



### Soldiers to get higher Service pay

(16 October) Higher Service pay for soldiers is now a reality. The Active Duty Soldiers State Service (Amendment) Bill, which seeks to make the Service conditions in the Slovak Armed Forces more attractive, has become an Act of Parliament following its endorsement by the Parliament's plenary. The new piece of legislation will enter into force on 1 February 2020.

Defence Minister Peter Gajdoš said: "Today we have fulfilled the promise we gave to our service members. This marks a historic milestone, because there have been no major adjustments in Service pay since 2006." As Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Security and Defence Anton Hrnko pointed out, remuneration in the armed forces has not, until now, been so fair. "Appointment-based pay makes challenging positions more attractive now," he said, adding that this is an important step towards bringing the quality of the Slovak Armed Forces to a higher level.

Under the Amendment Act, Service pay will consist of two elements – rank-based pay and appointment-based pay. Rank-based pay will account for 1/3 and appointment-based pay for 2/3 of Service pay. The latter may be increased by up to 50%. Another novelty is a year-on-year increase of 1 per cent in Service pay for every year of service.

### Redesign of Nová Polianka gets underway

(18 October) The former Specialized Institute for Pulmonary Diseases Nová Polianka will once again serve the needs of SVK service members and citizens. Parliamentary Chairman Andrej Danko and Defence Minister Peter Gajdoš symbolically tapped the foundation stone as the reconstruction got underway on 18 Oct 2019. HOREZZA, an MOD-owned joint stock company, is now redesigning the facility as a climatic spa. It will reopen to the public as early as next year.



Defence Minister Peter Gajdoš said: "Nová Polianka has always been a property of the SVK Ministry of Defence. I hope that everything will go according to plan and the climatic spa, which we want to develop here, will be a place for service members to come and relax as part of their recreational stays or with their families in their free time." He reminded that the reopening of the facility will create 50 new jobs in the region.

Parliamentary Chairman Andrej Danko said: "I am proud to see that the Slovak Ministry of Defence, led by nominees of the Slovak National Party, is beginning with reconstruction works here, which will be beneficial not only to local citizens, but also to members of the Slovak Armed Forces," adding that "I hope this property will be developed further in the future, rather than being put up for sale or lease."

As Director General of HOREZZA Miloslava Slížová noted, the reconstruction costs will be paid from the company's budget via a bank loan. "So, no money will come from the MOD," she emphasised.

The Nová Polianka Building, which is a national cultural heritage site, will have 141 beds. The climatic spa will create favourable conditions for treating a number of diseases related to the human body's respiratory system.

### Slovak troops on Exercise COOPSEC 2019 in Hungary

(17 October) Defence Minister Peter Gajdoš visited SVK troops taking part in Ex COOPSEC 2019, a Central European Defence Cooperation (CEDC) exercise, on Ujmajor Training Area in Hungary. He praised the strong points of the international exercise and thanked service members for representing Slovakia in an exemplary manner. "During the exercise they tested their readiness to cooperate in an international environment as they resolved emergencies that may occur during migration flows," he said.

Commenting on the Slovak exercising unit, Unit Commander Lt Col Juraj Bób said: "Some of our troops were involved in a Command Post Exercise (CPE), the CIMIC tactical team demonstrated its capabilities, and the transport platoon confirmed its ability to cooperate as an element of an international patrol."

Czech Defence Minister Lubomír Metnar emphasised that exercises of this type are much needed, he said: "As the numbers of refugees are still very high, there is a need to rehearse the capabilities of the CEDC armed forces, police and integrated rescue services."

A total of 417 soldiers from the CEDC countries, including 33 SVK service members and 3 policemen from the SVK Ministry of Interior – Border and Foreign Police Office (Presidium of the SVK Police Corps) along with their assets, participated in the exercise from 14-17 October 2019.



- **Ex Autumn Challenge 19**, bringing together soldiers from Poland, Czechia, Slovenia and Hungary, was held at the Land Operations Centre – Land Component Command in Krakow throughout the third week of Oct 2019. The aim of the exercise was to practise the capabilities of the V4 EU BG Operational Headquarters (OHO BG).

- **The 7th CISM Military World Games 2019** is held from 18 to 27 Oct 2019 in Wuhan, China. Representing Slovakia are 11 sportsmen from the Dukla Banská Bystrica Military Sports Club, the 5th Special Forces Regiment, and the Helicopter Wing Prešov.

- **Planned runway repair works at the Transport Wing Kuchyňa** are underway. Repair works are being performed by members of the Slovak Air Force Airfield Platoons in cooperation with members of the Engineer Battalion Sereď and personnel from the Training and Mobilization Manning Base Martin.

- **Members of the Juraj Langsfeld Training and Mobilization Manning Base Martin** held a ceremony on 16 Oct 2019, to mark the 194th anniversary of Juraj Langsfeld's birthday in his native home in Sučany.

- In line with the Munitions Depot Poprad Training Plan, military working dog (MWD) handlers completed the **MWD Handlers Competency Test** on 14 Oct 2019.

