



A great tribute to our heroes

(6 Oct) The MOD along with the Armed Forces and the public commemorated the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Dukla Pass at the Czechoslovak Army Corps Memorial at Dukla and in the city of Svidník. In attendance were President and Commander-in-Chief Peter Pellegrini, PM Robert Fico, DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák, and other guests. The commemoration events attracted around 7,000 visitors to the Dukla Memorial and some 10,000 people to the Museum of Military History in Svidník.

The ceremonial programme at the Dukla Memorial began in the afternoon with a flypast from SVK AF helicopters and a wreath-laying ceremony, and continued with speeches from President Pellegrini, PM Fico, and Deputy Parliamentary Speaker Žiga, combined with musical performances. The President and the Defence Minister then presented commemorative medals to WW2 veterans. Military history clubs were present with stands presenting the Dukla battlefield. In a statement, Mr Robert Kaliňák said: "We want to honour the heroes who passed through this difficult battlefield and lost what was most valuable to them – their own lives. Personally speaking, these celebrations of the heroic operation are, above all else, about the Slovak people preserving their very own tradition, which is specific to Slovakia."

In his keynote address, President Peter Pellegrini said: "War is the materialisation of evil and, as always, it most affects those who are most innocent. Laying down one's life in the fight for freedom is the ultimate sacrifice one can make for his country. So, let us stand in silent remembrance for all the victims and look in the eyes and thank those who were lucky to survive. Let us admire their heroism, which so much reflects the natural human desire for freedom."

In his remarks, PM Robert Fico said: "We have come here because we want to celebrate peace. The Battle of the Dukla Pass diverted large chunks of German forces away from the Slovak National Uprising, which they would have otherwise drowned in blood in just a few days. Today we can say that the decision to launch this operation was a decision that saved a large number of lives in Slovakia, although it brought heavy battles and heavy losses at this part of the front."

At the same time, there was a rich programme at the Museum of Military History in Svidník, including musical performances from Magic Spurs Band, Kandrác Band, and Šarišan Folk Ensemble, a demonstration of hand-to-hand combat, a presentation of MWDs, a SVK Armed Forces GOH show, and displays of Army vehicles and weaponry.



Slovak Defence Industry Day at VTSÚ Záhorie

(1 Oct) DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák along with other MOD officials attended a 'Slovak Defence Industry Day' event at the Military Technical and Testing Institute (VTSÚ) Záhorie. In attendance were delegates of the NATO Industrial Advisory Group (NIAG) and Defence Attachés to Slovakia. There were static displays and live demonstrations, with live rounds fired from the 120mm AM Mortar System, Dana SPH, Eva SPH, and the latest Zuzana and BIA SPHs. Our foreign partners took a close interest in the wide production programme, expertise and background that Slovakia has in the field of Indirect Fire Support (IFS). Slovakia is seeking to host the NATO Indirect Fire Support Centre of Excellence. According to Mr Kaliňák, the high compatibility and reliability of Slovak products is mirrored by an increasing interest in our products from Malaysia, Indonesia and Brazil. In his opinion, Slovakia is a leader in artillery shell production. Currently, there is high demand for artillery munitions, so the MOD is working to help the SVK defence industry handle every aspect of the entire artillery shell production process.



- Members of the Office of the SVK National Military Representative to SHAPE and SHAPE HQ conducted a change of command ceremony, with **Maj Gen Miroslav Lorinc** handing over to Maj Gen Martin Stoklasa after over three years in post. Maj Gen Stoklasa thanked his predecessor for a job well done and expressed his determination to continue his work.

- Following the decision of CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko, Joint Operations Command (JOCOM) Banská Bystrica received the **Commander JOCOM's Military Standard**. It was officially presented to COM JOCOM Maj Gen Martin Michalko during the Armed Forces Day event in Brezová pod Bradlom.

- With effect from 1 Oct 2024, **Brig Gen Ferdinand Muriň** finished his time as DCOM JOCOM BB and took on the role of COS OPS SVK DS. Defence Staff Col Norbert Hrib took over as DCOM JOCOM and Defence Staff Col Miroslav Borsuk as COS JOCOM.

- 42 Supply Base Martin** held a farewell ceremony for Command Sergeant Major (CSM) of 42 Supply Base Martin MSgt Ján Lukašik and Sgt 1C Jana Sandanusová. After the ceremony, the service leavers paid their respects at the WW2 Resistance Memorial in Bystrica before visiting the native home of Maj Gen Viliam Zingor, WW2 partisan warfare coordinator, whose name the Base carries in its honorary title.

- From 23 Sept to 11 Oct, the Topographical Institute Banská Bystrica delivered the **Basic Imagery Intelligence (IMINT) Course**, with a focus on developing the SVK military personnel's specialist skills to process, analyse and interpret imagery from intelligence sources. The course is an essential step in getting soldiers ready to work with the Military Intelligence and Analytical Teams on challenging tasks.

- The Military Academy's Simulation Centre and 51 Heli Wng Prešov supported the **Specialist Physical Training (SPT)** for 5th-year OCs. The training covered abseiling on the rock cliffs of the Jánka Valley and a foot march across mountainous terrain, as well as combat swimming and safe rescue of a drowning person at the Bobrovec Reservoir in the Liptov region.

- The Defence Language Institute Liptovský Mikuláš organised an international **Military English Language Seminar** at the Granite Hotel Smrekovica. The seminar, led by Gabriella Kiss, an expert in ELT methodology, Military English, and psychology from the Ludovika University of Public Service in Budapest, was attended by SVK, CZE, HUN and AUT experts.

