



SNU's unknown heroes

(20 August) SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš attended a remembrance ceremony dedicated to the memory of the Slovak National Uprising (SNU) victims in Dolný Kubín. The event, entitled Orava 1944 – Unknown Heroes, continued with a battle reenactment in Oravská Poruba.

The period of the Slovak National Uprising was brought closer to the visitors at Camp Tília Gácel in Oravská Poruba through the battle reenactment, building on a parade of historic vehicles driving in convoy. "I highly appreciate each initiative that brings significant historical events in this way closer to all generations. It is our responsibility to remind young people of the evils of war. This is the only way to prevent nations from repeating their mistakes from the past," he said.

Besides historic weaponry on display in the camp grounds in Oravská Poruba, visitors could as well view the combat hardware and weapons in service with the SVK Armed Forces. The programme also featured a performance by the Guard of Honour of the President of the Slovak Republic as well as dynamic demonstrations staged by soldiers.

Unusual exhibition

(15 August) On the MOD's premises, SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš opened the National Handicapped Artists' Presentation, of which he himself took on the patronage. In light of the exceptional value of the artworks on display, he decided to make the exhibition available to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 9.00 am to 11.00 am. The artworks will be displayed at the Ministry of Defence until 31 August 2016.

As the Minister remarked many would have expected that artworks of people whose lives have been an uphill struggle will be grey and gloomy, because that is the distinctive way of expressing a sense of injustice towards one's destiny. "On the contrary, there is a multitude of colours that will add to our green-blue world well until the end of August. What's more, they may even show a different dimension to our lives," he accentuated.

Handicapped artists owe the credit for having the opportunity to display their works of art before the public to the Slovak Agency for Support of Citizens with Health Disabilities, which has already staged approx. 200 separate exhibitions across Slovakia.

In attendance at the exhibition's opening ceremony were the artists and the chairman of the Slovak Agency for Support of Citizens with Health Disabilities, Ľuboslav Beník. "We immensely appreciate the opportunity to show, even on the MOD's premises, what our handicapped artists are up to," he said. As part of the presentation titled Path of Light, the visitors can enjoy the works of purblind and blind artists, while mentally disadvantaged photographers from the Košice region are displaying their perceptions of the natural environment, and the artwork of Jaroslav Velčický, a single-handed artist from Uhrovec, bears the seal of wood carving.

Minister congratulates Matej Tóth on gold medal

(20 August) Matej Tóth, of the Military Sports Centre Dukla Banská Bystrica (MSC DBB), became the Olympic champion in the men's 50km race walk in Rio de Janeiro. Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš, who called him to congratulate on his success, is preparing a surprise for him on his return home. "Our Olympic dream has come true. I extend my sincere congratulation to him, it is a great success for the whole of the Dukla, the Ministry of Defence, and Slovakia. Despite the injury which had marked his preparations, he proved to be a soldier-warrior with all his heart and soul," said SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš. Matej Tóth's most significant sport successes in the men's 50km race walk so far include 1st place at the 2015 World Championships in Beijing and 2nd place at the 2014 European Championships in Zürich.

The performance of the MSC DBB sportsmen and women at the Summer Olympics was concluded by Marcel Lomnický, hammer thrower, with an excellent 5th place. This is the greatest achievement in his career up until now. His previous successes include 5th place at the European Championships in Amsterdam this year and 8th place at the World Championships in Beijing last year.

Minister Gajdoš thanked all MSC DBB sportsmen and women for their outstanding representation of Slovakia, the Dukla, and the Ministry of Defence. "I am convinced each sportsman and woman gave their absolute best, some of them were more successful, others less. Nevertheless, one thing is for sure: they do deserve our support. Ours from the MOD is assured because they are our warriors," emphasised the Minister, while also extending his thanks to all coaches, the support team, and the Dukla leadership.



- Based on Resolution of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 348/2016, **Ján Hoľko** was appointed Head of the SVK Ministry of Defence Service Office on 18 August.

- Brig Gen Vladimír Kubáň, Commander of 1st Mechanised Brigade, officially introduced the new **Deputy Commander of 12th Mechanised Battalion Nitra** in the grounds of 12th Mechanised Battalion on 15 August. Capt Peter Živčák took up the appointment, while being concurrently promoted to the rank of major.

- The training of **21st Combined Mechanised Battalion Trebišov** units has been in progress even during the summer holiday season. At Veľké Ozorovce Garrison's training grounds, members of the Tank Squadron are gearing up for a squadron-sized tactical exercise and a verification check of the Tank Squadron's coordination, to be held in September.

- The SVK Land Forces Headquarters (SVK LF HQ) staffers, led by Brig Gen Daniel Zmenko, conducted a **command staff rehearsal** involving the SVK LF HQ staff, focused on planning a mechanised brigade's operation. The aim of this command staff rehearsal series is to increase the SVK LF HQ staff's level of subject matter expertise in planning an operation while using the processed battle order for Operation Slovak Shield II, with tasks to be assigned to the commander of 3rd Brigade.

