



Side by side with heroes

(29 August) Representatives of the Ministry of Defence, led by Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď, along with Slovakia's highest constitutional representatives observed the 76th anniversary of the outbreak of the Slovak National Uprising (SNP) in Banská Bystrica. Traditionally, the official programme of the National Commemoration Event started off with a flypast of SVK Air Force aircraft.

Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "Every meeting with the heroes of the Slovak National Uprising is a great honour for me. It was 76 years ago that they decided we would be standing here today on the soil of a free and democratic State. Therefore, our respect, gratitude and today's celebrations belong especially to them." To mark this occasion, the Minister thanked and presented four veterans with the SVK Minister of Defence Commemorative Medal, 1st and 3rd Grade, and the 75th SNP Anniversary and End of WW2 Commemorative Medal.

As of today, the SVK MOD registers a total of 436 living participants of the national liberation struggle in WW2, with 92 of them recognised as war veterans.



In Dargov, Košice and Bratislava

(28 August) The legacy and heroism of those participating in the Slovak national liberation struggle in WW2 was remembered by Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď at the Victory Memorial in Dargov and at the Major Ľudovít Kukorelli Memorial in Košice during commemorations to mark the 76th SNP anniversary.

Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "In the Slovak and European histories of the anti-Nazi resistance movements, the Slovak National Uprising is recorded as an undeniable timeless historical fact – an inseparable part of our national liberation struggle for a democratic and peaceful Europe." As he reminded us, thanks to the SNP events, the Slovak Nation fought to win the decisive pre-requisites for its own new democratic statehood, whilst at the same time laying the foundation of a new national and state idea, built on the principles of anti-Nazism, democracy and humanism.

The 76th SNP anniversary was also remembered today by Defence State Secretary Marian Majer during a commemorative event at the French Partisans Memorial on top of Zvonica Hill near Strečno.

Earlier on 27 August, Minister Naď paused to remember the heroism of the SNP participants during a ceremony in Bratislava's SNP Square.

Sappers of Sered' have their own memorial

(27 August) To mark the 76th anniversary of the 1944 Slovak National Uprising (SNP), Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď and Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko attended an unveiling ceremony for the Army Engineers Memorial dedicated to all servicemen and women of the Engineer Battalion Sered' who have served or are serving on domestic or international crisis management missions and operations. The Memorial in the form of a PTS-10 Tracked Amphibious Carrier is on loan from the Institute of Military History. At the ceremony, 13 veterans were presented the 75th SNP Anniversary and End of WWII Commemorative Medal and the SVK Minister of Defence Commemorative Medal (3rd Grade) by the head of the MOD. The legacy of the WWII national liberation struggle was also commemorated at the Liberators Memorial by local residents in Pezinok, with the MOD being represented by Director General of the Human Resources Department Martin Jakál.



- On 26 Aug, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď visited **President and C-in-C of the SVK Armed Forces Zuzana Čaputová**, to provide an update on current developments across Defence, the deployments of SVK soldiers on missions and operations abroad, and the SVK military's preparedness to combat COVID-19.

- The support for EU partner countries in the field of defence and security, the issues related to further enhancement of cooperation with NATO and the UN, and the priorities of the EU's CSDP – these all were among the themes of the **EU Defence Ministers Meeting** on 26 Aug in Berlin, with Slovakia being represented by Defence State Secretary Marian Majer.

- A remembrance ceremony in tribute to the **victims imprisoned unlawfully by the communist regime** was held at the gates of Leopoldov Prison on 26 Aug. The MOD was represented at the ceremony by Defence State Secretary Marian Majer and Dean/Director of the Office of the Head Office of Ecumenical Pastoral Service Cpt Dávid Vargaštok.

- To mark the 76th SNP anniversary, a wreath-laying ceremony was held at the **SNP Memorial in Zvolen** on 28 Aug. The sacrifice of the SNP victims was saluted by SVK AF personnel at the Memorial in front of SVK AF HQ.

- A total of 32 officers graduated from the **Basic Command and Staff Course** at Gen M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy on 28 Aug. 15 new medical professionals completed the Professionally Qualified Officers Course and were promoted to Lieutenant.

- To support the fight against COVID-19, SVK members of the EUFOR ALTHEA Liaison and Observation Team (LOT) in BiH handed over **personal protective equipment (PPE)** to a local medical centre in the town of Foča.

