



## Gun salute welcomes New Year 2025

(1 Jan) In the presence of President and Commander-in-Chief of the Slovak Armed Forces Peter Pellegrini, Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko, Deputy Chief of Defence Maj Gen Miroslav Lorinc, Commander of the Slovak Army Maj Gen Ivan Balog, a 21-round gun salute was fired from the 122mm HD-30 towed howitzers by the firing party of 21 Artillery Battalion Michalovce from Bratislava's Vienna Road on Danube Embankment on New Year's Day at 14:00 to mark Slovakia's Foundation Day. President and Commander-in-Chief Peter Pellegrini thanked the artillerymen for the New Year 2025 Gun Salute. "I wish 2025 would be another year of modernisation, renewal, and strengthening of personnel and technical capacities for the Slovak Armed Forces, while recognising that we are a proud, independent nation and have our own republic just as much as we have a proud and combat-ready Slovak Armed Forces," Peter Pellegrini said. Following up on the President's statement, Gen Zmeko said: "For us, the soldiers, it is a great honour that we can join in with the celebrations of Slovakia's foundation every year. This is also how we can present that our mission is to serve the State and our citizens." He continued: "What's more, this is usually the first opportunity for me as the Chief of Defence to see in person the soldiers who are on duty over the New Year holiday and give them my thanks and best wishes, just as I send my thanks to those who are deployed on operations abroad, protect and defend critical infrastructure at home, or are on other duty or standby."

## Foundation Day ceremony at AOS

(8 Jan) The Academic Staff and Officer Cadets of the General Milan Rastislav Štefánik Armed Forces Academy (AOS) Liptovský Mikuláš gathered for a ceremony to celebrate 32 years of Slovakia's existence as a country. During the ceremony, the decorations awarded by Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko – the Military Crosses for Loyalty to the Slovak Armed Forces (1st and 2nd Grades) and the Chief of Defence Badge (3rd Grade) were presented to Lt Col Rastislav Ledaj, MSgt Štefan Krolak and Maj Pavol Lukášik, respectively. AOS Commandant Brig Gen Aurel Sabó offered his thanks and a gift to Assoc Prof Martin Mark, a long-serving member of the AOS Academic Staff, for his selfless and responsible work to the benefit of military tertiary education.



## Defence Staff holds ceremony for Slovakia's Foundation Day

(8 Jan) MOD military and civilian staff commemorated the 32nd anniversary of the foundation of the Slovak Republic and its Armed Forces in a ceremony at the MOD in Bratislava. In his remarks, DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič underlined the significance of the Armed Forces for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of our borders, public order, and disaster relief operations. Addressing the soldiers, Mr Vojtašovič said: "You never hesitate to stand up and help SVK citizens. You have been part of our country's successful 32-year-long story." While he presented the SVK Minister of Defence Commemorative Medal to MOD personnel on behalf of DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák, Deputy Chief of Defence Maj Gen Miroslav Lorinc presented the decorations awarded by Chief of Defence Gen Daniel Zmeko to the recipients. Jozef Žiak, the co-founder and long-serving reporter of the Defence Magazine, received the SVK Chief of Defence Commemorative Cross.



- Both military and civilian personnel in Defence commemorated the victims of the Nazi rampage in Nemecká on 4 Jan. 80 years ago, the German occupation forces and their Slovak minions launched the most extensive reprisals in Slovakia. During mass executions on 4-12 Jan 1945, up to 900 men, women and children were brutally murdered in Nemecká and their remains were burned in a local lime kiln. The 1944-1945 Nazi reprisals represent the most tragic chapter of Slovak history.

- Bishop of the Forces and Armed Corps Mons František Rábek performed the Epiphany Blessing of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and Defence Staff (DS) offices and premises on 9 Jan.

- A deployment ceremony for the military personnel deploying to Latvia as part of the NATO Multinational Brigade (MNB-LVA) was held at 103 CBRND Bo Rožňava. In attendance were family members, local government representatives, and Armed Forces officials.

- Director of the Liptovský Mikuláš-based Defence Language Institute (SVK DLI) Lt Col Matuš Šostronek welcomed Chairman of the Central European Defence Cooperation - Language Platform (CEDC-LP) Dr Péter Szaló from the HUN MOD's Defence Education Dept, who came to hand over the 2025 CEDC-LP presidency to the SVK DLI for this calendar year. CEDC-LP brings together Slovenia, Croatia, Austria, Czechia, Hungary and Slovakia to promote Military English (ME) language and training.

- Since the Slovak Armed Forces personnel deployed on NATO's enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) in Latvia were not able to spend the Christmas period with their families, Maj Vlasta Kovalová, Staff Chaplain of 2 Mech Bde Prešov, preached the Word of God and celebrated the Lord's Supper Worship Service for them at Camp Ādaži.

- The General Milan Rastislav Štefánik Armed Forces Academy (AOS) Liptovský Mikuláš has released Episode 1 of the Military Occupational Specialties (MOSS) podcast mini-series. In Episode 1 of the podcast, Lt Col Rastislav Ledaj from the AOS Electronics Dept presents the Electronic Weapon Systems Study Programme and the related MOSS. The podcast can be downloaded from the [AOS website](#).

