



SVK Armed Forces Day

(22 September) To mark Slovak Armed Forces Day, servicemen and servicewomen along with MOD and Armed Forces leaders gathered for a solemn ceremony in front of the MOD Main Building and on the parade grounds at all military units across Slovakia. Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď said: "Traditionally, 22 September celebrates the dedicated service of our servicemen and servicewomen to our country which, once the orders are given, does not recognise „no“ as an answer. Whether it be protecting our country, helping our citizens affected by a natural disaster or a pandemic, or assisting in situations where the lives and health of our citizens are at stake, including dangerous evacuation operations from a country controlled by terrorists and extremists. I am immensely grateful to our soldiers for their work and service through which they demonstrate that the Slovak Armed Forces are an irreplaceable element in delivering the security of the State." Mr Naď remembered to give thanks to all members of the Slovak Armed Forces who died in the line of duty.

On Slovak Armed Forces Day, which is observed on 22 September, it is a tradition to promote military personnel for their excellent achievements and work results, often over and above the official working hours. Eight service personnel were promoted to higher ranks, 16 soldiers were awarded a medal by the Minister of Defence, and 221 soldiers from the SVK Armed Forces were awarded a medal by the Chief of Defence. The Minister of Defence and the Chief of Defence recognised 16 soldiers of the National Movement Coordination Centre (NMCC), the Defence Staff (DS), the Slovak Air Force (SAF) and the Special Operations Forces (SOF) for their humanitarian assistance role in the successful second evacuation of people from Afghanistan. Members of the Strategic Planning Branch at the SVK Defence Staff received formal recognition for their work as well.

After giving his assessment of the performance of the SVK Armed Forces, the head of the MOD pointed to another aspect of their service, saying: "Speaking from the Defence Minister's perspective after chatting with soldiers on numerous occasions, besides their performance I perceive their conditions – I am aware of the shortcomings with which we have been grappling for over a year and a half now. Also, I have spoken out about the issue of outdated equipment, inadequate weaponry and military clothing, and poor infrastructure. Nevertheless, I believe our servicemen and servicewomen can see our continued efforts to improve their working conditions, consider, for example, the military warehouses where the situation might not be ideal, but it is definitely much better than a year ago."

In his remarks, CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko said: "We've been through two years of hard fighting against the pandemic and this fight has been far from easy. In doing so, we have employed the cleverness and learning of our staffs and leaders in conducting serious operations and we have deployed our people to perform tasks which are far beyond the duties they have been trained for. We have done so patiently, orderly, perseveringly and tenaciously, without any expectation to get remuneration or any other profit for our service. And we are committed to continuing to do so." Today's SVK Armed Forces Day celebrations also featured a commemorative event at the Memorial dedicated to Hurban-led battles during the Slovak Uprising of 1848/1849 in Brezová pod Bradlom, where Defence Minister Jaroslav Naď and Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko paused to remember the acts of heroism and battle successes of the Slovak Volunteers as the forerunners of today's fully professional SVK Armed Forces. Due to the pandemic restrictions, members of the public were not permitted to attend for the second time in a row.

Almost 300 junior soldiers pass out of basic military training

(24 September) Basic military training for 292 trainee soldiers, cadets of the M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy Liptovský Mikuláš and professionally qualified officers, of whom 55 were women, was concluded today with the swearing of the Oath of Allegiance and a passing out parade at the Training and Mobilisation Manning Base Marin. On completion of their initial military training, three groups of graduates are set to embark on the next stage of their careers in the SVK Armed Forces. 181 cadets of the Slovak Armed Forces Academy will continue with their studies, 11 professionally qualified officers, ranked Lieutenant, are soon to finish their course and transfer to their military units, and 100 soldiers will move on to branch-specialised training at Phase 2 training establishments before taking up appointments at respective military units, depending on their trades. Due to the unfavourable pandemic developments, the passing out parade took place without members of the public, but online audiences were treated to a livestream on the SVK Armed Forces website.



- The **Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade Nitra** put its personnel at the Red readiness level as part of a combat readiness rehearsal. Members of the Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade Nitra tested their readiness with an overall positive assessment ahead of the Nitra 2021 mobilisation exercise.

- Sportsmen and women of the **Dukla Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica** did very well at European championships. Alica Lichnacová claimed the gold medal at the Triathlon European Championships in Spain's Castelfedels. Powerboat race driver Marián Jung claimed the European Champion title in the O-700 category in Bad Saarow, Germany. Tomáš Hasilla placed 1st in the men's sprint and 2nd in the men's supersprint at the Biathlon Championships in the Czech Republic.

- **Pilgrims** from the Ordinariate of the SVK Armed Forces and Armed Corps (Bishopric of the Forces) to the Vatican, led by Vicar General Col Jozef Michalov, handed a replica of a Great Moravian bell as a symbolic gift to Holy Father Francis.

