unplanned targets and making calls for fire (CFF) in English as the operational language. The rehearsal put the execution of specific tasks to the test, with the MLRS units being assessed on their cooperation with the Fire Support Teams (FSTs) directing fire onto enemy positions, as well as the signallers in the Signal specialties on the transmission of commands.

VLM issues forest fire warning



(10 Mar) Due to the extremely dry weather and a higher risk of forest fires, Military Forests and Estates (VLM) Branch Facility Kežmarok is warning local residents that public access to woodlands is prohibited by the Kežmarok County Office until further notice. The ban in place is necessary to protect the local woodland

biodiversity and ecosystem and to put the safety of residents first. An increased risk of fires posed by dry weather may lead to an uncontrolled spread of fire and hence serious ecological damage. VLM, therefore, urges citizens to strictly respect this preventive measure. Any violation of the ban will be punishable in accordance with applicable legal regulations.

Recce platoon diver training in Lake Black Water

(14 Mar) Lake Black Water, a former gravel extraction site, played host to a series of drills for engineer divers from Engr Recce Dive Pl, part of 901 Engr Bn Sereď.

Whether conducting underwater searches, locating and retrieving submerged military assets or freeing stranded crews from amphibious swimming or deep water fording vehicles, this time the Army dive teams focused on improving the Platoon's ability to carry out engineering assignments such as reconnaissance and survey, personnel rescue, and equipment recovery.

The training at the dive site also helped to test new rescue equipment to enable a faster, more effective response in the event of an amphibious swimming vehicle's breakdown or accident. Under the leadership of Platoon Sergeant Sgt 1C Vladimír Búda, the Sereď-based divers practiced tactical procedures utilising diver propulsion vehicles (DPVs) or underwater scooters, thereby ensuring far greater mobility and efficiency of underwater movements.

