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הרכבת

A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East
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With the hills in the background a loco makes a trial run along the newly-completed 'Valley Line' - seen here in mid-July at the island platform at Yokne'am-Kfar Yehoshua station. (Photo:Israel Roads, courtesy Sybil Ehrlich)

Views of the new stations on the Valley line courtesy of Aharon Gazit



Afula



Kfar-Barukh

EDITORIAL.

Barely had the last issue been sent to Steve Waldenberg for layout and printing when news came of a tender for the restoration of two more vehicles at the Israel Railway Museum – followed by news of closer cooperation between Chen Melling there and Steve Davies, formerly of the National Railway Museum at York and now running a Heritage Railway Consultancy. Since we normally try to list items according to chronology as well as theme this item appears first.

In mid-June trial running began on the revised and transformed (and now standard-gauged) Emek Jezreel line to Beit Shean and by the time this issue is published the line had just opened for public service! (There were trial runs on 28th. August). Work continues apace on the lines to Jerusalem and Carmiel, and now there are plans to reach really up north to Kiryat Shemona and to Tiberias – it looks as though, in a few years, there truly will be railway lines from close to the Lebanese border to the Gulf of Eilat. May we all live to see the day....

It has been again a turbulent Quarter elsewhere in the region – the political situation in Turkey turned on its head within a week in mid-July and whether any intelligent and trained engineers will want to stay there, or whether Western firms will continue to trade to the same extent as before, remains to be seen. Yesterday's enemy becomes today's friend and vice-versa. History tends to repeat itself with distressing regularity with the principle of a so-called 'One Man – One Vote' democracy whereby the self-appointed Supreme Leader says "I am that Man and I have that Vote!" 'Harakevet' tries on the whole to stay out of politics, we prefer to take a longer-term view where possible, but sometimes sudden changes simply need to be noted. In this respect it is amazing to note the sudden uproar in Israel regarding infrastructure works on the Sabbath – as we go to press the scandal or conflict is bubbling and one is certain there will be more to report by next issue!

This issue has a lengthy report on the travels of two correspondents in Lebanon, Dubai and Abu Dhabi – an up-to-date eye-witness report on the situation of railways in these countries is a rare and valuable event and a valuable contribution – and also details of a proposed railtour of Jordan which, by the time this issue is published, may or may not be confirmed – we can only hope. So the section on 'Other Middle East Railways' is unusually long. And even so, much must be held over for a future issue!

The Editor.

114:03

Permanent-Way Works on the Nahariya -Haifa line at Akko in July 2016. (Picture by Mr. Shahar Wiesman from Israel Railways press office)



NEWS FROM THE LINE.

(i). MUSEUM NEWS: Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 11606 for restoring two historical passenger cars at the National Railway Museum at Haifa East.

Background:

At least in Israel, such a tender does not occur every day; in fact, for many years such tenders were not published; it is encouraging that the initiative of the railway museum manager Mr. Chen Melling will at last bring fruits. The vehicles referred to are:

(i) A wooden body 3-axle passenger carriage built about 120 years ago in the UK as a third-class car for the Egyptian State Railways (E.S.R.); during WWI - around 1915 - it was converted by the British Army into an ambulance car.

The car was then used from 1949 – the start of service by Israel Railways - for passenger services but only for a short while; then it was used by the Permanent Way department as part of a breakdown train; it was withdrawn in the mid-1970's and was preserved in the museum from its opening in 1983. It carries the Egyptian original number 4720 as well as the letters E.S.R. and P.R.- Palestine Railways - to whom it later belonged.

The subject of ambulance trains in WWI is missing in the national history and therefore this car has been selected for restoration which will include all the additional parts installed through the years, as well as complete rebuilding and adding media equipment which will tell the story.

(ii) A wooden-bodied bogie passenger carriage built around 1893/4 in the UK as a passenger coach; it was brought to Palestine during WWI by the British Army after being converted into an ambulance car - like No. 4720.

The car was converted again during the 1920's; this time as a third-class passenger coach as it was used also by Israel Railways - retaining the P.R. Number 314 - until about 1954, when it was sold to the IDF - Israeli Defense Forces - and was moved to the Navy base at Haifa where it was used as a canteen; it was exposed to the salty weather, as a result of which part of the roof and ceiling have collapsed.

The intention is to complete rebuilding the car into its configuration as a British Mandate third-class passenger car. The tender contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 24 months.

Latest date for submission of proposals: 28.07.2016. (Aharon writes: "I have special feelings for this coach as I remember travelling on it with my father in the summer of 1952 between Haifa Central and Kiryat-Motzkin.")

(ii). EXTENSION OF CARMIEL LINE TO KIRYAT SHEMONA APPROVED.

From a press release of 19.07.2016 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry: "Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz approved yesterday - 18.07.2016 - the line from Carmiel (Lower Galilee) to Kiryat-Shmona (Upper Galilee) near the Lebanese border. He also approved an additional station to be called Meron after a holy place where hundreds of thousands of ultra-Orthodox Jews celebrate every year on a certain date in May – the 'Lag BaOmer' festival.

Last May over 7,000 buses brought the celebrants here and still there were severe bottlenecks; Mr. Katz, together with professionals of the Ministry and Israel Roads who will manage building the line, consider that such a station will relieve pressure.

He has also instructed his staff to introduce special cheaper railway tickets for this category of passengers.

The new line will continue the Acre - Carmiel line, to be opened in July 2017; the Meron station will be built near the road junction Sheva. It will then continue in an 11km tunnel under the city of Tzefat between the Arab village of Rama and the Amud creek, then a 400m bridge will lead to another tunnel of 11km under another part of city of Tzefat between the Amud creek and the village of Rosh-Pina where a station will be built under the name of Rosh-Pina-Hazor of the Galilee (referring to a small town of this name nearby); it will then reach the station of Kiryat-Shmona, which will be built at the outskirts of the city.

Construction of the \$1.92 Billion (NIS 7.4 Billion) electrified line is to last between 4 and 5 years and speeds will be up to 160km/h. Kiryat-Shmona will be reached from Carmiel in 26 minutes, while Tel-Aviv will be reached from Kiryat-Shmona in 120 minutes."

(iii). NEW LINE PLANNED AFULE – TIBERIAS:

From a press release of 21.07.2016 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry:

"Israel's energetic Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz does not stop; immediately after the press release of 19.07.2016 regarding the line between Carmiel and Kiryat-Shmona he announced on 21.07.2016 his decision to build a new railway line between Afula - on the Valley Line to be opened in October 2016 - and Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee (called 'The Kinneret' in Hebrew), on which fast passenger trains will operate (in addition to freight) and bring people to Tel-Aviv within 60 minutes; this is competitive even with air!

Minister Katz has instructed Israel Ways - the managing company for infrastructures - to promote planning of the new line as an integral part of linking the Galilee and the north of Israel with the national rail network; he is now pressing for double-track-

ing the Valley Line, since the new line will be built as double-track; it will be 30 km long and will include several tunnels and bridges totalling several kilometres.

Mr. Katz has instructed his head of staff in the Galilee Mr. Zion Finian to follow up and promote the project; Mr. Finian said that the new line will be a real revolution for the Galilee which will give the city of Tiberias a central role and will encourage the economy and employment in the area.

According to the plan, the new line will start from Afula railway station and then run directly to Poriya hospital on the outskirts of Tiberias.

In the other direction towards the centre of Israel the line will be linked to the Menashe line (alongside road No. 65), then to the long-awaited Eastern Line - 60 km between Lod and Hadera-East (part of the historical Haifa - Cairo line), and finally into two branches: a link to the Hasharon line (Kfar-Sava - Coast line in the median of Highway No.531, both partially under construction) directly to Tel-Aviv; the other link will be near Lod to Ben-Gurion Airport.

The plan includes also a freight terminal near Tiberias to enable freight haulage to the ports and to the airport, will push the building of new factories in the Galilee, and will improve population distribution thus putting an end to the term "Periphery", which in Israel sounds negative.

It should be mentioned that construction of the two lines will be a real challenge even greater than the A1 as the line passes through much steeper and environmentally-sensitive terrains."

(iv). CAR SHARING AT BINYAMINA.

From a press release of 30.05.2016 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Starting on 01.06.2016 the railways will provide a special dedicated area within the parking area of Binyamina station for Car-Sharing, for private cars with a driver plus at least 2 additional passengers; a stewardess will arrange the parking according to the time of the cars' arrival.

As a pilot project, there will be parking space for only 20 cars for railway passengers between 06:30 and 10:30.

The reason for selecting Binyamina for the pilot project is that the 95-year old station is used daily by about 5,500 people from the surrounding area, arriving by car, mostly with the driver only; the parking area, although already enlarged, cannot cope with the daily rising demand; car-sharing may reduce the number of cars, bringing some relief.

The project is a result of a partnership between the railways, the area initiative for partnership, the forum "Transportation Today and Tomorrow", and the "Moovit" Company.

The car sharing is being carried out by Moovit Carpool service enabling the customers to co-ordinate between them; the drivers register at the Moovit Binyamina

site in order to offer the deal; additional people wishing to join the service have also to register and a Moovit application will inform them when the right car is available; at the moment the service is available for Android users only.

If the pilot scheme proves successful the dedicated parking areas will be increased and this sort of service will be introduced at other stations too.

The railways management said: "One of the challenges faced by the company in the age of ever-growing demand for rail services is to find a solution for complementing transportation services to/from the railway stations; the innovative initiative for encouraging Car-Sharing is a revolution in terms of the concept of arriving at and leaving the stations, in addition to synchronizing schedules between trains and buses headed by the Transport Ministry".

Mrs. Naomi Apple, manager of the area initiative for partnership, and Mrs. Tamar Keinan, manager of the forum "Transportation Today and Tomorrow", both welcomed the step by Israel Railways Ltd., mentioning that "It is a breakthrough regarding parking management in Israel; car sharing has existed for years in Europe and North America and it is time it was used in Israel too".

(v). TRAFFIC STATISTICS – FURTHER RECORDS BROKEN:

From a press release of 05.06.2016 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways are improving their customer services and keep breaking former records:

Passenger services:

During May 2016 about 5.58 Million passengers were carried, 27% higher than in May 2015 (4.38 Million) and 39% higher than in May 2014 (4 Million); the previous monthly record was achieved in March 2016 with 5.4 Million.

In May 2016 another record was achieved; 260,000 passengers/day; the daily average on May was 230,000; itself a rise of 13% on the May 2015 daily traffic.