- **Wreath-laying ceremonies** were held in Myjava and Poriadie on 20 Sept to mark the 173th anniversary of the foundation of the first Slovak Parliament. In attendance were members of the SVK Parliament, Ministry of Defence, SVK Armed Forces, central and local government authorities, and members of the public. The event was supported by the SVK Armed Forces Guard of Honour and the SVK Armed Forces Band.

- On completion of reconstruction works to the **Military History Museum Svidník**, the Museum reopened its galleries to members of the public on 23 Sept.

- On 23 Sept, members of the **SVK Presidential Guard of Honour** prepared a programme for kids and pupils from the primary school in the village of Ivanka pri Dunaji, the Fándly Nursery School in Senec, and the primary school in the village of Slovenský Grob.

- In close cooperation with members of the Indiana National Guard and the General M. R. Štefánik Armed Forces Academy, the Topographical Institute held the **Imagery Intelligence (IMINT) X Course** for IMINT officers on 20-24 Sept.

- The MOD has issued a **traffic warning** to motorists as 39 Allied road movements are scheduled to take place across Slovakia from 27 Sept to 3 Oct 2021. Over the same period, the SVK military will conduct road movements from/to: Trenčín – Rašov, Sklené – Turecký Vrch TA, Nitra – Alekšince, Zemianske Kostofány – Bratislava and back, Alekšince – Hlohovec, Turecký Vrch TA – Viničné and back, Zemianske Kostofány – Nováky and back, Zemianske Kostofány – Sliac and back, Zemianske Kostofány – Martin and back, Brezová pod Bradlom – Nitra, Martin – Sereď and back, Prešov – Nitra, Hlohovec – TC Lešť, Martin – Sučany, Martin – Moldava nad Bodvou, Moldava nad Bodvou – Trebišov, Trebišov – Martin, Trebišov – Hlohovec, Poruba pod Vihorlatom – Trebišov, Trebišov – Prešov, Veľké Ozorovce – Trebišov, Kamenica nad Cirochou – Trebišov, Trebišov – Topoľčany, Nitra – Prešov, Sklené – Sliac, Nitra – Sliac, Levice – Sliac, and Prešov – TC Lešť. There will also be SVK military rail movements from/to: Vlkánová – Sliac – Trenčín-Kubrá and Prešov – Sása-Pliešovce.

FULL FIELD KIT

on Radio Regina, live on Fri at 21.05 with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat, will focus on Ex Blonde Avalanche 2021.

Reservists on regular Active Reserves training at Engineer Battalion

(20 September) Held between 26 Sept and 1 Oct 2021, two-week Active Reserves (AR) training opened at the Engineer Battalion Sereď in an untraditional manner.

The AR soldiers' PCR tests not older than 72 hours were checked first before in-processing, antigen testing, drug testing, medical checks, issuance of clothing and equipment for training, and familiarisation with the training objectives, with cautious observance of the coronavirus restrictions in place.

After the opening remarks by Commander of the Engineer Battalion Sereď Lt Col Jozef Kasl, the reservists were taken to the Training Centre Lešť where they started all-arms

MP Marksmanship Competition



(23 September) The Crisis Management, Training and Canine Branch, MP Dept Vlkánová-Hronec, hosted the 25th Military Police Marksmanship Competition and the 15th Lt Col Luboš

Belák Memorial event. 54 military policemen took part in the shooting competition, attracting the highest number of competitors so far. The Czech Military Police did not miss out on this event either. Peter Borovský (PPZ) won the award for the Fastest Marksman, Sgt 1C Jaroslav Folta and Sgt 1C Miloš Haleký (both from the MP Dept Vlkánová-Hronec – MP Group Prešov) were named the Best MP Team, and Sgt 1C Jaroslav Folta won the award for the Best MP Marksman and claimed the Combat Marksmanship Champion title.

Chaplain General in BiH



(24 September) Slovakia delivered material humanitarian aid, worth almost €36,000, to pay for the social workers education programme at the Lipa Migration Centre, located close to the town of Bihač, BiH. Deputy Interior Minister Vendelín Leitner and Chaplain General of the Office of Ecumenical and Pastoral Service in the Armed Forces and Armed Corps Col Viktor Sabo handed the cheque worth €35,722.76 over to Director of Immigration Services Mirsad Buzar. While in BiH, Col Szabo also paid a visit to SVK soldiers on Op EUFOR ALTHEA and celebrated an ecumenical mass.

MWD Handlers Championships



(23 September) The 16th Military Working Dog (MWD) Handlers Championships took place at the Crisis Management, Training and Canine Branch, MP Dept Vlkánová-Hronec. Due to the pandemic, this year's participation levels were low.

Nevertheless, the competitors achieved excellent results in their categories. The most senior MWD handlers – winners of most MWD handlers competitions turned out to be the best dog handlers. A new generation of dog handlers made their debut at the competition as well. Just as last year, this year the MWD Handlers Trophy went to Eva Smádová and Boris Hronec of the Tactical Wing Sliac. Both of them were recognised in different categories. Eva Smádová won the overall competition.



administration bodies come together to demonstrate their capabilities at the water obstacle area at the TC Lešť.