- Working in cooperation with TC Lešť and Helicopter Wing Prešov, Trebišov-based 23rd Motorised Battalion deployed on Kamenica nad Cirochou TA to take part in **Ex Deep Strike**.

- Under the **Find Your Home** Armed Forces Project, CSS Bn Prešov visited children from the Children's Home in Remetské Hámyre. They learned about the Unit's mission, activity, equipment and weapons and did sporting activities and took home gifts.

- The last week of August, members of the Crisis Management Section (Military Police Department) deployed to exercise at TC Lešť, while using the Jakub Koloseum helicopter and insertion simulator. The aim of the training activity was to prepare military policemen for **insertions from the Black Hawk helicopter**.

- On 24 Aug, Helicopter Wing Prešov was visited by children from the Children's Home in Košice under the **Find Your Home** Armed Forces Project. They became familiar with different military specialities and the advantages of service in uniform.

- The MOD has issued a traffic warning to local motorists as 8 **Allied road movements**, involving US, CZE, HUN, POL, AUT and BIH troops, are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 31 Aug to 6 Sept 2020. Over the same period, the SVK Armed Forces will conduct convoy operations from/to: Trenčín – Prešov, Trebišov – Prešov, Prešov – Nemecká, Nemecká – Martin, TC Lešť – Topoľčany, TC Lešť – Rožňava, TC Lešť – Martin, Prešov – Žilina and back, Sliac – Martin and back, Sliac – Žilina and back, Prešov – Zemianske Kostolany and back, and within Nitra.

Minister sacks hospital director

(27 August) Director of the SNP Central Military Hospital Ružomberok Peter Vaněk MMed was sacked from his post by Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď for fundamental managerial failures associated with a series of infringements of legislation and extensive financial implications, the head of the MOD announced at a press conference. "An internal audit has established that the military hospital leadership has gravely erred in its duties in numerous cases. Thanks to the audit conducted by the Inspectorate of the Minister of Defence, a total of 58 irregularities have been identified. For this reason, we have filed a criminal complaint, which is now being investigated by the National Criminal Agency (NAKA) and which is gradually being supplemented by further findings," said the Minister. Brig Gen Vladimír Lengvarský MMed has been appointed the new Director of the SNP Central Military Hospital Ružomberok.



Minister visits Montenegro

(25 August) Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď made his first official visit to Montenegro for talks with the country's highest representatives. The Defence Minister's official programme involved meetings with President Milo Đukanović, Prime Minister Duško Marković, and his Montenegrin counterpart, Defence Minister Predrag Bošković. Topics of discussion included the MOD's priorities, a continuation of bilateral engagements, and an exchange of experience in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. On the coming parliamentary election in the country, Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď expressed his full and continued support for Montenegro's democratic transformation, European direction and integration efforts.

Training mission "Allied Sky"

(28 August) As part of a training mission dubbed Allied Sky, a total of six US Air Force B-52 Stratofortress bomber aircraft flew over all 30 NATO Member States in Europe and North America in the space of just 24 hours. Slovakia, too, took part in this non-combat mission, with SVK Air Force MiG-29 fighter jets escorting the B-52s as they made their way across SVK airspace. This historically first training event of its kind was intended to demonstrate NATO's solidarity, whilst offering opportunities for enhancing allied interoperability.

Tactical battalion-level exercise dubbed Slovak Rifles is underway at Lešť

(27 August) A tactical battalion-level exercise dubbed Slovak Rifles, involving 13th Mechanised Battalion Group, which had to be put off from June until August is now running from 10 August to 4 September 2020 at the Training Centre Lešť. The exercise is the culmination of the Group's two-year preparation period. Apart from 13th Mechanised Battalion Levice, the Group is made up of a platoon from Engineer Battalion Sered', an IGLA MANPAD platoon from Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade Nitra, a CBRN platoon from CBRN Battalion Rožňava, elements of Deployable CIS Base Ružomberok,



a tactical CIMIC and PSYOPS team from Martin, a HUMINT unit from ISTAR Battalion Prešov, an artillery platoon from Self-propelled Artillery Battalion Michalovce, and a logistical platoon from Combat Service Support Brigade Trenčín. A command post exercise was held in early August, confirming the Battalion Group's readiness for the tactical exercise, while 1st Mechanised Company (13th

Mechanised Battalion Levice) concluded its training with a tactical live-fire exercise. TC Lešť also hosted integration training for all elements of the Battalion Group.