Between 01.01.2016 and 31.05.2016 24.9 Million passengers were carried; 17% higher than the figure of 21.3 Million in the same period in 2015.

Freight traffic:

Here the railways also achieved a daily record of 39,200 tons on 18.05.2016 (equal to 2,000 trucks); the daily average is 30,000 tons."

(vi). THE NEW LINE TO JERUSALEM: SEVERAL REPORTS – AND THE SABBATH FURORE.

(a). "Rivlin says fast train to capital on track." Typical sub-editorial cliché-ridden journalese – such persons are not classed as 'sub' editors for nothing! - from the 'Times of Israel' 5.6.2016, by Melanie Lidman:

"Days before Jerusalem Day, President Reuven Rivlin toured a section of tracks for the highly anticipated Jerusalem – Tel Aviv high-speed train, which is scheduled to open in late 2018.

The Fast Lane [sic] project, which costs an estimated NIS 7 Billion (\$1. Billion) and has been in planning since 2001, is expected to cut travel time between Tel Aviv and the capital to 30 minutes down from 78 minutes on the old line built during the days of the Ottoman Empire. The fast trains will reach speeds of up to 160kph (100mph). When fully operational, they will depart every 15 minutes in each direction, carrying up to 1,000 passengers.

"This just goes to show that all roads lead to Jerusalem," Rivlin said Wednesday during a site visit atop of a 97-metre (318 feet) high bridge over the Yitlah Stream west of Jerusalem, the highest bridge in Israel. [sic. - actually bridge 10 is over Emek haArazim]. "As we mark another year of the uniting of Jerusalem, we are seeing now that Jerusalem is open to the whole country, and the whole country is open to Jerusalem."

The massive public works project, however, has faced a few hurdles since the planning started 15 years ago. Originally slated to be finished in 2008, environmental activists stalled the plans after raising a number of concerns about potential damage to the protected hills and valleys surrounding the capital. Environmental groups tried to force the planners to build a tunnel under the Yitlah Stream instead of passing over it with a bridge. The Interior Ministry's Planning Commission decided that the tunnel would hold up the project for at least two years, and ruled in favour of Israel Railways.

The high-speed rail line also crosses the Green Line twice, once near Latrun and once near Mevasseret Zion, inviting criticism from the Israeli left and pro-Palestinian groups. A German company advising the project withdrew in the face of pressure from activists.

In September 2015 Economy Minister Aryeh Deri, the head of the Ultra-Orthodox Shas party, decided not to allow construction on the Shabbat, further delaying plans by two years. In January 2016 part of an emergency exit tunnel collapsed, fuelling a legal fight between Israel Railways and the various contractors responsible for different aspects of the construction.

Despite the delays, Fast Lane to Jerusalem director Dror Sofro said he is confident that the train will begin operations for passengers in the last quarter of 2018. Rivlin toured the empty tunnels on June 1 to get a grasp of the sheer size of what he called "a very serious undertaking for the State of Israel." The longest tunnel in the Fast Lane project is 11.6km (7.2 miles) long, making it the longest tunnel in Israel. A massive German tunnel boring machine

drilled each of the tunnels, specially customized to drill in one motion at the size of the tunnel. The machine uses 24 motors to drill directly into the hard Jerusalem stone, advancing at a rate of 16 to 20 metres (50 to 65 feet) per day.

In Mevasseret Zion the train tracks will be 200 metres (650 feet) below ground, as the suburb is perched on hilltops higher than the capital. In Jerusalem the train station being built near the Central Bus Station is 80 metres (260 feet) below ground and doubles as a public bomb shelter."

(b). And - from 'Y-Net' News. By Ofer Petersburg, Published 09.07.16.

"The construction seems endless, but only a year and a half allegedly remain until the 28-minute high-speed train between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem is to open; Ofer Petersburg travelled the section of it leading to the capital, containing Israel's longest bridge, its highest, a nature reserve, and the Mideast's largest tunnel.

For years, we've heard talk of the fast train between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Innumerable data, schedules, company names, problems, disagreements - but as of late, this grandiose project has been transforming into something real. You can already sense its impending grandeur: passing on bridges over beautiful abysses, travelling several minutes in a dim tunnel, and emerging from the earth to discover Jerusalem before you.

This is all without mentioning the impressive engineering and technological operations, from quarrying machines digging deep tunnels into mountains that look like giant caterpillars nibbling on rock to the construction of a massive subterranean nuclear fallout shelter at the Jerusalem station, the International Convention Centre (ICC, also known as Binyenei Ha'uma). If everything runs according to schedule, a year and a half from now, a train at 160 km an hour will depart four times an hour and carry us between the capital and the nonstop city in just two minutes shy of a half-hour. This large and impressive project includes 57 km of tracks, and its cost is estimated as some 7 billion shekels. It includes five tunnels and ten bridges, about 700 engineers, and hundreds of other professionals working three shifts around the clock.

According to Boaz Tzafir, the CEO of Israel Railways, the majority of the work has been completed and all that remains now are some completing measures: laying tracks, signalling systems, etc. Minister of Transport Yisrael Katz intends to inaugurate the project at the beginning of 2018 along with the upgraded highway to Jerusalem, currently being constructed in full swing.

We were taken on a tour of the section between the Sha'ar Hagai section and Jerusalem, the construction of which is

currently being completed. Thirty-one kilometres that include some of the most beautiful views of our country, the longest tunnel in the Mideast, the longest bridge in Israel, and the highest bridge in Israel. Even the most cynical will be impressed.

The first tunnel on the route from Tel Aviv to the capital is about 3.6 km long and passes from Latrun to Sha'ar Hagai. In actuality, it's two adjacent tunnels, with a separate one for each direction of travel.

They were dug, for the first time in the country, by a Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM): a huge rotating cylinder that digs a circular path while installing concrete sides. The TBM is about 150m long with a 10-metre diameter, and it weighs 1,500 tons. It digs 22 metres a day.

This first tunnel is connected to Tunnel 2 by a bridge of a mere 35 metres. Tunnel 2 continues from Sha'ar Hagai to the Yitla River Valley, a distance of 1.2 km.

Bridge 6: Israel's longest. There's not much to elaborate about the view.... What you don't see is that it's Israel's longest bridge—1,250 metres—passing over the Ayalon River to Latrun. The bridge, which somewhat resembles a Roman aqueduct, is in fact a double bridge: That is, there are two sets of parallel tracks running in opposite directions. The tracks have already been laid on a section.

ICC Station: Emergency fallout shelter

Upon reaching the terminus in Jerusalem, between the ICC and the Central Bus Station, one suddenly has the impression of being abroad. The train stations sprawls over 72,000 square meters, and the platforms are at a depth of 80m, which makes it one of the five deepest train stations in the world. The escalators leading up are already present, and there are three elevators, each with a capacity of 33 persons. Four 320-metre platforms have already been constructed.

The security system is designed according to the most stringent international standards for crowds of 4,000 simultaneous passengers. The station is also intended to be used in case of emergency as a civilian nuclear shelter for 2,000 persons. Its steel doors have already been installed. Alongside the station, a 1,200-space subterranean parking facility will be built.

Bridge 10: Israel's highest. Another peak for the country: The highest bridge in Israel—95 metres—passes above Emek Ha'arazim. It was an engineering challenge, and its accomplishment is impressive, as is the view: Overlooking the valley, on the bridge one can already see Jerusalem in the distance. Today, you can cross it on foot, which is what we did, but from the end of the year tracks will already be laid on it.

From the tracks, the route enters Tunnel 4, which is 2.6 km long. It begins under Highway 1 west of the Sakharov Gardens, and it splits at the end into two tunnels

leading to the Jerusalem terminus's two halls.

Bridge 8: Nature-friendly

This beautiful site, where the tracks pass over the Yitla River, is the reason for the many delays in the route's construction. It's a nature reserve that conservation groups lobbied to protect as much as possible. To do so, the bridge was constructed using a balanced-foundry method which allows it to stand on one sole post. This has already won it international awards.

Passengers, too, will be rewarded, but with the wonderful scenery. The bridge is 160m long and its height is 28m. It, too, is double. A helipad will be built nearby for emergencies.

Tunnel 3: 12 km into the earth

The most impressive feat of engineering completed in Israel: 11.6 continuous kilometres of tunnel (which, again, is composed of two adjacent tunnels) at a depth of 300 metres: the longest and deepest tunnel in the Middle East. We drove through it in a car in about fifteen minutes. The train will traverse it in four.

The travellers from Tel Aviv will enter it by the Yitla River and exit it by the Halilim River, east of Mevaseret Zion. The adjacent tunnels were dug by two TBMs.

Recently, after one of the service passes between the adjacent tunnels collapsed, a Dutch team of experts examined the 46 service passes and found that 33 of them had a risk of water leakage and cracks. Israel Railways has already repaired 23 of them at a cost of about 12 million shekels. The subject of responsibility for damages is currently being legally clarified between the state and the Shapir company."

(c). And also in 'Times of Israel': 20.08.2016:

"Following many delays and budget breaches, transportation officials in Israel said they are on track for launching a fast train connection between Tel Aviv in Jerusalem early in 2018.

The fast connection project, which was launched more than 10 years ago and has cost more than double its initial budget of \$800 Million, will be finished by March 2018, enabling millions of passengers annually to travel between Israel's largest cities via its main airport in under 30 minutes, according to an interview published by Ynet on Friday with Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz.

"The commitment is to deliver by March 2018," said Katz.

Transportation by train between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem currently takes more than 90 minutes, even though the cities are only 33 miles apart. Taking public transportation to the centre of Jerusalem from the capital's current train station in Malha on the southwestern edge can take another 45 minutes.

Once operational, the fast train service

is expected to save the economy millions in lost productivity and make Jerusalem a more attractive place for the high-tech industry, among other sectors, currently centered around Tel Aviv. The connection will also stop at Ben Gurion Airport.

Tunnel excavation has complicated the project and delayed its deadline by approximately seven years. It is also the reason its budget ballooned to \$1.8 Billion. The latest delay occurred earlier this year when cracks were discovered in one of the tunnels, requiring urgent repairs and a review of other subterranean passages.

A view of the tunnels and bridges under construction along the route of the express train between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, on Feb. 6, 2014. (Yossi Zamir/Flash90)

Katz said this was the last delay because all of the tunnels have been excavated and fortified with concrete. The last bridge of the project is on course to be completed next month, making further complications unlikely, according to Ynet.