- Slovak Air Force Headquarters hosted a Holy Mass on 11 Oct 2019 and the **6th Sgt 1st Class Petra Šálašiová Bowling Competition** on 15 Oct 2019 in memory of their colleague who died of a treacherous disease 6 years ago.

- Drivers are advised by the MOD to drive carefully as there will be 50 **Allied road movements** in Slovakia from 21 to 27 Oct 2019. They will mostly involve U.S., HUN and POL troops escorted by MP. As well as ferrying oversized cargo, SVK Army convoys will conduct road moves on the following routes: Kuchyňa-Sereď, Levice-Hlohovec, Sása Pliešovce-CV Lešť, Levice-Martin-Bratislava and within the city of Nitra, and rail movements on the following lines: Martin-Sása Pliešovce, Prešov-Sása Pliešovce, Nitra-Sása Pliešovce, Levice-Sása Pliešovce and Kuchyňa-Zemianske Kostolany.

### Full Field Kit this week

Live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat on Regina Radio's Full Field Kit, you will learn how the MOD is delivering on one of its priorities – redesigning Nová Polianka as a climatic spa for soldiers and their families. There will also be reports on CBRN specialists exercising at the JAKUB range at TC Lešť as well as on the 100th anniversary of Bratislava Garrison. We appreciate your comments, suggestions and opinions. Please, write to us at [plnapolna@mod.gov.sk](mailto:plnapolna@mod.gov.sk).

### Mobilization exercise in Prešov

(18 October) Mobilization Exercise Prešov 2019, held on 16-18 October 2019, tested the readiness of individual elements of the SVK Defence and Interior Ministries to perform the tasks of State defence when the state of war and mobilization are declared by the Slovak Armed Forces.

The simulation tested the system of calling up reservists to perform exceptional military service and other tasks that natural persons and legal entities are bound to do by law, especially undertaking assigned duties and handing over material assets.

The mobilization exercise was supervised by the Defence Management, Armed Forces Development, and Defence Planning Department (SVK MOD), the Strategic Planning Staff (SVK General Staff), the Crisis Management Department (SVK Ministry of Interior).

The exercise was attended by staffs from the County Offices in Prešov, Bardejov and Stará Ľubovňa and from the Higher Territorial Unit (VÚC) Prešov, personnel from SVK Army HQ Trenčín, Combat Service Support HQ Trenčín, Army Recruitment Team Prešov, SVK Armed Forces Personnel Office Liptovský Mikuláš, CSS Battalion Prešov, and Slovak Post.

### On cooperation of soldiers and policemen



(14 October) Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko held an office call with President of the Police Corps Gen Milan Lučanský. They discussed joint training activities, including the training of soldiers for

assistance tasks and the provision of security to SVK citizens. Speaking after the meeting, CHOD Gen Zmeko said: "Members of the Armed Forces are part of the security system of the Slovak Republic and they are ready to perform tasks prescribed by law."

Soldiers deploy alongside policemen during sporting events such as ice-hockey world championships or when providing technical support (CBRN or specialized trades) to policemen.

### Among the best hospitals

(14 October) The Central Military Hospital – Faculty Hospital Ružomberok has been ranked among the best hospitals in Slovakia by the INEKO Institute over the past years.

It placed 2nd in the latest 2019 ranking of state university and faculty hospitals by INEKO, improving its ranking by 1 place against the previous year. According to INEKO, the strength of the hospital consists in the high patient satisfaction levels with health services. The hospital shows the lowest numbers for the need to reoperate patients and the lowest death rate for acute stroke after operation.

In the category of state university and faculty hospitals, the 2019 Hospital of the Year Award went to the F. D. Roosevelt Faculty Hospital with Outpatient Clinic in Banská Bystrica.

### Slovak and Czech defence firefighters exercise together at Lešť

(18 October) FIRE RESCUE 2019, an international defence fire services exercise, kicked off at the Training Centre Lešť on 14 Oct 2019. The exercise was attended by defence firefighting units from the CZE Armed Forces, members of the Office of SVK Armed Forces Surgeon General, and personnel from the Medical Rescue Service Bratislava.

Officer Conducting the Exercise (OCE) Lt Col Róbert Senček, of the SVK Air Force Headquarters Zvolen, emphasised that the main goal was to practise and align the action of firefighting teams in executing specialist firefighting and rescue missions, deepen the ability of incident response commanders to set up an incident response staff and run operations. A multi-storey building fire was the first operational exercise

scenario where firefighting and rescue teams practised saving people after a gas explosion in the boiler room of a high rise building. Special climbing equipment was used in the firefighting



response and the firefighting teams had to work in a constrained environment. Later on, they dealt with a coach road accident as a mass casualty incident.

The readiness of the exercising units was tested throughout the week by interesting operational and tactical training exercises involving scenarios such as an aircraft disaster, an airplane fire, a building fire, a forest fire, and a mass casualty incident.

The exercise played an inseparable part in developing Capabilities Targets 2017. Based on the SVK-UK bilateral cooperation, Barry Cooke, of the UK MOD, participated in the exercise as an observer.