



Preparations for SNP 81 celebrations in Banská Bystrica

(14 Aug) Following last year's nationwide Slovak National Uprising (SNP) 80th Anniversary Celebrations, the MOD, the SVK Gov Office, and other co-organisers have been preparing for the 81st anniversary celebrations of this major landmark in modern Slovak history, and so Banská Bystrica will be bustling with a rich mix of socio-cultural events on Fri 29 Aug 2025. The MOD's priority is to keep this tradition going, while seeing to it that the SNP celebrations remain dignified and commensurate to the Uprising's historical significance, with the participation of the widest possible public audience. The SNP Museum in Banská Bystrica – whose 70th anniversary is being observed this year – has had an irreplaceable role in cultivating this historical legacy. "This year's celebrations will coincide with the 70th anniversary of the SNP Museum's establishment. As with this year's VE 80 celebrations in Piešťany, the Institute of Military History is preparing an SNP Exhibition Tent for the public, with authentic WWII photographs and documentaries on view, among other things," Ms Karin Silberhorn, Director of the SVK DPM and MINDEF's Office, said in a statement.

Visitors can walk around the information stands of ministries and their organisations and try out different hand-on activities. They will also be able to get up close to vehicles and equipment in service with the Armed Forces. Aside from the SNP Exhibition Tent, there will be static displays from historical re-enactment clubs.

The SNP Memorial Wreath-Laying Ceremony starts at 10:00 and will be broadcast live on STVR and on LED screens in the park below the SNP Memorial, as will the ceremonial programme with speeches from keynote speakers and cultural performances. Starting from 13:00, musical and cultural performers will appear on stage to delight the audience with their performances. At 14:00, some 400 Basic Military Training (BMT) passers-out will be there to swear the Oath of Allegiance in front of their families and the public. "We also have some surprises for visitors. In the afternoon, they can look forward to a host of live concerts. Throughout the day, there will be food stalls, drinking water refill points, and a range of attractions delivering entertainment for all. As was the case last year, people will go through security checks before entering the viewing area," Ms Silberhorn added.

The MOD is running an information campaign on the SNP 81 celebrations. As preparations are now underway for the event, the MOD is closely liaising with the co-organisers – the Government Office, President's Office, Banská Bystrica City Council, SNP Museum, and other ministries. The full programme of the SNP 81 celebrations, other useful information on visitor safety and security, traffic restrictions, and our visitors' map will be available on the MOD website under the "SNP 81" section. Media representatives wishing to cover the SNP 81 celebrations in person need to register via the media accreditation form available on the MOD website under the "SNP 81".

Second intake of new recruits to NDF is dominated by young people

(14 Aug) Turkish Hill Training Area was delighted to welcome the second intake of 38 reserve recruits interested in joining the National Defence Forces (NDF). It was mainly young people and students – ready to "savour" the magic of Active Reserves (AR) training – that reported to SVK Army drill instructors for basic military training during their initial form-up on Reception Day (R-Day). As part of this intake, even a few journalists will be put through their paces. As of 14 Aug, the MOD received a total of 6,395 registration forms and 1,331 application forms for service in the NDF. The MOD's project, consisting of the Operational, Standby and Conscript Reserves, aims to increase Slovakia's defence capability and the reservists' physical and mental readiness. Those eligible for the NDF are candidates aged 18-55 (with exceptions granted to some aged 55-65) who must be SVK nationals, medically and mentally fit, reliable and of unimpeachable integrity, with permanent residence in Slovakia. NDF soldiers will acquire new skills covering the basics of marksmanship, tactical combat, map reading & navigation, first aid, fieldcraft, field engineering, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defence (CBRND), and some elements of branch-specific training.



■ Amid the summer blood shortage, the first intake of reservist soldiers to the National Defence Forces (NDF), including DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák, gave blood at the University Hospital in Bratislava's Ružinov. 12 privates from 1st Platoon rolled up their sleeves to donate the most precious fluid – free of charge.

■ DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič took part in the unveiling and consecration of a renewed cross in the Záhorie Military District. The ceremony with Field Mass was celebrated by Slovak Air Force Chaplain of 46 Wng Kuchyňa Maj Slavko Ganaj from the Vicariate of the SVK RC Bishopric of the Forces and Armed Corps.