Among the tunnels dug are two of Israel's longest, each measuring 7 miles. The route also features Israel's tallest bridge, at 311 feet, just outside the Israeli capital. The new connection's Jerusalem terminus will be the centrally located International Convention Center Jerusalem, opposite the city's main bus terminal.

(d). But then from the same source 26.08.2016 came Trouble:

"Overriding religious parties, PM orders Shabbat work on train line

Netanyahu says construction on Sabbath is tantamount to saving lives; Tel Aviv-Jerusalem high speed rail project also sees closure of parts of Ayalon highway.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Friday that construction work on a train station in Tel Aviv will go ahead on Shabbat, despite objections from the religious parties in the coalition. Work on the Shalom station is part of construction on the Jerusalem - Tel Aviv high-speed train line.

A statement from the Prime Minister's Office said that postponing the work was tantamount to endangering life, therefore it could go ahead on Shabbat. The work on the station also means the closure of sections of the Ayalon highway, the central ring road around the city. Construction work was due to begin at 4 p.m. Friday, Channel 10 reported. The PMO also announced the establishment of a committee to "strengthen the coordination between the Transportation Ministry and the religious factions."

The committee will be headed by Netanyahu's chief of staff, and will include the director general of the Transportation Ministry, the police commissioner and ministers from the religious faction or their

representatives.

Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman's Yisrael Beytenu party urged the prime minister to go ahead with the planned construction, despite the demands of the religious parties, Channel 10 said Friday.

"Irrelevant considerations must not interfere with professional considerations, and cause the endangerment of human life on the roads and disruption to the daily lives of hundreds of thousands of Israelis," the party said in a statement.

Economy Minister Aryeh Deri of the Sephardi ultra-Orthodox Shas party ordered a halt to all Shabbat construction on the line last year, in a move that Israel Railways warned would delay the project by two years.

Construction on the express railway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem was originally set to be completed by late 2017 or early 2018.

Army Radio said at the time that Deri's decision was the result of a dispute between the Economy Ministry and the Transportation Ministry, headed by Yisrael Katz of Likud. The Economy Ministry maintained the railway had to obtain special labour permits from the Transportation Ministry to work on Shabbat. The Transportation Ministry, meanwhile, said that the permits fall under the sole jurisdiction of the Economy Ministry.

The Economy Ministry defended the decision, telling the Ynet news website that Israel Railways was bound by law to seek special Shabbat permits and had not done so. The railway authority said the move would effectively set back the NIS 6 Billion (\$1.5 Billion) project — which began in 2001 — until 2020."

(e). However, the excrement then really hit the air conditioning:

"Potential coalition crisis was brewing on Sunday as ultra-Orthodox parties voiced outrage over construction work on a train station in Tel Aviv that took place on Shabbat.

As rumours swirled that the heads of the religious parties could demand Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz be fired over the scuffle, the minister himself brushed off any accusations of improper conduct on his part. In an interview with Army Radio, Katz stressed his respect for religious values and Israel's Jewish character, but said the work was done in line with the letter of the law, and was not a breach of the status quo. Police and construction professionals had ruled "unequivocally," he said, that conducting the work on a weekday would have created massive congestion throughout Tel Aviv, obstructing the work of emergency services and very possibly endangering public safety.

"These were essential works, which there was no other way to handle, and they are for a very worthy cause," he insisted.

The crux of the conflict appeared to be Haredi leaders' sense that they had been "cheated" by Katz, after he and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu indicated to them that the work at the Shalom station - part of construction on the Jerusalem - Tel Aviv high-speed train line, which demanded closing off large sections of the central Ayalon Highway for much of the weekend - could not be carried out on weekdays for fear of endangering human lives. But the party leaders said they felt betrayed after discovering on Saturday night that the Transportation Ministry had turned the project into "an extensive and unnecessary media festival that included a press conference [by the minister] and a press statement, which only intensified the desecration of Shabbat," according to a joint statement.

In the statement, Shas leader Aryeh Deri, United Torah Judaism leader Yaakov Litzman and UTJ MK Moshe Gafni said they "strongly protest the unnecessary desecration of the Shabbat." A UTJ source said, "When Shabbat ended, we saw pictures taken during the day and we heard Katz saying that he didn't succumb to religious pressure [not to have work done on Shabbat]. That doesn't look like the preservation of human life."

Jewish law, which figures in some decisions of the Israeli government, permits the violation of the laws banning work on Shabbat in order to avert danger to human life.

The party heads have demanded an urgent meeting with Netanyahu. According to sources ultra-Orthodox political sources quoted by the Israeli daily Haaretz, the three are likely to demand Katz's ouster. Katz himself said he was not worried about his job, asserting that his conduct had been guided by the recommendations of safety professionals, whose assessments had also convinced Netanyahu that the work on Shabbat was necessary.

As for the press conference, Katz said he was not seeking to create an altercation, but simply to oversee the successful completion of the task in his capacity as minister.

Gafni told Haaretz Saturday that the work "could have been done on a regular day, not on Shabbat. It looks like lying is part of Katz's profession." At the construction site earlier Saturday evening, Katz told reporters that the work was "necessary and warranted" and that he refused to cancel it "despite the [religious] pressures."

Shas and UTJ held marathon talks on the issue overnight Thursday with Katz, and denied Friday reports that they had threatened a coalition crisis. The Prime Minister's Office announced last week the establishment of a committee to "boost coordination between the Transportation Ministry and the religious factions." The committee will be headed by Netanyahu's

chief of staff, and will include the director general of the Transportation Ministry, the police commissioner, and ministers from the religious factions or their representatives. (On 03.09 Netanyahu issued a Stop Order on work, AFTER the tracks had been lifted, which meant of course that no work could be done to relay them until after Shabbat....)

(f). We now give several (of many) reports which to some extent duplicate and to some extent contradict each other - this is virtually 'Stop Press' on the day this issue needs to be sent for printing and clearly there will be further developments as the smoke clears.

From 'Times of Israel' 04.09.2016: "The head of the left-wing Meretz party Zehava Galon petitioned the High Court over Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decision to halt infrastructure work on several of Israel's railway stations on Shabbat. "The court must put an end to the prime minister's unbridled frenzy on the backs of thousands of passengers," Galon said Saturday.

Netanyahu instructed Israel Railways on Friday to halt 17 out of 20 projects that had been scheduled to take place over the weekend, after ultra-Orthodox parties threatened to topple the coalition if work continued on the Sabbath. Work on the 17 projects would instead take place on Saturday night - after Shabbat has ended - and on Sunday, leading to the cancellation of services at several railway stations.

The cancelled lines will affect some 70,000 travellers, including thousands of soldiers on mandatory military service who go home for the weekends. Suspending the infrastructure projects has also resulted in a delay in completing the high-speed train line between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, which was set to be completed in 2018 but is already behind schedule.

Galon warned Friday that the decision to suspend the work on Shabbat could result in legal action. Taking part in a protest by left-wing MKs and activists opposed to the decision to halt the weekend work, Galon said: "If infrastructure work does not continue as planned, Meretz will file a class action suing for hundreds of millions of shekels."

The protest at the Savidor train station on Arlozorov Street, a public transportation hub in the heart of Tel Aviv, included Galon, Meretz faction leader Ilan Gilon, and party MKs Tamar Zandberg and Michal Rozin. Similar protests were also scheduled to take place at Arlozorov Street and at Haifa's Lev Hamifratz station on Saturday night, in an event titled "We demand trains 24/7." The event, organized by a group called Free Israel, is demanding an end to what it says is religious coercion in Israel.

Members of the opposition also said

Saturday that they have collected the 25 MKs' signatures needed to force a special Knesset committee session to discuss the decision to terminate services at several railway stations after Shabbat, in order to allow for construction work that should have taken place on Friday and Saturday, when trains do not run.

The three projects that were allowed to continue despite ultra-Orthodox objections were those whose delay would, according to the police, constitute a genuine risk to human life due to traffic complications. But the Ynet news website said the ultra-Orthodox parties rejected the police argument, and claimed that alternative solutions should be found.

According to Jewish law, the religious rules of conduct for Shabbat, such as the prohibition to work or to operate electrical machinery and engines, can be violated when a human life is at risk. Moshe Dagan, secretary-general of the Chief Rabbinate, however, said the weekend work is not something that would save human lives and as such would not be allowed."

(g). And of course there is Politics (with a capital 'P'):

"As his top aide accuses Katz of 'putsch' bid, Netanyahu says coalition crisis over Shabbat work was deliberate attempt to weaken his relationship with Haredi public as train row reignites internal Likud battle.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Saturday accused Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz of sparking a coalition crisis over work on Israel's railways on Shabbat, just weeks after the two fought over control of a key Likud party institution. Netanyahu claimed Katz created the row between Likud and leaders of ultra-Orthodox parties last week when he ordered the continuation of construction projects over the weekend, ostensibly in order to avoid train delays.

"This crisis was started by Katz unnecessarily to undermine the relationship between the prime minister and the ultra-Orthodox public, as well as damage his reputation within the general public," Netanyahu's office said in a statement.

The prime minister was "shocked at the cynical attack," his office said. Channel 2 said Saturday night that the prime minister was poised to fire Katz.

From the very beginning, there was no need to call for work to be done on the Sabbath. It was possible for the work to be done at other times, and not hurt the ultra-Orthodox public, or the soldiers," Netanyahu's office said, adding that Katz was "holding both passengers and soldiers hostage." Netanyahu instructed Israel Railways on Friday to halt 17 out of 20 projects that had been scheduled to take place over the weekend, after ultra-Orthodox parties threatened to topple the coalition if work

continued on the Sabbath. Work on the 17 projects would instead take place on Saturday night — after Shabbat has ended — and on Sunday, leading to the cancellation of services at several railway stations.”

After last weekend’s construction work triggered a coalition crisis, Netanyahu earlier this week pacified the ultra-Orthodox parties by promising to establish an inter-ministerial committee on infrastructure work on weekends. Netanyahu’s chief of staff, Yoav Horowitz, met at the Prime Minister’s Office with ministers Yaakov Litzman (United Torah Judaism), Aryeh Deri (Shas) and Jewish Home leader Naftali Bennett. Also present were the head of Israel Railways, the secretary general of the Chief Rabbinate and a representative from the Labour Ministry in charge of granting special weekend work permits.

The ultra-Orthodox ministers said at the meeting that keeping Shabbat is more important than providing public services. The CEO of Israel Railways, Boaz Tzafir, said that cancelling the lines and the projects would affect 72,000 commuters and delay the delivery of goods on freight cars worth NIS 4 Million.

