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Today Yesterday Oct 6th Oct 3rd Oct 2nd

2pm: Matej admits borrowing money for SDKU debt guarantee
 2pm: [PIANO] Šefčovič may not oversee transport
 2pm: Most soldiers returned from Afghanistan
 2pm: Slovakia considers aid to fight against ISIS
 2pm: Court approved restructuring process in Váhostav
 10am: IPI: Karolyi case shows the need to reform laws
 10am: Polish tourist dies after a fall in the High Tatras
 10am: Third block of Mochovce power plant to be launched in 3Q16
 10am: Hungarian Foreign Minister visits
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Slovakia's part in Rosetta project

"WE ARE on the comet," exclaimed scientists and engineers in European Space Operations Centre located in German town Darmstadt, which serves as the main mission control centre for the European Space Agency (ESA), when the Rosetta spacecraft parked near Comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko in early August. It had been travelling to the comet for 10 years, five months and four days.

The project of the whole mission, which cost more than €1 billion, was also attended by Slovaks. Experts from the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAV) helped construct an Electrical Support System (ESS) that secures communication between the orbiter and the lander, and also the separation of the lander from the orbiter. When being connected, the communication is secured via a special cable. After they are separated, they will communicate with a radio system which will work similarly to the internet, Ján Baláž from the Institute of the Experimental Physics of the SAV told the Pravda daily in January.

The system, made in cooperation with Irish STIL company, is considered one of the critical systems of the spacecraft.

"Therefore it was made from the best quality components under strict technological conditions and is double-backed," Baláž said, as quoted by Pravda.

When describing how they started cooperation on the Rosetta project, Baláž said that Slovakia participated as a subcontractor in 2000 and 2001, i.e. at the time the country was not officially cooperating with ESA. Since they had worked on several projects with STIL, they were also asked to attend the Rosetta project.

"For us, it was an honour to contribute to such a prestigious ESA mission," Baláž told Pravda. "A transfer of technological experience and know-how to our workplace based on ESA standards was also valuable."

The spacecraft is now expected to closely survey the comet. It should create a map and scientists and engineers will then choose a place where the Philae lander will land in November to make further analysis. The Experimental Physics branch of SAV workplace will not, however, contribute to these analyses since it only contributed to the project's technological part, Baláž explained.

This article is published as part of Spectator College, a programme created by **The Slovak Spectator** with the support of **Petit Academy Foundation** and **Orange Foundation**

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