- Three members of a civil-military co-operation (CIMIC) and psychological operations (PSYOPS) team from the US Armed Forces paid a visit to SVK Land Forces Headquarters Trenčín on 17 August to discuss the possibilities of the US partners providing specialised training to SVK Armed Forces personnel. The co-operation will enable the SVK Armed Forces to enhance the service personnel's specialist readiness in the dynamically evolving **CIMIC and PSYOPS** military occupational specialties.

- On 10-19 August, the Air Defence, Communications and Information Systems, and Electronic Surveillance Company (AD CIS ES COY), of Training Battalion Martin, hosted the **P-37MSK Radar Rangefinder System Operator Course**. The aim of the course was to master the radar components' basic construction design and principles of operation and to manage the radar's preparations for target surveillance, recognition, detection and tracking operations. Of great importance was also the development of the soldiers' psychological traits and skills in getting the combat system up and running for operations within the NATO Integrated Air and Missile Defence System (NATINAMDS).

- During the period of 31 July – 12 August, members of 2nd Mechanised Brigade participated in a command post exercise, dubbed **WARFIGHTER 2016**, at the Indiana National Guard's Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Centre (CAJMTC) and Muscatatuck Urban Training Centre (MUTC). The exercise was aimed at planning, preparation and conduct of offensive and defensive operations, verification of targeting processes, integration of fire and combat support, joint pre-combat drills, combat activity control and coordination, checks of standard operational procedures (SOPs), and implementation of communications and information systems (CIS). The commander of 76th Foot Brigade positively evaluated the SVK troops' contribution to increasing the efficiency of the exercising command staff's individual processes and functions. He underscored their activity and flexibility with which they put their experience and expertise into practice.

Pilots upgrade their qualification at Exercise Slovak Hawk

(18 August) SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš paid a visit to Sliach Airfield during a joint exercise involving the SVK Air Force and instructors of 100 Squadron RAF LEEMING. Bringing together up to 30 UK and 50 SVK service personnel, this is the 3rd year the exercise has taken place in its history.

"It is an excellent opportunity for our pilots to share their experience with the Royal Air Force pilots. At the same time, they are upgrading their capabilities, combat qualification, and communication by using the operational language," said Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš.

In his statement, the Ambassador Extraordinary and



last at Sliach Airfield until 25 August. It follows up on the long-term defence engagement between the SVK AF and the RAF. One of the three RAF Hawk jets will present itself to the public at the Slovak International Air Fest (SIAF) 2016.

Meeting with Ambassador



(16 August) SVK Minister of Defence Peter Gajdoš met with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Israel to the Slovak Republic, HE Mr Zvi Aviner Vapni.

Topics of discussion were the Slovak Presidency of the Council of the European Union, defence modernisation projects, and the NATO Warsaw Summit, where Slovakia was entrusted with the Lead Nation role of the NATO Explosive Ordnance Disposal/Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (EOD/C-IED) Trust Fund for Ukraine. In light of its long-term expertise and interest in cyber security issues, Israel sent its representative to attend the Cyber Security Co-operation Conference, which was organised by the SVK Ministry of Defence earlier in July.

Along a partisan trail

(20 August) The State Secretary at the SVK Ministry of Defence, Ivan Máčovský, visited the village of Skýcov to pay his tribute to the memory of those who laid down their lives during the Slovak National Uprising (SNU). The reverent act of wreath-laying at the SNU Memorial came part of the 28th hikers' march, called Along the Zlatno – Skýcov Educational Partisan Trail. Also in attendance at the event was Deputy Prime Minister for Investments and Informatisation Peter Pellegrini. Every year the march participants come together to commemorate the engagements of the partisan groups which had operated in the surroundings. The founder of the educational trail initiative is Lt Gen (Rtd) Ján Husák.

Farewell in Martin



(19 August) To mark the deployment of SVK Armed Forces service personnel to EUFOR-ALTHEA in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Preparation for Overseas Movement (POM), coupled with a pre-deployment ceremony, took place on 19 August at Training Battalion Martin. The event was attended by Col Ján Marek, Deputy Commander of the Strategic Crisis Management Centre, CSM Vladimír Beluš, Command Senior Enlisted Leader of the SVK Armed Forces, Col Ján Drevenák, Deputy Chief of Staff at SVK Land Forces Headquarters, and Maj Pavol Tabačár, Chief of Staff at Training Battalion Martin. Col Marek wished the outbound soldiers much success in discharge of their duties and a happy homecoming.

Plenipotentiary of the United Kingdom to the Slovak Republic, HE Mr Andrew Garth highlighted the excellent co-operation between the SVK Air Force and the Royal Air Force. "Defence and security in Europe are of great importance to us," he emphasised, adding that the UK has decided to pull out of the European Union, but not out of Europe.

Maj Gen Miroslav Korba, Commander of the SVK Air Force, acknowledged that this type of exercise is of great value to pilots.

The joint Slovak Hawk 2016 exercise will follow up on the long-term defence engagement between the SVK AF and the RAF. One of the three RAF Hawk jets will present itself to the public at the Slovak International Air Fest (SIAF) 2016.