Ahead of Friday’s protest, Galon demanded from Tzafir that the work continue according to the original plan, saying it is not in Netanyahu’s purview to cancel it.

“The prime minister and the chief of staff in his office do not have the authority to instruct to stop infrastructure work, and once the work permits were issued lawfully by the authorized agency, which is the Labour Ministry, the prime minister has no business meddling in this issue and it is not within his authority,” Galon told Tzafir, according to Channel 10.

But, said Moshe Dagan, secretary-general of the Chief Rabbinate, the weekend work is not something that would save human lives and as such would not be allowed. “As a representative of the chief rabbis, I would like to announce that our position is that the Shabbat projects for which the railways asked permission have not been approved and cannot be carried out over Shabbat as they do not involve a risk to human lives,” said Dagan.

Leaders of Zionist Union, MKs Isaac Herzog and Tzipi Livni, said their party will arrange private transportation for any soldiers adversely affected by the cancellation of the train lines. “The ministers of this government do not care about a mother who misses her son the soldier and at the service of political interest they steal the mother and son’s quality time together,” Herzog said. Livni added: “The state of the Jewish people is not a monopoly of the ultra-Orthodox parties.”

(h). Mud Slinging: The ‘Times’ (of London) reported on 05.09.16, in an item by Gregg Carlstrom in Tel Aviv: “The state-

owned rail company had scheduled a round of maintenance for Saturday when trains do not run and road traffic is light, but the ultra-Orthodox parties in the Israeli coalition, deeming it a desecration of the sabbath, demanded that it be called off. The prime minister complied hours before the repairs were scheduled to begin. The work was rescheduled for yesterday, the start of the Israeli working week. As a result there were no trains between Tel Aviv and Haifa until late last night, causing lengthy traffic jams as up to 100,000 commuters took to the road instead.

One man said it took 3 ½ hours to reach central Tel Aviv from Hadera, barely 30 miles to the north. Another spent four hours on a bus from Haifa, a journey normally covered by train in an hour.... The cancellations affected thousands of conscripted soldiers who were trying to return to base after spending the weekend at home. The defence ministry laid on dozens of shuttles to transport them and Egged, the national bus company, added extra services.

Jewish law forbids almost all forms of work on the sabbath, except in life-threatening emergencies. The Israeli state, however, has long made exceptions; the electric power company for example will fix power lines on Saturdays and the railways routinely perform small repairs. ‘We’ve been doing this for years,’ said Keren Turner, director-general of the transport ministry. The latest maintenance projects, however, are big ones and in the heart of Tel Aviv. That drew the attention of the ultra-Orthodox parties, which contribute 13 members of the 67-seat coalition. Mr. Netanyahu blamed the crisis on a rival, Yisrael Katz, a popular member of his Likud party who serves as transport minister. He has held the job since 2009, and has built a reputation for competence, advancing plans for new Mediterranean ports and overseeing the launch of the Jerusalem light railway system. Lately he has aimed higher, telling local media that he hopes to run for prime minister.

Mr. Netanyahu has accused Mr. Katz of organising a ‘putsch’ to change the government, and tensions were high at a weekly cabinet meeting on Sunday morning; the two men, who sit next to each other, did not exchange a word. ‘Katz is holding passengers and soldiers as hostages,’ Mr. Netanyahu said. ‘Ministers are appointed to prevent crises, not to manufacture them.’ Ultra-Orthodox MPs backed him, and at least one of them demanded Mr. Katz’s resignation. ‘The holy sabbath is paramount,’ said Yaakov Litzman, the health minister. ‘We cannot compromise.’ While they did prevent dozens of builders from working on Saturday, the transport ministry said that more than a hundred of its employees had been forced to work that day to arrange alternative transportation

for commuters.”

[Several ironies here of course; I recall Paul Cotterell z’l telling me years ago that trackworks in the Haifa area were routinely scheduled for Saturdays ‘but quietly’. And the fact that staff had to spend their Saturday arranging alternative buses is piquant. Alas, once more Judaism is cast into a poor light in the eyes of many (and not just secular) Israelis. Ed.]

(i). Here as an example is part of a public statement by the Israel Religious Action Center: “Israel’s railway system provides service to a quarter-of-a-million weekday commuters. Over 1,000 miles of train tracks connect our country. Plans to expand service—including a new high-speed line connecting Tel Aviv and Jerusalem—are a sign of progress and economic development.

But as Israelis learned last week, even trains are no match for ultra-Orthodox gamesmanship. Regular train service shuts down completely throughout the country from Friday night to Saturday night as a political accommodation to the Sabbath observances of Israel’s ultra-Orthodox politicians. Only maintenance, repairs and infrastructure work is allowed. There has been repair work every Saturday for the past decade to make sure that our trains run smoothly the rest of the week.

Even that seems to be too much now. Ultra-Orthodox members of the government demanded last week that all Saturday railway repairs be cancelled. The Prime Minister gave in and issued a stop order right before sundown on Friday, leaving no time for railway employees to reassemble the tracks that were being serviced.

By Sunday morning rush hour, the trains were still in their stations. Chaos ensued. Thousands of stranded workers and soldiers scrambled to find other ways to get to work or to their army bases. Highway traffic was backed up for hours. Commuters took to the streets to protest.

Ultra-Orthodox Knesset members claimed they simply wanted to help deepen Jewish connection to the Sabbath. Ironically, their actions only deepened resentment towards Judaism by Israel’s secular and non-Jewish citizens.

Make no mistake. This latest political ploy is part of a larger agenda by the ultra-Orthodox community to maintain control over Israel’s public sphere. Over the past several months, the government has been kowtowing to the ultra-Orthodox political parties, and their appetite is only continuing to grow...”

(j) To close with a more sober, factual report from Aharon Gazit which ends with a positive note: “A political crisis happened last week, when Prime Minister Netanyahu instructed the railways not to carry out infrastructure works dur-

ing Saturday (Shabbat) and delayed them to Saturday night, 03.09.2016 and Sunday, 04.09.2016, as a result of pressure from the Ultra-Orthodox parties which are partners in the coalition, claiming that the works are a violation of the status quo. As a result, there were no direct trains between Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem until 19:00 on Sunday 04.09.2016.

Trains from Nahariya on Saturday night 03.09.2016 start/terminate at Haifa Hof-Ha-Carmel.

Trains from Nahariya southwards on Sunday, 04.09.2016 start/terminate at Bin-yamina.

Trains from the south will start/terminate at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central.

Trains on the Hod-HaSharon - Rishon-LeZion Moshe Dayan- Ashdod – Ashkelon - Beer-Sheva line will operate regularly, as will trains between Herzliya and Jerusalem and between Tel-Aviv and Rishon-LeZion Rishonim.

Traffic is to resume today – 04.09.2016 - at 19:00.

As a result there was a lot of pressure was on bus lines. Both the Transport and Defence ministries have recruited 1,000 buses, particularly for soldiers to return to their bases. There were also many demonstrations against the chaos the delays caused.

But - At least this shows how important and vital rail services now are in Israel."

(vii). INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS AND EFFECTS ON TEL AVIV SUBURBAN LINES.

From a press release of 09.06.2016 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Within the next couple of years the railways will carry out extensive infrastructure works on the Tel-Aviv - Herzliya line, including the stations, in order to prepare them for the start of operating the A1 fast rail link to Jerusalem in 2018; amongst other matters, platforms are being extended, electrification infrastructure and track quadrupling works are to be installed including realignment of tracks eastwards, as well as the dismantling of 650m of existing track and re-assembling it and a new modern signalling system.

Due to these works the following changes to schedules will take place on the Hod-HaSharon - Tel-Aviv section:

Starting on Wednesday 22.06.2016 at 20:00 the line between Tel-Aviv University and B'nei-Brak stations will be closed for traffic. As a result, passenger trains between Tel-Aviv and Hod HaSharon in both directions will not operate, including the intermediate stations of B'nei-Brak, Petakh-Tikva, Rosh-Ha-Ayin North, and Kfar-Sava.

Trains from Beer-Sheva to Hod HaSharon through Ofakim, Netivot, Shderot, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Yavne West, Rishon-LeZion West (Moshe Dayan), Bat-Yam and

Holon will terminate at Tel-Aviv HaHagana station; passengers wishing to go to other Tel-Aviv stations and northwards will change trains at platform number 1; on Friday, 24.06.2016, trains will terminate at Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central station."

The railways will provide the following alternatives in order to minimize disruptions:

On Wednesday 22.06.2016 between 20:00 and 23:30 special shuttle bus services between Hod HaSharon and Tel-Aviv Savidor-Central stations but without calling at Tel-Aviv University station!

During peak hours at morning and afternoon/evening of Thursday 23.06.2016 special trains will operate between Hod HaSharon and B'nei-Brak stations but will not reach any of Tel-Aviv stations!

Traffic will resume on Sunday, 26.06.2016."

(viii). WHITE NIGHTS IN TEL-AVIV.

From an announcement of 26.06.2016 by Israel Railways Ltd. on their website:

"During the night of Thursday 30.06.2016 and Friday morning 01.07.2016 many events of the 'White Night in Tel-Aviv' event will be organized by the municipality. The railways will add trains as follows:

A train from Nahariya to Tel-Aviv HaHagana station to depart at 22:30 and call at all intermediate stations. The trains of 00:30 and 00:40 from Tel-Aviv HaHagana station to Nahariya will call at all intermediate stations. The train of 05:00 from Tel-Aviv HaHagana station to Hod HaSharon will call at all intermediate stations. The train of 05:00 from Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central to Beer-Sheva Central via Ashkelon will call at all intermediate stations. The trains of 02:13, 03:13 and 03:57 from Nahariya to Ben-Gurion airport will be extended to Modi'in Central and call at all Tel-Aviv stations and Modi'in Outskirts. The trains of 00:53, 01:53 and 02:53 from Ben-Gurion airport to Nahariya will call also at HaHagana and HaShalom stations."

(ix). PUBLIC TRANSPORT COORDINATION IN ASHKELON.

From a press release of 29.06.2016 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry:

"Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz announced today that the public transport revolution has reached the city of Ashkelon and surroundings.

From Friday 01.07.2016 the city's urban transport services will be increased by 40%; the winning bus operator Dan Darom (South), which succeeds Egged Ta'avura, will introduce daily 1,060 journeys compared with 765 so far.

