



Armed Forces Day

(28 Sept) Servicemen and women along with the MOD and Armed Forces leaders gathered to celebrate Armed Forces Day in Brezová pod Bradlom. Around 10,000 people came to an open field below Baranec Hill to see the forces-themed events live throughout the day.

Earlier in the morning, DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák, DEPMINDEFs Igor Melicher and Martin Vojtášovič, and CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko paid tribute to the Slovak volunteer soldiers who died for our freedom in the 1848-49 Slovak Uprising in ceremonies at the Tomb of General Milan Rastislav Štefánik on Bradlo Hill and at the 'Hurban's Battles' Memorial. Reflecting on the occasion, Mr Kaliňák said: "Going into this battle under the leadership of the Štúrists, our forebears fought for their own Slovak Nation for the first time in history, at the time of the pan-European revolutionary events. We owe them our huge thanks and we vow never to forget their legacy – it will remain here, now and for generations to come."

The official programme continued with an Armed Forces ceremony in the host town's Gen M. R. Štefánik Square, where CHOD Gen Zmeko and DEPMINDEF Melicher recognised several retired and serving military personnel and personalities who had contributed to spreading the good name of our Armed Forces. This was followed by a promotions parade.

The programme then shifted to the field below Baranec Hill, where the President and the Head of Slovakia's Armed Forces addressed the audience.

In his keynote speech, President and Commander-in-Chief Peter Pellegrini said: "The Armed Forces are among the most trusted public institutions in our country. Activities like this show that young people can choose service to their country as their future profession. In addition to social welfare guarantees, I believe the other distinct motive for signing up with the Armed Forces will be the gradual fielding of most advanced weapon systems, some of which we can see here today."

In his remarks, CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko said: "We will strive to enhance the credibility of our Armed Forces. It is all about our good honest work – whenever anyone needs us, we are always ready to help."

Throughout the day, the Armed Services staged demonstrations of forces and assets, namely a parachute drop by the Airborne Forces, capability demonstrations of the Special Operations Forces (SOF), and air displays from SVK AF aircraft. Among the Army and Air Force assets on show on the ground and in the air were Zuzana 2 SPHs, MBTs and IFVs as well as rotary and fixed wing aircraft such as UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters, Aero L-39 Albatros tactical jet trainers, and a C-27J Spartan airlifter.

The finale of the programme was filled with live musical performances from singer Peter Bažik, Peter Cmoric Band, Magic Spurs Band, and other performers as a thank you to the entire Armed Forces community.



AOS academic community welcomes 201 Officer Cadets

(27 Sept) The Armed Forces Academy (AOS)'s Main Hall hosted the 2024/2025 Academic Year Opening Ceremony along with a Matriculation Ceremony for the first-year Officer Cadets (OCs). Those who completed basic military training this Aug and Sept and took the Oath of Allegiance at the SNP 80 event in Banská Bystrica reported to the Academy last week, where they officially began their education & training programmes. 2024 saw 201 first-year OCs joining the Academy, 37 more than last year. Throughout the 2024/2025 Academic Year, 383 OCs will pursue Bachelor of Sciences (BSc) degree studies, including 48 first-year female OCs, 202 OCs will follow Master of Engineering (MEng) and Magister (Mgr) degree studies, and 57 students part-time doctoral studies. Deputy Commandant for Education Col Michal Turčaník led the Matriculation Ceremony and presented the new OCs with the Certificates of Matriculation.



- On 23 Sept, over 150 pupils, students and teachers of Bratislava-based primary and secondary schools met with **CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko**, who introduced them to the core tasks of the Armed Forces and answered their questions at an event organised by the 'Carpathians' Military Society, which brings together serving and ex-service personnel and Armed Forces supporters.

- DEPDEFMIN Martin Vojtášovič signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation** between the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Labour, Social Welfare and Family.

- The NATO-certified **Introduction to Joint Operations Planning Course** took place at the Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš for the 12th time. Traditionally, among the participants on the course are senior officers from NATO Partner countries. In addition to SVK service personnel and one AOS serviceman, officers from Morocco, Algiers and Ukraine took part.

- 14 Log Bn Topoľčany** held a farewell ceremony for Service leavers. With a symbolic handover of the national flag to Cdr 1 Mech Bde Defence Staff (DS) Col Štefan Acsai, Lt Col Marek Krchnavý finished his time as Cdr 14 Log Bn Topoľčany. Maj Ján Pásztor takes over as the new commander with effect from 1 Oct. COS 14 Log Bn Maj Jana Teglišiová left the Service as well.

- The Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš delivered the **Professionally Qualified Officers (PQOs) Course No 33**. A total of 31 college graduates and 73 MOD Other Ranks and Non-Commissioned Officers in the Temporary and Permanent State Service took part in the course.