■ Ten bee families have thrived across the MOD grounds in Bratislava. This year, they have produced 150kg of exceptional 'city' honey. While beekeepers were bottling honey last week, MOD SEGGEN Peter Krajčovič turned up to show his appreciation for their work on the City Bees project.

■ A joint exercise involving guards of honour from the Czech and Slovak Armed Forces was held in Zatec, Czechia. Both SVK and CZE Guards of Honour (GOH) have a long tradition of ceremonial duties at public events, but this time they met for a field training exercise (FTX), with a focus on combat tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP), marksmanship, communications, topography, battlefield casualty drills, and CBRN. The SVK GOH members were commanded by SSGT Peter Husty.

■ In response to a Military Aid to Civilian Authority (MACA) request, the Slovak Air Force deployed a UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter, using an understung Bombi Bucket, to fight a wildfire in the municipality of Likavka near Ružomberok on 13 Aug.

■ 103 CBRN Bn Rožňava hosted the IPT 12-1/A Decontamination Vehicle Operators Course under the leadership of Chief Instructor MSgt Róbert Pardus from 7 Trng Regt Martin. The aim was to instruct the trainees from across the ranks of the SVK Armed Forces in operating the decontamination vehicle and its equipment according to decontamination SOPs.

■ The Apostolic Administrator of the SVK RC Bishopric of the Forces and Armed Corps, Bishop František Rábek visited the SVK Military Academy (AOS) Officer Cadets undergoing basic military training (BMT) at 7 Trng Regt Martin. After Holy Mass in the Church of Virgin Mary of Seven Sorrows in Martin - North Parish, he met with 112 OCs and wished them every success in their studies. Pastoral and spiritual care to this intake of OCs is provided Staff Chaplain Capt. Jaroslav Leopold Jablonsky. The BMT training is also being attended by Roman Catholic Chaplain Martin Murajda, who is getting ready to join the SVK RC Bishopric of the Forces and Armed Corps.

■ MSgt Lubomír Patáky from the Internal Service and Control Branch, Internal Service Dept, Slovak Armed Forces, attended the 34th International Shooting Competition at Leopold Flg Air Base - General Pabisch Airport in Austria, where the contestants were tested on shooting the Glock P80 pistol and SIG 77 assault rifle at different distances. The Austrian Bundesheer's Aviation and Air Defence Training School (FIFIATS) and the Lower Austria NCO Organisation invited military shooters from Czechia, Germany, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, and the UK. For his 3rd place in shooting the SIG 77 assault rifle at 200m, MSgt Patáky won a cup and a shooting badge. In the secondary disciplines – air pistol, grenade throwing, and archery, he finished 9th overall.

■ Athletes of the Dukla Military Sports Centre did very well at the P-T-S Athletics Meeting in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia. Viktória Forster took 2nd place in the 100m race (11.28sec) and won the 100m hurdles (12.63sec), setting a new SVK record. Emma Zapletalová triumphed in the 400m hurdles (53.75sec), rewriting the existing SVK record. Daniela Ledecká added 3rd place in the 400m hurdles (55.53sec), and Gabriela Gajanová won the 800m race (1:58.53). In other disciplines, Matej Baluch took 4th place in the 400m hurdles (49.58sec), Veronika Kaňuchová placed 4th in the hammer throw (67.02m), and Tomáš Veszelka finished 7th in the triple jump (15.49m).

■ Dukla Slalom canoeists have successfully finished the ECA season in Čunovo. Ivana Chlebová confirmed her excellent form by winning both rounds of the women's K1 event final. Among the male slalom canoeists, Adam Gonšenička added 5th and 7th places.

■ SVK Athletics was represented at the prestigious Diamond League 2025 in Chorzów (POL) by three Dukla athletes. Emma Zapletalová proved to be the most successful athlete by finishing 2nd in the 400m hurdles in a new SVK record of 53.58sec. Viktória Forster finished 8th in the 100m hurdles semi-final, and Gabriela Gajanová took 11th place in the 800m race.