Regarding rail, the government sees the Ashkelon railway station as a growing hub and therefore the three feeder bus lines (12, 13 and 14) to/from the station will enjoy increased service frequencies; they will operate until 21:45 compared to

19:00 so far; additionally lines 12 and 13 will operate the whole day (till 21:45) - they currently operated during rush hours only.

A new bus feeder line 15 between the station and remote quarters will operate between 05:15 and 08:40 and between 15:00 and 21.45 with bus schedules coordinated with those of trains.

Passengers will enjoy - for the first time - the multi-liner smart card valid for rail too. 80 modern low-floor 'Euro 6' buses will operate, equipped with all the information passengers need; electronic boards with on-line information have been installed at all bus stops.

Mr. Katz said: "Only an integrated and coordinated public transport system can convince people to use public transport instead of the private car, and therefore we're investing so heavily in public transport systems and services".

(x). TERRORISTS PLANNED AN ATTACK ON THE RAILWAYS.

From 'BICOM' News website, 05.07.2016: "Israeli prosecutors yesterday charged two Palestinian gunmen and an accomplice with the murder of four Israelis last month in the Tel Aviv terrorist attack, which prosecutors said was inspired by ISIS.

Cousins Mohammed and Khaled Makhamreh, both in their early twenties from Yatta near Hebron, opened fire at the Sarona Market complex, killing 41-year-old father of two Ido Ben Ari, 39-year-old mother of four Ilana Neve, Mila Mishayev, 32, and Dr Michael Feige, 58. Another Yatta resident, Yunis Ayash Musa Zayn, is said to have assisted in providing weapons and ammunition.

Although not affiliated with any specific terror group, the indictment said the accused had decided to "take revenge on Israel in the name of ISIS during the [Muslim] fast month of Ramadan". A separate Shin Bet statement said that they had been "inspired" by ISIS "without having been formally recruited or receiving any kind of assistance or instruction." One of the cousins had apparently studied in Jordan.

Having crossed a breach in the West Bank security barrier, the accused had originally planned to carry out an attack on Israel's train network, but had been put off by heavy security at Beer Sheva's train station. They took a taxi to Tel Aviv and then asked where they could find cafes and restaurants. They had bought suits, watches, shoes and briefcases to give the impression of businessmen."

[Ed. adds: Alas, this shows how important the security men are who stand at each station. At Kfar Saba-Hod HaSharon there is a plaque to Alexander Kostyuk who was killed in performance of his duties protecting passengers on 24.04.2003, the station therefore bearing also his name.] see next page.



(xi). WORKS NEAR LEV-HAMIFRATZ TO AKKO.

On 06.07.2016 Israel Railways Ltd. announced on their website that due to infrastructure improvement works including: laying new tracks at Kiryat-Motzkin station including noise reduction pads, 500m of new track at Acre (Akko) station, track upgrading at a level crossing north of Acre and infrastructure works at Haifa Lev-HaMifratz station to be carried out by Yefe-Nof (Haifa Public Transport Planning Company) which require temporary dismantling of tracks in favour of works being done rebuilding the nearby Lev-HaMifratz bus terminal, to take place between Saturday night 16.07.2016 and Friday 22.07.2016 (inclusive), the following changes will take place to passenger services between Haifa Central and Nahariya:

Between Saturday night 16.07.2016 and until Sunday night 17.07.2016 at 23.59 the section between Nahariya and Haifa Lev-HaMifratz will be closed for traffic.

Between Monday 18.07.2016 at 00:01 and Wednesday 16.07.2016 at 23.59 the whole Haifa Central and Nahariya section will be closed for traffic.

Between Thursday 21.07.2016 at 00:01 and Friday 22.07.2016 at 19:00 only the section between Nahariya and Haifa Lev-HaMifratz will be closed for traffic.

Consequently, the following changes in traffic will take place:

Between 16.07.2016 and 17.07.2016 and between 21.07.2016 and 22.07.2016, trains departing from Nahariya, Acre, and Kiryat-Motzkin will terminate at Haifa Lev-HaMifratz.

All trains from the south destined to Kiryat-Motzkin, Acre, and Nahariya, will terminate at Haifa Lev-HaMifratz, except the trains of Sunday, 17.07.2016 departing from Modi'in Central station at 22:18 and 23:18 respectively which will terminate at Haifa Central.

Between 18.07.2016 and 20.07.2016, trains departing from Nahariya, Acre, and

Kiryat-Motzkin, will terminate at Haifa Central.

All trains from the south destined to Haifa Lev-HaMifratz, Kiryat-Motzkin, Acre, and Nahariya, will terminate at Haifa Central, except the trains of Wednesday 20.07.2016 departing from Modi'in Central station at 22:18 and 23:18 respectively which will terminate at Haifa Lev-HaMifratz.

On all these dates there will be no suburban trains between Haifa Hof-HaCarmel and Acre stations. The Transport Ministry will provide replacement bus services. Traffic will resume on Saturday night 23.07.2016.

(xii). THE VALLEY LINE: TEST TRAINS.

On 10.07.2016 Sybil wrote: "There have been radio announcements about this for the last few days, and today a press release to say that trains will start test runs on July 17, until July 27!!! Between the hours of 8:00 and 18:00. Warning signs in Hebrew, Arabic and English have been put up, and during the test runs inspectors will prevent people, cars and animals crossing."

(xiii). THE VALLEY LINE: OPENING.

From a press release of 29.08.2016 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry:

"Today – 29.08.2016 - was an historic one; Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz inaugurated the Valley Line – a revival of the mythological Hedjaz Line - almost 65 years after the historical line closed.

On the inauguration train were also veteran people who had used the original trains when they were children at the elementary school "Gilboa" in the Beit-She'an valley, mayors and heads of municipalities from the surroundings, the Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Boaz Zafirir, and senior officers of the ministry, the railways, and of Israel Roads who was responsible on building the line.

The train which departed this morning from Haifa called at the new station of Migdal HaEmek-Kfar-Barukh, then arrived at Afula (the Valley's "capital city"), where 35 veterans of the same school class who had travelled on the original Hedjaz train joined the other invited guests.

Minister Katz gave to each of those honoured guests a certificate and a special multi-liner smart card issued for the event; the train then continued to the new last station on the line at the city of Beit-She'an.

The 60km single-track line currently has four stations: Beit-She'an, Afula, Migdal HaEmek-Kfar-Barukh, and Yokneam-Kfar-Yehoshua.

Two additional stations will be built at a later stage, one over Haifa-Lev-HaMifratz (over the line to Nahariyya) and the other at Neshet, just east of Haifa.

Since the line is to be used both for passenger and freight traffic, a freight terminal is being built near Beit-She'an to serve goods to/from Jordan to be hauled by rail only to/from Haifa.

The \$1.07 Billion (NIS 4Million) line has 26 bridges with a total length of 5.5km, 3 tunnels totalling 1km, culverts, viaducts, and grade separations.

A lot has been invested in preserving historical railway buildings along the old alignment, as well as taking care for the environment by, for instance, re-planting of more than 600 trees, some of which are several hundred years old.

Minister Katz has decided that during the testing period for the public, between 16.10.2016 and the start of regular services on 04.11.2016, passengers boarding at any of the line's stations will travel free for 3 months to everywhere in Israel by using their multi-liner smart card; from Yokneam-Kfar-Yehoshua free travel will be available only for people from the immediate neighbourhood.

After these three months a 50% fare reduction will be given to passengers boarding at any of the stations but buying a return ticket; people from the surrounding neighbourhoods boarding at Yokneam-Kfar-Yehoshua will enjoy the same reduction.

Upon the start of services the line will enjoy the services of 38 bus lines to/from all the stations.

The original Hedjaz line was opened in 1905 and until 1948 (the Israeli independence war) played a vital role both for the economy and for the British Army in Palestine.

After the foundation of Israel and the end of the Independence war and cease-fire agreements, there were attempts to revive the service between Haifa and Afula, but even free tickets could not convince the public and the line was finally closed in November 1951; now it is alive again!"

'Ha'aretz' reported on 29.08.16 (by Noa Shpigel): "Train makes inaugural trip on new line in northern Israel: The first test run of the resurrected Jezreel Valley train line took place on Monday, 65 years after the line was shut down.

Making the trip between the Kfar Baruch station and Beit She'an were Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz, area mayors, and veteran residents of the Jezreel Valley who boarded the train at Afula. Part of the line's modern version hews closely to the historic route, and in the future it's slated



Beit-She'an

More views of the new stations on the Valley Line



Kfar-Barukh

Afula



הרכבת

to be extended to the border crossing at the Allenby Bridge, where it will link to the Jordanian rail system.

"This is a blessing for the valley, a gift to the periphery in general, and to Beit She'an in particular," said Liran Raviv, a Beit She'an photographer who is seeing the dream of a train line to the coast take shape.

The historic valley line was a branch of the Turkish Hejaz Railway that ran from Haifa through Tzemah on the southern Lake Kinneret shore all the way to Damascus. It was built in 1905 and ran until 1951. There are people in the Jezreel Valley who still remember those days.

Rina Porat of Kfar Yehoshua was 20 years old when the old train stopped running. "At the time, the train was the centre of our lives. Without the valley train, all the communities along the tracks would never have existed. It was a lifeline," she said. Porat recalls that when her mother was about to give birth to her, two friends from Kfar Yehoshua set out on a cattle-drawn cart to bring the doctor from Nahalal, who then advised her mother to go to the hospital. The mother, who had already started labour, was taken to the train station; since there were no trains to Afula at that hour, but only to Haifa, which was in the other direction, Porat was born in Hadassah Hospital in Haifa.

She remembers the train from her childhood, particularly the trips they took on Shabbat, and is still angry about the way people made fun of the slow-moving railroad cars. Despite the disadvantages, she says, the train was hugely important to the valley. She has mixed feelings about the new line, however. "We'll have to wait and see what comes of it."

Matan Oz, a resident of Tel Adashim, took the test run with his father and aunt, veteran residents of the moshav who had ridden the old Hejaz Railway. "Dad was satisfied, he really enjoyed himself," said Oz. He added that because the train will link the Jezreel Valley with Haifa, it will provide more job opportunities for local residents and facilitate a wider dispersion of the population since people will be able to move to the valley and still work in the city. Raviv, the photographer, noted that the train will make cultural and leisure activities much more accessible to residents of his area. "It will impact on everything. It will push everything forward," he said. "As far as Beit She'an is concerned, this is one of the biggest investments ever made in this city."

