



the sandf

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Defence
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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JUNGLE WARFARE TRAINING AT PORT ST JOHNS FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE FORCE INTERVENTION BRIGADE IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Five South African Infantry Battalion (5 SAI Bn) is finalising its Jungle Warfare Training at Port St Johns in the Eastern Cape. The soldiers have been there since the beginning of April 2017 to receive training in preparation for their deployment to the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). They will form part of the Force Intervention Brigade of the United Nations Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO).

The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) must, in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations (UN), supply forces for deployment under the UN flag in the DRC. Therefore the SANDF are in the process to prepare for its next rotation of an infantry battalion as part of its contribution for this deployment.

To better equip the deploying forces, the soldiers are prepared in a forest environment where it is necessary to adapt the current battle tactics to suit the circumstances that they will operate in the DRC. The only area in South Africa that allows the SANDF to achieve this objective is the Port St Johns area.

The approach of the SANDF is: "We train as we fight and we fight as we train". With this in mind the deploying soldiers are prepared in an environment that represent as close as possible the area of operations in which they will operate. During this training the focus is on patrols in jungle areas, house clearance, fighting-in-built-up areas, river crossings and fire and movement in dense terrain with the emphasis on command and control of the force. The troops are also trained in rotary wing operations and controlling aerial fire on ground targets from Combat Support Helicopters.

The experience gained from the Jungle Warfare Training is invaluable to members deploying to the DRC. The quality of training that they receive places them in a new bracket and has surpassed all expectations. This training will prepare them to face all possible eventualities that they may experience in the mission area.

From Port St Johns 5 SAI Bn will move to the SANDF Mobilisation Unit in Bloemfontein to receive Mission Readiness Training and to mobilise before they will start the rotation to the DRC around June 2017. They will be deployed for a twelve month period.

Since the advent of democracy in 1994, domestic and international expectations have steadily grown regarding a new South African role as a responsible and respected member of the international community. These expectations have included a hope that South Africa will play a leading role in a variety of international, regional and sub-regional forums, and that the country will become an active participant in attempts to resolve various continental and global conflicts. It is against this background that South Africa got involved in a number of peace efforts of which the contribution to MONUSCO is the biggest of the SANDF at present.

On Tuesday, 25 April 2017 the SANDF will host a Media Visit to the training area at Port St Johns to show members of the media what has been achieved during the last month. News editors, reporters, media commentators, photographers and analysts are encouraged to attend.

Members who wish to attend must report to the Port St Johns Town hall at 09h00 on 25 April 2017. They will then be transported to the training area. Members of the Media interested in attending should contact Lieutenant Colonel Piet Paxton at 012 355 3596 or 083 626 5751.

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