Commander JFCBS in Slovakia



(14 Aug) At the invitation of SVK CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko, the newly appointed Commander of Joint Force Command Brunssum (JFCBS), Gen Ingo Gerhartz (DEU F) made a visit to Slovakia on 12-13 Aug, to establish personal contacts with the SVK Ministry of Defence (MOD) and Defence Staff (DS) leadership and gain a deeper understanding of the Slovak national perspective on the Regional Plan Centre (RP-C) and the dynamics of regional security. While visiting the MOD in Bratislava, Gen Gerhartz also met with DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák.

New SVK Air Chief appointed
(11 Aug) 2 SVK AF BDE Zvolen hosted a Change of Command ceremony for the new SVK Air Chief and Deputy Air Chief, in the presence of CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko, Director of the SVK Military Aviation Authority Office Nofal Kattan, commanders of the Armed Forces and the Units subordinate to the Defence Staff (DS), ex-service SVK AF commanders, and almost 200 airmen of SVK AF HQ Zvolen and SVK AF units. DS Col Adolf Daubner and DS Col Peter Výrostek assumed the appointments of Commander of the Slovak Air Force and Deputy Commander of the Slovak Air Force, respectively.



Sahara Rally 2025 at VTSÚ Záhorie
(16 Aug) Sahara Rally 2025 – a gathering of owners of historical military vehicles and re-enactors from historical re-enactment clubs from Slovakia, Czechia, and the surrounding countries – took place at the Military Technical Testing Institute (VTSÚ) Záhorie over the weekend. The re-enactments covered a span of historical eras from WW2 to Afghanistan. Among the highlights this year were: an aircraft-supported re-enactment of the 1943 battles in Northern Africa, a re-enactment of the 1945 liberation of Lanžhot in Czechia, and demonstrations of the Czechoslovak People's Army (ČSLA)'s military equipment. Sahara Rally 2025 – held under the auspices of DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák – was co-organised by the SVK Army Historical Activities Association and the MOD.



Army and Air Force personnel help out in military museums
(11 Aug) In the first half of 2025, it was possible to build on the long-term successful collaboration between the Institute of Military History (VHU) and the Slovak Armed Forces on the preservation of the Museum of Military History (VHM) collection items. Technical assistance from SVK Armed Forces personnel volunteering at VHM Piešťany came in the form of professional care and treatment of exhibits in preparation for their installation in the Museum's new Exhibition Hall 4 (H4). Logisticians of 53 Fld Svc Bn Hlohovec contributed by lending a hand in the Museum's depositories by assembling metal storage shelves and treating small-size exhibition items. Airmen of 81 Wng Sliac were hard at work to change the tyres on MiG-29s, as well as maintaining the nose-wheel legs of aircraft on display. Airmen and air defenders of 2 SVK AF Bde, 81 Wng Sliac, and 11 SVK AF Bde Nitra teamed up with logisticians of 53 Fld Svc Bn Hlohovec and engineers of Rpr Bn Martin to help out with movements, renovations and assembly of objects. At VHM Piešťany, SVK military personnel also got the grounds ready



for the nationwide Victory in Europe (VE) Day 80 celebrations earlier this May. And since March, they have been involved in grass mowing, weeding, and cutting down woody invasive species within the local airfield and around the Museum's depositories. Elsewhere at the VHM Museum's Svidník Branch, soldiers of 14 Tnk Bn Trebišov, 65 Recce Bn Prešov, 22 Recce Regt Prešov, 67 Com Spt Coy Prešov, 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce, 20 Log Bn Prešov, 103 CBRN Bn Rožňava, 54 MLRS Bn Rožňava, 2 SVK AF Bde Zvolen, and 51 Wng Prešov formed work parties and joined the Museum staff to work on the restoration of exhibits on eight different occasions, from mid-May to the end of June.

With the extremely beneficial assistance of logisticians from 20 Log Bn Prešov, WW2 field artillery guns on open air display at Nižný Komárnik were moved to allow for the repair of their damaged stone plinths. In addition, they did a lot of gardening, maintenance, and auxiliary work associated with regular care and area revitalisation. All work was completed to the highest possible standards.