Minister Katz predicted that the train would help the region flourish and predicted that real estate values in the communities along the route would rise. He promised that in the future the railway would run from Kfar Baruch to Tel Aviv, a ride that would take half an hour. He also noted that a cargo depot had been built in Beit She'an from which cargo coming from Haifa Port

will be transported to Jordan. He expressed hope that in the future the train would be extended into Jordan so that goods could be sent directly from Haifa.

The line will open to the public in a limited fashion on October 16, just before the Sukkot holiday. Passengers boarding the train at any of the valley stations will be able to go anywhere in the country for free until November 4, when the line becomes fully functional. There are currently three other stations between Haifa and Beit She'an: Yokne'am-Kfar Yehoshua, Migdal Ha'emek-Kfar Baruch and Afula. Two more stations are planned for Haifa Bay and Neshet. Officials say that in the beginning, they expect 1,500 people to take the train daily, but that it will have 10,000 passengers a day by the end of the first year of operation."

(xiv). DIGITAL INFORMATION FOR PASSENGERS IN ARABIC.

From a press release of 10.07.2016 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Israel Railways Ltd. started today upgrading the cellular application for the overall version of its digital service which includes route planning, in the Arabic language too, in addition to that already existing in Hebrew and English; the service is available for users of iPhone and Android instruments.

Within the next couple of months the railways will launch the application in its new version (2.0) in which a new user interface and new abilities such as: voice service, real-time information, personal messages, preferred stations, etc. will be incorporated.

The railways' application has so far accumulated about 1.7 Million downloads, while each month there are about 300,000 individual users of the application.

The application offers, in addition to journey planning and tariffs, also buying a contractual multi-liner smart card, an "alarm clock" activated prior to the arrival at the destined station, and special tourist sites for train passengers.

The railways further announced today that during August, a month with heavy traffic, the service hours of its information centre will be extended to 24 hours/day (with the exception of Friday and Saturday, when the service will operate until 19:00 on Friday and will resume at 20:00 on Saturday night).

As an integral part of customer service and in order to provide high availability, the digital channels include chat with service personnel at railway sites and SMS services through cellular phones during nights in addition to the regular phone services.

The railways' service centre is manned by dozens of service providers who speak Hebrew, English, Russian and Arabic so the customer has the free choice of type of service."

(xv). MORE WORKS IN TEL AVIV AREA.

From a press release of 21.07.2016 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"As an integral part of tracks diversions, extending platforms at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station and Herzliya station, building a new terminal at Tel-Aviv HaShalom station, and preparatory works towards electrification, the Hod HaSharon - Tel-Aviv line section will be closed for traffic between Wednesday 03.08.2016 at 20:15 and Saturday night 06.08.2016 at 23:59.

Consequently, the section between Tel-Aviv University and B'nei-Brak will be closed; also the intermediate stations of Bnei-B'rak, Petakh-Tikva, Rosh-HaAyin North, Kfar-Sava, and Hod HaSharon will be closed.

Trains from Beer-Sheva to Hod Ha-Sharon and from the intermediate stations of Ashkelon, Ashdod, Yavne-West, Rishon-Le-Zion West (Moshe Dayan), Bat-Yam Komeiyut, Bat-Yam Yoseftal, Holon Wolfson, and Holon Junction will start/terminate at Tel-Aviv Hahagana station; passengers travelling to other Tel-Aviv station and further northwards will change at platform 1.

On Saturday night 06.08.2016 until 23:59 trains between Beer-Sheva and Hod Ha-Sharon will operate on both directions between Beer-Sheva and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central.

On Wednesday 03.08.2016 between 20:00 and 23:30 the railways will provide alternative bus shuttle services between Hod HaSharon and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central without calling at the Tel-Aviv University station.

In the morning and evening peak hours of Thursday 04.08.2016 special trains will be operated between Hod HaSharon and B'nei-Brak; not reaching Tel-Aviv University station."

(xvi). HASHALOM STATION EXPANSION.

From a press release of 15.08.2016 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways are currently performing complex construction works at Tel-Aviv HaShalom station in order to improve customer services, adding a new entrance and exit directly from the adjacent Hashalom bridge on its southern edge, thus saving the passengers the need to pass through the station building at the northern side, and adding a parking area for 2-wheeled vehicles on the bridge.

The works include erecting of two steel structures 6.4m high, 60m long, with an overall weight of 560 tons; they will be the base for the southern terminal floor.

This operation is to take place between Friday, 26.08.2016 at 16:30 and Saturday night, 20:30; as a result, the HaShalom road will be closed partially and entirely on the mentioned dates, and due to the role of the bridge, will cause disruptions

for road traffic. Tel-Aviv HaShalom station is one of Israel's most important stations; it is used daily by 55,000 passengers, and the new terminal besides easing exit/entry, will also enable increasing the number of users according to the forecast for the coming years.

Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager (still) Mr. Boaz Zafrir said: "Passenger traffic during the first half of 2016 was higher by 15% over the same period of 2015; the public has voted rail with its feet, and we're preparing ourselves to a huge wave of demands after the opening of the A1 fast rail link to Jerusalem; the new terminal being built at one of the network's most used stations is a significant step for tens of thousands of our customers using the station; we'll keep improving services".

(xvii). ANOTHER FIRE ON AN IC3 SET.

An IC3 Flexiliner dmu which was en-route between Haifa and Tel-Aviv on 25.08.2016 caught fire due to a technical failure. Six passengers were slightly injured due to



breathing smoke; they were evacuated near Hadera West station. The stranded train caused serious delays as well as overcrowding and it took some hours to resume traffic. The railways' union immediately blamed Alstom to which maintenance is outsourced, mentioning that only about one-third of the fleet is in working condition. However, they tend to forget that some weeks ago a similar case happened with a Bombardier double-deck train maintained by the railways. It is no secret that the railways would like to get rid of the IC3 fleet; there were negotiations with DSB, but so far with no results due to the high price the railways are asking. In any case, a certain number of dmus will have to remain in service both for the old Jerusalem line and the Valley Line (both single-tracked and not electrified).

(xviii). CORRUPTION INVESTIGATION.

From 'Jerusalem Post' 31.08.2016: "Deep-rooted corruption at state's road and rail company. Police say they have completed a corruption investigation in-

volving dozens of senior current and former employees of the state-owned National Transport Infrastructure Company (Netivei Yisrael), which is responsible for Israel's roads and railways.

"We investigated a suspected systematic and organized mechanism for the transfer of state funds ... estimated at hundreds of millions of shekels," the police say in a statement, according to Channel 2. "The investigation uncovered alleged systematic criminal activity and deep corruption within Netivei Yisrael for more than a decade, under the tenure of several CEOs and with the involvement of a range of people from different areas of the company, including executives, managers, and junior staff, as well as those who were supposed to be the 'gatekeepers,'" say the police."

(xix). MORE GREAT HALF-YEAR STATISTICS.

From a press release of 31.08.2016 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"On 31.08.2016 the railways published

Additionally, the railways achieved progress on the \$53.8 Million (NIS 200 Million) to upgrade ten railway stations, as well as adding 2,500 parking spaces as an integral part of this aim.

Achievements in Passenger sector:

1. During the first half of 2016 the railways carried 28.9 Million passengers, compared with 25.9 Million over the same period of 2015; a rise of 12%.

2. The incomes - including operation fees - reached \$247.6M. (NIS 921M.) as against \$234.6M (NIS 891.3M.) over the same period in 2015; up by 3.3%; the gap of 9% as against incomes from tickets sales is due to the reform to reduce tariffs created by the Transport Ministry.

3. Daily average passenger services was 213,000 compared with 194,000 in 2015; up by 10%.

4. The daily record was achieved in May 2016 with 248,000 passengers.

The specific lines with rise in demand were:

1. The southern coast line between Ashkelon and Tel-Aviv; 17% more, including demands from the stations of Sderot, Ofakim, and Netivot (the Negev line).

2. Hod-HaSharon - Tel-Aviv line; 9% more.

3. Binyamina - Tel-Aviv line; 16% more.

Punctuality:

1. The average punctuality during the first half of 2016 was 95.6%.

2. The average punctuality between 2013 and 2015 was 95% as against 88.67% between 2011 and 2012; up by 7%.

3. The improved punctuality is a result of managerial attention, the commitment of the employees, operating an updated timetable and expanding the track infrastructure during recent years.

Freight sector:

1. During the first half of 2016 the railways carried 4.6M tons, compared with 3.8M. tons over the same period of 2015; up by 21%.

2. During the first half of 2016 the freight sector had an income of \$4.3 Million (NIS 16M) compared with \$2M (NIS 7.5M) over the same period of 2015; up by 100%!

3. The incomes from transshipments including operating fees reached \$49.4M (NIS 183.6M) compared with \$42.7M. (NIS 160M. over the same period of 2015; up by 15%.

The railways General Manager Mr. Boaz Zafrir said: "The positive results of growth show that we're on the right path; we're proud of the fact that more and more customers are enjoying our services and we'll keep it that way".

TENDERS.

A. NEW TENDERS.

(i). International RFI : Request for Information - Hydraulic Telescopic Rail Crane. For Sleeper Changer Attachment. For fitting to a Vaiacar V704FV RR excavator. "The object of this RFI is to enable ISR to explore the option of purchasing of the attachment as well as to review and estimate costs involved ... the Respondent is invited to submit to ISR data and any technical information regarding the attachment, past experience in manufacture and/or supply of attachments as specified..."

(ii). Tender No. PMR 16/1 : Preselection for participants in the tender for design, operating, and maintaining a site at Modi'in Central station: The site will consist of 27,000 sq.m. of business, hotels, and parking area. Latest date for submission of proposals: 22.06.2016.

(iii). Tender No. 11628: Providing maintenance services for the railways' fuel and grease facilities:

There will be two winners selected, one for the northern area and one for the southern area. The northern sites are at: Haifa East including the depot, Efrayim (Kishon) workshops, container terminal at Hadera West, container terminal at B'nei-Brak, track panel assembly area at B'nei-Brak, and Tel-Aviv.

The southern sites are at: Lod station and depot complex, Port of Ashdod classification yard, Beer-Sheva north (including depot), Ashkelon, Dimona, and Ramat Hovav hazardous waste material burying site.

The tender is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 30.06.2016.

(iv). Tender No. MS/RC/2016/5: Advertising on railway bridges over roads: The tender is for 6 months with optional extensions of up to additional 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 30.06.2016.