- The directors of the Slovak and Austrian Defence Language Institutes, Lt Col Matuš Šostronek and Col Thomas Fronek met in Liptovský Mikuláš to evaluate SVK-AUS cooperation so far and present their visions for driving defence language education forward under the Central European Defence Cooperation - Language Platform (CEDC-LP). Also discussed was the proposed exchange programme for teachers and testers.

- As of 7 Jan 2025, the Orthopedic Surgeon's Practice had been moved to the newly refurbished Eastern Wing of the Surgical Pavilion (the basement/ground floor of the former Physiatry, Balneology and Medical Rehabilitation Clinic) and from now on patients will be examined in these new premises, the Central Military Hospital - Teaching Hospital Ružomberok has announced.

- It was a brilliant start of the new season for pistol shooter Juraj Tužinský from the Dukla Military Sports Centre, when he took a silver medal in the Men's 10m Air Pistol Final at the ISSF Grand Prix in Slovenia's Ruse. Serbia's Damir Mikec finished with the same score of 242.7b and needed a shoot-off to defeat Tužinský.

## Armed Forces provide help to Museum of Military History

(10 Jan) The Museum of Military History (VHM) Piešťany, working under the remit of the Institute of Military History (VHÚ) Bratislava, continued its cooperation with the Slovak Armed Forces in 2024. Thanks to their knowledge of equipment and specialist activities, our soldiers played a major role in the transport and preservation of the Museum's collection items.

Personnel of the Museum's branch in Svidník along with members of 14 Tnk Bn Trebišov, 65 Recce Bn Prešov, 67 Com Spt Coy Prešov, 21 Mech Bn Trebišov, 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce, 20 Log Bn Prešov, 22 Mech Bn Michalovce, 2 AF Bde Zvolen, and 51 Wng Prešov carried out a total of 39 activities involving basic treatment and preservation of the Museum's collection objects. In addition, they provided invaluable assistance in moving large-scale exhibits within the Military Equipment Park in Svidník. There was also a lot of gardening, maintenance, and support work.



## Artillerymen's farewell to Ādaži

(2 Jan) Camp Ādaži hosted a ceremony for the SVK artillerymen leaving the NATO Multinational Brigade Latvia (MNB-LVA) and returning home to Slovakia. With a total of seven rotations of SVK artillery forces working alongside other Allied soldiers to

secure the Alliance's eastern border, our artillerymen have performed tasks under Canadian command since 2020. At the ceremony, the commander of the Multinational Artillery Battalion Group handed over commemorative coins to selected soldiers. He expressed his thanks to the SVK artillerymen for their service, resolve, cohesion and teamwork. A special word of gratitude in the form of gifts went to the Commander and First Sergeant of the SVK Artillery Battery, 1Lt Štefan Krížak and MSgt Marián Magnus.

## A decade of Solidarity Run

(6 Jan) The Solidarity Run is now in its 10th year, with 5 SOF Regt Žilina and the Jozef Gabčík Running Club as the main organisers from the beginning. The idea of organising the running event emerged during the NATO Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. Forging cooperation with the POL SOF to support the event was of great significance. In 2019, the 5th Special Forces Regiment and Special Operations Forces Association stepped in to join the organisational team, adding another dimension to it. The Solidarity Run is primarily intended for SOF personnel and their families, but it is also open to the wider community.

## From VHM Museum's collections

(7 Jan) Slovak military museology assumed its institutional form in 1994, when the Institute of Military History (VHÚ) was established with the Museum of Military History (VHM) as its organic element. To mark this occasion, the Museum researchers decided to publish a representative, educational follow-up publication to From the Museum of Military History's Collections, in which a group of authors

presents the diversity of collection objects at VHM Piešťany and the Museum's branch in Svidník through a selection of 200 collection items, from the beginning of the 19th century to the present. The publication is also available in [electronic format](#).



The core tasks at VHM Piešťany in the first half of 2024 included the movements of large-scale exhibits. These were supported by 4 Log Regt Trenčín and 81 Wng Sliáč. For example, airmen of 81 Wng Sliáč prepared the transport of large-scale exhibits to Aircraft Repair Company Trenčín (LOTN) to undergo complex renovation. Elsewhere, soldiers of 405 Rpr Bn Martin assisted in preparations for the 'Laugaricio Tank Days' and the 'Night of Museums and Galleries'. In turn, VHM Piešťany joined our soldiers in supporting the nationwide SNP 80th Anniversary celebrations. SVK soldiers also helped restore the Museum's collection objects in the Czechoslovak Army Equipment in 1945-92 Gallery, prepared the gallery halls, and put large-scale exhibits in place. Last but not least, they offered a range of services to keep the outdoor exhibition grounds clean, including grass cutting. In doing so, they performed to the highest standards – for which VHM Piešťany is very grateful to them.