- Once again, SVK service personnel joined a **World Cleanup Day** event in Latvia, to support a culture of sustainability and the environmental well-being of the world. Our soldiers helped to clean a beach and parts of a forest close to the municipality of Camikava on the Baltic Sea coast.

- In Cyprus, UNFICYP, UN Cyprus Talks and United Nations Police (UNPOL) joined forces to support the **#BeActive campaign** in the UN Protected Area, emphasising the need to meet and do physical activities together for people's physical, mental and social well-being.

- Staff Chaplain Maj Ivan Bojčuk took over as **Senior Chaplain of SLOVCON UNFICYP** from Maj Slavko Ganaj during the Hand Over, Take Over (HOTO) process on 19-25 Sept.

- The SNP Museum Banská Bystrica announces that the **Nemecká Memorial Gallery** will be closed to the public from 4-6 Oct.

- The Central Military Hospital - Teaching Hospital Ružomberok marked **World Pharmacists Day** on 25 Sept.

- The **Central Military Hospital - Teaching Hospital Ružomberok** announces that its Surgery, Urology, Proctology, Mammalogy and Neurology practices have, since 27 Sept, been moved to their new premises in the Surgery Pavilion's East Wing Building (former Physiotherapy, Balneology and Medical Rehabilitation Outpatient Clinic).

- Under the auspices of its Educational and Cultural Events Section, the Armed Forces Personnel Office delivered a **workshop for those responsible for Humanities and Social Sciences (HSS) seminars** on 25 Sept. Almost 40 military units from across the Armed Forces took part.

- Kickboxer Alexandra Filipová of the **Dukla Military Sports Centre** triumphed over her competitors to win the women's +70kg category at the K1 WAKO World Cup in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

- Powerboat racer Marián Jung** of the Dukla Military Sports Centre won the F-500 European Championships in Poland's Rogožno.

FULL FIELD KIT

Radio Regina's Full Field Kit programme offers an interview with military historian Jozef Bystrický about the Battle of the Dukla Pass at 21.05 on Fri with a rebroadcast at 00.30 on Sat.

New SVK Armed Forces Recce Teams Competition makes its debut

(23 Sept) SVK Army and Armed Forces Academy (AOS) recce teams descended on Kamenica nad Cirochou Training Area for the 1st SVK Armed Forces Recce Teams Competition, organised by 65 Recce Bn Prešov.

11 recce teams from across the SVK Army and AOS took part. They completed challenging tactical and night foot marches, carried out tasks such as setting up one's observation post (OP), requesting fire against targets, map navigation and compass use, recognition of enemy combat vehicles, joint light tactical vehicle push, abseiling, survival and evasion, escape from the enemy, and crossing water obstacles while observing acoustic discipline. The last day of the competition was dedicated to shooting short and long weapons from different positions with a time limit, hand grenade throw, and rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) firing.

Speaking after the event, Battalion Commander Lt Col Marián Brinček and Battalion Chief of Staff Maj Jozef Mizerák said that the competition's intent was met. "A home team from the Deep Recce Company won over a home team from another Recce

Soldiers and floods in Slovakia



(24 Sept) Over 2,000 soldiers with more than 300 pieces of transport and engineering vehicles and equipment lent support to flood relief efforts across Slovakia from 13-23 Sept. In addition to engineering work, they

assisted with evacuations with the use of high ground clearance vehicles and protected the residents' property from damage. Four SVK AF helicopters with underslung platforms were on standby, capable of extracting people from places where other equipment could not reach. The SVK military quickly provided flood relief assistance to critically affected regions and municipalities, and their residents.

Floods wreak havoc in Cyprus



(25 Sept) Central Europe is not the only region to have been hit by floods. Heavy rains in Cyprus have severely impacted on the living conditions of all asylum seekers stuck in the buffer

zone that separates the Turkish and Greek Cypriot parts of the island. Several tents have been flooded, with some rendered unusable. UNFICYP and UNHCR Cyprus personnel are working to redirect the flows of water away from the area and are setting up new tents.

Military pilgrims in Vatican City



(25 Sept) Pope Francis' 500th General Audience took place in St Peter's Square in Rome on Wen 25 Sept. Among the 5000-strong crowd were a record almost 450 pilgrims from Slovakia's Roman Catholic (RC) Bishopric of

the Forces and Armed Corps, Interior Ministry, and SVK embassies. For the SVK pilgrims, this marked the culmination of the 18th National Pilgrimage of the RC Bishopric to the Vatican and Rome. Earlier in a separate audience, representatives of our pilgrims brought greetings to the Holy Father and presented him with gifts. Among the pilgrims are members of the Armed Services including the Armed Forces GOH, Police Forces, Fire & Rescue Services, Prison & Court Guard, Financial Directorate, and employees and volunteers of the Sisters of Mercy Hospice in Trenčín. Leading the pilgrimage is Bishop of the Forces and Armed Corps Mons František Rábek along with his team of chaplains.