(v). Tender No. MS/RC/2016/6: Purchase and removal of used diesel fuel and grease from railway sites: The tender is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 12 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 02.07.2016.

(vi). Tender 41502. Permanent Way. Call for Potential Participants

"1. Following the cancellation of Tender 41502, Israel Railways Ltd. ("ISR") wishes to execute a new process for the purchase of Various Types of Turnouts, Diamonds, Expansion Switches installed with Various Types of Bearers and on Slab Track and their Parts and Components.

2. In order to better understand the needs of the various participants, ISR has decided to conduct separate face to face meetings with all interested potential participants. During such meetings, participants will be encouraged to voice their comments to all the Tender Documents.

3. The Tender documents and any additional information can be obtained, free of charge, at Israel Railways website: <www.rail.co.il>

4. All participants who are interested to take part in such process, should confirm its attendance by no later than July 11th, 2016, by email to Ms. Chen Gevirtz, International Procurement Coordinator, at cheng@rail.co.il in order to schedule the meeting."

(vii). Tender No. 31509: Supply of Coupons for the railways' employees for purchasing Food, Electrical appliances, Fashion, Shoes, Sport and Camping needs. Latest date for submission of proposals: 28.07.2016.

(viii). Tender No. 21527: Providing Acoustic Engineering design and inspection services: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 28.07.2016.

(ix). A Request for Information for tracing Suppliers to provide installation, and training services of Technological Studying Equipment including laboratories for electricity, electronics, pneumatics, and hydraulics: The contract is for 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 19.07.2016.

(x). Tender No. MS/RC/2016/7: Operating a kosher Fast Food (meat) Buffet at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station: The contract is for 3 months of preparations; 36 months and optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 01.08.2016.

(xi). Tender No. 41603. For Supply of Second-Hand Bogie Hopper Wagons. For a period of three years; IR shall have the right to extend the period by a further three years. Bidder must be the owner of at least fifteen second-hand Ballast Bogie Hopper Wagons and must have maintained and/or refurbished at least twenty Ballast Bogie Hopper Wagons and/or other rolling stock during the last five years (or have a binding agreement with a third party who has done so.) ... IR intends to issue a Purchase Order for ten wagons within 4 months of the effective date of agreement... with an option at its sole discretion

to purchase from the Supplier additional Wagons.... Time of delivery shall not exceed six months from the issuance of purchase order. Supplier shall undertake to supply IR with spare parts and necessary tools for at least fifteen years..... (there follow many technical issues of tendering and payment and how the bids will be evaluated on a points system). Bids by 7th. Sept. 2016.

(xiii). Tender No. 41604. Supply of Monitoring Systems for Railway Safety. Tenders by 6th. September 2016

(xiv). Tender No. 41605. For the Manufacture and Supply of Ballast Regulators. Supply of three Ballast Regulator Machines over five years. The bidder must be the designer, manufacturer and supplier of the proposed Ballast Regulator Machine and had supplied at least six such from the beginning of 2013...

[We give here a part of the 23-page Technical Specifications Document as illustrative of the degree of detail that applies to many such Tenders:

"Ballast Regulator Machine

1 General Requirements one

The ballast regulator shall be self-propelled and will be used on ISR railway network for the track construction and maintenance work.

1.1 Applicable Standards

1.1.1 The vehicle shall comply with the latest edition of:

- EN 12663: Structural requirements of railway vehicle bodies

- EN14033-1: Rail bound construction and Maintenance Machines Technical requirements for running. The vehicle shall meet "Category 1" requirements.

- EN14033-2: Rail bound construction and maintenance machines - Technical requirements for working.

- EN 14033-3: Railway applications - Track - Rail bound construction and maintenance machines - General safety requirements.

- EN 50125-1:2003 Railway Applications - Environmental Conditions for Equipment - Part 1: Equipment on Board Rolling Stock.

- EN 50155:2007 Railway Applications - Electronic Equipment Used on Rolling Stock.

- IEC 61991 Ed. 1.0 Railway applications - Rolling stock - Protective provisions against electrical hazards.

- All EN and IIC mentioned in this technical description.

1.1.2 The ballast regulator design shall follow the EN regulations and IIC codes for environment protection like: noise; pollution; etc...

1.1.3 The machine shall be able to work on single and double line track and between station platforms. The machine shall work in plain track and shall be used also for work in turnouts.

1.1.4 The ballast regulator shall be designed to operate under the climate and environmental conditions, dust conditions in the atmosphere, sea salt concentrations in the atmosphere according to the data provided in Attachment A.

1.1.5 1.1.4 The ballast regulator shall be designed to operate on tracks with gradient up to 35%.

1.1.6 The ballast regulator shall be designed to operate on main and secondary lines with minimum curve radius of 140 meter and travel on shunting area with minimum curve radius of 75 meter.

1.1.7 The ballast regulator shall include an "INDUSI" (Inductive signal protection) system.

1.1.8 Since ISR intends to introduce an ETCS Level 2 signalling system, the manufacture will ensure enough space for future installing of required equipment.

Ballast Regulator Machine

1.1.9 The ballast regulator shall include a "dead-man" safety device to stop the vehicle in case the driver is unable to continue operating according to UIC 641 code.

1.1.10 The ballast regulator shall be designed to provide easy access to all the vehicle systems in order to perform maintenance tasks and inspection.

1.1.11 The BRM shall be designed with faults monitoring system for: Braking System, Propelling System, Cooling System, Fuel System, Air Intake, Hydraulic System, Pneumatic System, Electrical System, Air-conditioning System.

1.1.12 The BRM shall fully comply with requirements for OCS. (25kV AC)

1.1.13 The driver cabin arrangement and visibility angles while sitting in the driver seat facing traveling direction shall comply with UIC 651 code. The ballast regulator crew shall have panoramic view on the track.

1.1.14 The BRM shall have about 1 cubic meter (side plow/wing) ballast capacity.

1.1.15 The BRM shall ensure working with one wing as well as working with two wings.

1.1.16 The BRM shall be of the latest technology. Components which are obsolete, nearing end of production or out of production shall not be used. All components shall remain and be readily available for the ISR to purchase for a minimum of twenties (20) years from the date of FAT.

1.1.17 The BRM shall be equipped with subassemblies (propelling,

1.1.18 Hydraulic, pneumatic, brakes, air conditioning etc.) that have local representatives.

2 Operating Conditions

The completed ballast regulator must conform to all system clearances and track conditions. The ballast regulator must be tested and inspected on rail to ensure conformance with all system clearances and track conditions, and compliance with all specifications.

2.1 The ballast regulator shall have the following operating conditions:

2.1.1 Track gauge 1435 [mm] -

2.1.2 Travel speed - self-propelled up to 100 [Km/h]

2.1.3 Travel speed – towed up to 100 [km/h]

2.1.4 Max gradient 35 %

2.1.5 Min curve radius on shunting area 75 [m]

2.2 Loading gauge

The ballast regulator shall comply with ISR loading gauge parameters [Attachment B].

3 Vehicle Construction

3.1 Frame

The frame shall consist of one part. All work units shall be arranged on one rigid frame.

The frame shall be made from standard rolled steel.

The following are provided on the frames:

- Handrails or grab irons

- 4 lifting hooks for handling;

- One guard-irons on both sides of each wheel;

- Side steps; the lowest step used for boarding the machine shall not exceed the loading gauge.

- Kick board shall be provided to prevent crew entry into potentially hazardous areas.

- All floor walking areas shall be made from anti-slipping and wear resistant material. .

3.1.1 Coupling and Buffers

Each headstock shall be fitted with UIC type coupling system and buffers, namely:

- ? 1 central Draw Gear to UIC 520 with an elastic draw system;

- ? 1 Draw Hook to UIC 520 OR with a breaking force of 1,000KN;

- ? 1 Screw coupler to UIC 520 OR with a breaking force of 850KN

- ? 2 side buffers with a stroke of 105 mm to UIC 526-1;

- ? 1 brake hose with valve....." and so forth.]

(xii). International tender No. 11605: Design, delivery, building, operating, installation, and maintenance services of GSM-R System along the whole Network. The contract is for 5 years with optional extensions of up to additional 10 years. Latest date for submission of proposals: 15.11.2016.

(xiii). Tender No. MR/RC/2016/3: Operating a 9,700 sq.m. area at Haifa Bat-Galim station for car parking. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 08.08.2016.

(xiv). Tender No. 21605: Construction and upgrading 10 Control Buildings as well as communication works along 37 km between Binyamina and Shefayim on the Tel-Aviv - Haifa line: The contract is for 10 years. Latest date for submission of proposals: 25.08.2016.

(xv). Tender No. 21604: Construction and

upgrading 9 control buildings as well as communication works along 32 km between Binyamina and Hof-HaCarmel on the Tel-Aviv - Haifa line: The contract is for 10 years. Latest date for submission of proposals: 25.08.2016.

(xvi). A Request for Information (R.F.I.) for tracing suppliers for testing and repairing Electronic Cards. The contract is for 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 07.09.2016.

(xvii). Tender No. 21617: Design, installation and operation of Monitoring and Cleaning Air from emissions at the stations of Tel-Aviv HaHagana, and Holon Wolfson, Yoseftal, and Bat-Yam Komemiyut stations: The contract is for 48 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 27.10.2016.

(xviii). Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 11539: Provision of supply, installation, and maintenance of visual instruments at Level Crossings and roads under the railways' responsibility. Latest date for submission of proposals: 09.10.2016.

(xix). Tender No. MS/RC/2016/10: Providing taxi services to/from the railway station of Beit-She'an.

(xx). Tender No. MS/RC/2016/11: Providing taxi services to/from the railway station of Afula.

(xxi). Tender No. MS/RC/2016/12: Providing taxi services to/from the railway station of Migdal Ha-Emek-Kfar-Barukh.

(xxii). Tender No. MS/RC/2016/13: Providing taxi services to/from the railway station of Yokne'am-Kfar-Yehoshua.

(xxiii). Tender No. MS/RC/2016/14 : Providing taxi services to/from the railway station of Ofakim.

All the tenders' contracts are for 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 26.09.2016. Note: the first four station are on the Valley Line; the fifth is on the Negev Line.

B. TENDERS EXTENDED.

(i). International tender No. 51403 - For the Supply of Double Deck Electric Multiple Units for Israel Railways; latest date for submission of proposals postponed to 28.09.2016.

(ii). : Notice No. 3 Tender No. 41604 for Supply of Monitoring Systems for Railway Safety ("Tender")

"1. This notice (the "Notice") is being furnished to bidders in accordance with the provisions of Section 26.7 of the General Terms and Conditions of the Tender Documents (the "General Terms").