- On 2 Oct, the Trenčín Garrison Club hosted the initial meeting of the Permanent Working Group (PWG) for Gender Equality and the **Women, Peace and Security (WPS)** Agenda. The PWG, comprised of representatives from all MOD branches, aims to intensify the performance of tasks to promote gender equality across the Armed Forces.

- AOS Officer Cadets Filip Novotný, David Valach and Oliver Lukacko participated in **Ex Agile Cub** in Czechia. The University of Defence (UOD) Brno prepared the 3rd iteration of the exercise for some 100 OCs specialising in reconnaissance and intelligence support to operations. The exercise saw participation of five NATO countries. After the week-long preparation phase at UOD Brno, the OCs took part in the execution phase of the exercise on Libavá Training Area.

- The SNP Central Military Hospital - Teaching Hospital Ružomberok marked **International Doctors' Day** on 1 Oct.

- Thanks to cooperation between the **SNP Museum** and the Slovak National Bank, the SNP Memorial Banská Bystrica will, until 30 Oct, be displaying the plaster models for the coins that have placed 1st, 2nd, 3rd in the design competition for the SNP 80 Silver Coin with a nominal value of €10. The SNP Museum launched the sale of the commemorative coin on 8 Aug.

FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme offers a report on water crossing drills at TC Lešť at 21.05 on Fri with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

Defence Minister visits Snina, Sečovce and Strážske

(4 Oct) Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence Robert Kaliňák attended the opening ceremony for a new production line for 155mm artillery shells at ZVS Holding in Snina. The new production line will allow ZVS Holding to markedly expand production of shell bodies for large calibre munitions in the coming years.

The factory in Snina has undergone extensive modernisation in recent years. Since 2020, the number of its employees has gone up from just 75 to 180 today. And the company plans to more than double the number of jobs in the near future. By 2026, the annual production of 155mm artillery shells in Snina is expected to rise to 360,000 pieces.

In addition to Snina-based ZVS Holding, in which the SVK MOD is a 50-percent stakeholder, Defence Minister Robert Kaliňák made a trip to the nearby town of Strážske to officially launch the restoration of the company premises of what used to be Chemko Strážske. It is there that MSM GROUP wants to launch



production of bi-modular gunpower fillings for large calibre munitions in 2027. Dozens of new jobs will be created in the region. With the help of the MOD, the SVK defence industry will soon be capable of handling every aspect of the entire artillery shell production process – from producing shell bodies and individual components through to filling shells with gunpower. Thanks to this, Slovakia will achieve absolute self-sufficiency in shell production, which means delivering secure and sustainable munitions supplies to the Slovak Armed Forces and potential munitions sales abroad, to support domestic economic growth.

While in Sečovce, the Defence Minister paid a visit to a local grammar school and the Technology & Services Secondary Vocational School, where he familiarised himself with the education and training for young students on the Security & Protection Services Programme. On this occasion, the MOD signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with this educational institution.

Evacuation from Lebanon



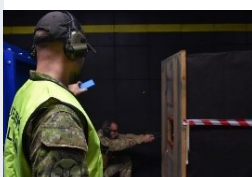
(4 Oct) Following a deterioration of the security situation and an escalation of the military conflict in Lebanon, the MOD and Armed Forces, collaborating with the Foreign Affairs and Interior Ministries, provided an evacuation flight

for SVK nationals and the SVK Embassy staff and their families from Lebanon to Slovakia. A SVK AF transport aircraft brought over two tons of humanitarian food and medical supplies to Beirut. During evacuation efforts, Slovakia is also cooperating with other countries that need help with the return of their nationals.

Arty – both competitively and work-wise

(1 Oct) Under the leadership of Dep Cdr 5 Arty Regt Rožňava Lt Col Marek Uchal', the Best Artilleryman Competition 2024 was hosted on Kamenica nad Cirochou Training Area, with participation from 28 SVK Army units and sub-units. Capt Atilla Örvös, Cdr 2 MLRS Bty from 54 MLRS Bn Rožňava, was named Best Artilleryman of 2024. During the event, Cdr 5 Arty Regt Rožňava DS Col Ján Hric hosted the first meeting with commanders of the V4 artillery forces. The V4 artillery commanders agreed to meet annually in one of the V4 countries.

Best MP Marksman of 2024



(1 Oct) The 28th Military Police Director's Marksmanship Competition and the 18th 'Lt Col Ľuboš Belák' Memorial Shooting Competition took place at the Training and Military Working Dog Facility Vikanová - Hronsek, with participation

from 36 shooters from the SVK Military Police, CZE Military Police, TC Lešť, 2 SVK AF Bde Zvolen, 81 Wng Sliač, Police, Border and Foreign Police, and Prison and Court Guard. SSgt Pavol Babenský (SVK MP) won the Master of Combat Marksmanship and Best Marksman of Military Police categories, WO1 Ondrej Bahýľ (Prison and Court Guard) claimed the Fastest Shooter title, and SSgt Pavol Babenský - Sgt 1C Miloš Halecký (SVK MP) were named the Best Team.

BMT gets underway

(2 Oct) For the fourth time this year, the Training and Mobilisation Force Generation Base Martin has launched basic military training (BMT). After all in-processing procedures, including an initial issuance of Army clothing and equipment, 205 trainee soldiers were assigned to the Training Platoons. Over the next seven weeks, they will gain basic soldiering skills and will practise them at the Martin base and on Martin Garrison's Sučany training ground. In addition, they will get to know military life, build physical and mental resistance, and develop self-reliance. Successful graduates will swear the Oath of Allegiance on 22 Nov.