2. ISR wishes to inform that it has decided to conduct "face to face" meetings regarding Tender No. 41604 for the Supply of Monitoring Systems for Railway Safety ("Tender").

3. The bidders meeting shall take place

on 17th August, 2016 at 09:00 am (Israel Time) at ISR's Headquarters, located at Tel-Aviv train station - Savidor (Arlozorov).

The face to face meetings shall be held at ISR's headquarters on 17th August, 2016, between 11:00 – 20:00 (Israel Time). Please note that face to face meetings shall take place separately with each participant.

For the avoidance of doubt, participation in the bidders meeting and/or the face to face meetings is not mandatory.

4. Parties interested in participating in the bidders meeting and/or the face to face meetings, are requested to confirm their attendance by no later than 14th August, 2016 by e-mail: <anatr@rail.co.il> Please specify the name and title of each person who shall attend on the participant's behalf.

5. Additionally, please submit, to the above email any suggested topics for discussion at the face to face meetings with respect to Tender No. 41604 for the Supply of Monitoring Systems for Railway Safety ("Tender").

6. The time schedule for each participant's face to face meeting, shall be determined by the number of participants that shall inform ISR of their request to participate in such meetings. The time schedule for the face to face meetings shall be determined by way of lottery during the bidders meeting.

7. For the removal of doubt, unless otherwise explicitly stated herein, the Tender Documents remain unchanged and fully binding. It is hereby further clarified that throughout the Tender Process, ISR shall only be bound by information submitted by ISR in writing, and no oral or other non-written response or information will bind ISR for any purpose whatsoever.

10. The deadline for submission of inquiries and/or requests for clarification and/or additional information regarding the Tender or relating to the Tender Documents, as per Section 26.6.4 of the General Terms, has been postponed to 21st August, 2016."

(iii). Postponements of last date for submission of proposals on international tenders Nos. 41603 to 26th. Oct. 2016; & 41604 to 25th. Oct.

(iv). Tender No. 11630: RFP for services of creating an organizational suppliers' pool. The contract is for 60 months with optional extensions of up to additional 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 29.09.2016.

C. TENDERS AWARDED.

(i). ADVERTISING. The railways have announced that the winning bidder of Tender No. MS/RC/2016/4 - Permission for advertising on boards at railway stations is: Hodaya Public Boards Ltd.; \$649,416 (NIS 2,500,250) annually.

(ii). REPAINTING. The railways have announced that the winner of Tender No. 11542 - Providing services for Locomotive Repainting is M.T.R. - abbreviation of the Hebrew words "Railway Industry"; in fact these are large workshops located at Dimona station which also manufacture parts for rolling stock and motive power. There are 70 employees.

(iii). The local construction company Regavim Regavim Ltd. won the \$3.95 Million (NIS 15.2 Million) Tender No. 21606 for Extension of Platforms at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station.

(iv). The local earthworks contractor Elyakim Ben-Ari Ltd. won Tender No. 21534 for track laying and rail welding, which was for years in the hands of Lesico Ltd.; the winner used to supply Lesico Ltd. with ballast.

(v). The local construction company Abraham Yitzhak Ltd. won the \$12,626 (NIS 48,722.3) Tender No. 21533 for the construction of Mazkeret Batya (Batya Memorial) station (on the line to Beer-Sheva south of Ramla).

(vi). The local construction company Y.D. Ashush Ltd. won the \$8,470.4 (NIS 32,687) Tender No. 21531 for the construction of Kfar-Menakhem (south of Na'an Junction on the line to Beer-Sheva).

(vii). The local construction company Y.D. Barazani Ltd. won the \$22,63M (NIS 87.3Million) Tender No. 21507 for the construction of the southern site DP4 of the Beer-Sheva railway depot.

(viii). The following architecture offices won Tender No. 21518 for providing architecture and planning services for passenger stations, structures and facilities: Z. Mosesco Architects and City Designers; Amar Corial Architects Ltd.; B. Peleg Architects; Bar-Hana Architects and City Builders; Amir Mann & Ami Shenar Architects; Armon Architects and City Designers Ltd.; Inbal Peled & Tzvi Kimelmann; Eisenberg & Sherman; B.A.H. Architects; Flancon; Futsh; D.Eithan & Ruth Lahav.

(ix). The local construction company Y.R.N. Construction & Development Ltd. won the \$3,732 (NIS 14,400) Tender No.21530 for the construction of an administration building and control tower at the Beer-Sheva railway depot.

(x). The following track engineering offices won Tender No. 21526 for Trackworks Planning:

E.M.I. Metom Engineers and Consultants & Hason Yerushalmi Design 1997 Ltd.; Grun-ner D.E.L. Engineers and Consultants; Yinnon Design, Consulting and Research Ltd.; D.E.L. Engineering Ltd.; Mahud Engineering Ltd.; D.K.R. Construction Ltd.; T.D.M. Civil Engineering Ltd.; C.F.C.E.A.M -Company for Civil Engineering and Measurements Ltd.

(xi). The local engineering and construction company TER-ARMEE Ltd. won the \$4,887 (NIS 18,858) Tender No.21523 for

construction and upgrading control building + communication between Nahariya and Acre, and between Zevulun Junction (near Kishon works) and Haifa Bat-Galim station.

(xii). The local sub-contractors: Amir Elad, Ali Afifi, Y.R.N., Berekhovich, and Kal Peled won frame Tender No.21524 for carrying out sub-contractor works of construction, infrastructures, and upgrades.

(xiii). The local construction company Abraham Yitzhak Ltd. won the \$6,082 (NIS 23,471) Tender No. 21525 for building a preparatory platform for treating electric trains.

(xiv). The local electric engineering companies: Yigal Efroni Ltd. and A.S. Electric Ltd. won Tender No. 21521 for providing electric tests.

(xv). The local gardening company Ganei-Noy Yadi Ltd. won the \$712,620 (NIS 2.75 M) Tender No. 21527 for rebuilding the area around Pleshet Junction on the Ashdod - Yavne West section where the branch to the port of Ashdod starts.

(xvi). The local suppliers of lighting equipment: Electric Raz Ltd. and M. Drori Ltd. won frame Tender No.21519 for supply, installation, and maintenance services of Lighting Facilities at level crossings, sites, and roads which are under the railways' responsibility.

(xvii). The local construction company Asher Green & Sons Ltd. won the \$4,415.4 (NIS 17,039) Tender No.21514 for adding an exit building for passengers from Tel-Aviv Hashalom station to the adjacent Hashalom road bridge.

(xviii). The following local construction companies won Tender No.21513 - Carrying out works of building, infrastructures and upgrades: Olnik - company for earthworks and roads Ltd.; Y.Lehrer (Engineering) Ltd.; Afifi Ali; Regavim Regavim Ltd.; Ben-Zion Wilker (1987) Ltd.; S.B.H. Construction Systems (1988) Ltd.

(xix). The local safety consulting companies: D.D.L., For Safety Engineering & Safety, and Vardi Institute, won Tender No.21509 for providing safety consulting services.

(xx). The local construction company Eli Ben-Shitrit Ltd. won the \$3,380 (NIS 13,044) Tender No. 21511 - upgrading the Kiryat-Motzkin railway station.

(xxi). The local construction company TER-ARMEE Ltd. won the \$4,326 (NIS 16,694) Tender No.21504 - construction of a control building and an access road at the Kishon works site.

(xxii). The G Com Group Ltd. won Tender No. 21501 - Providing consulting services for the GSM-R Project, A lengthy Agreement Document states, (excerpted):

"Current and Future Network Layout
The Israeli Railway Network line length is about 680 km.

At present, the Israel Railway Network is undergoing a development process. New lines

are already under construction:
Fast Track to Jerusalem "A1 line": Tzomet Daniel – Jerusalem Ha'Uma
Akko – Karmiel
Haifa Center HaShmona – Beit She'an
Ra'anana to Coastal Line

Alongside network growth, several actions are being planned and/or performed with the aim of modernizing the network and improving its efficiency, such as the deployment of a modern railway electrification system (1x25 kV AC) which will cover 420 km of the network, and the procurement of new electrified rolling stock able to work with said electrification system.

In the near future – after completing the new lines - line length of the Israeli Network will be about 800 km with electronic and relay interlocking, electrified lines and 1435 mm of standard gauge. The future total track length is about 1,500 km. This number includes the tracks of both directions and some station tracks. The network is centred in Israel's densely populated coastal plain, from which lines radiate out in many directions.

Signalling system

The Israeli Railways Network is currently divided into two main areas: North and South. In the North from Nahariya Station to Shefaim Station, stations are operated under SpDrL72-2 Relay Interlocking. In the South from Shefaim to Be'er Sheva, Thales ESTW L90 IL electronic interlocking systems are installed.

Regarding field elements, there are two main train detection systems installed coexisting in the Israel Railway Network:

50 Hz Track Circuits

Axle Counters

Both systems have been supplied by Thales and are used to detect the presence of the trains within defined sections of track. ISR is planning to improve the train detection system by substituting 50 Hz track circuits for axle counters.

There are technical buildings which are located on platforms near the railway track in all the stations of the Israel Railway Network in order to house the different equipment related to Signalling and Fixed Communications.

As a backup energy system, there are batteries providing at least 8 hours of uninterrupted power service.

Automatic Train Protection

Israel Railways currently uses INDUSI, which belongs to the ATP class of systems. INDUSI facilitates inductive coupling and consist of two components, namely a track-borne and a train-borne magnet. The first one is directly connected to a pre-signal or a main signal. The magnet is located in a light-metal housing which is "electrically open" to the top. Its oscillating circuit is tuned to a frequency of 500 Hz or 1000 Hz or 2000 Hz. Depending on the signal's aspect, the track transponder is short-circuited or active. The train-borne magnet is connected to an AC generator on the train and permanently sends out elec-

tromagnetic waves of 500 Hz and 1000 Hz and 2000 Hz to the floor. When a train is approaching an active track-borne magnet, a current is induced and energy is detracted from the train-borne unit.

In consequence, a corresponding action is triggered. This way a unidirectional transmission from the track (the signal) to the train is implemented. In its basic position, the track-borne magnet is active.

Fixed Telecommunications Network

ISR owns a SDH network based on fiber optics.

Mobile Radio communications

There is a VHF radio communication system that will remain as the GSM-R back-up system.

There is an iDEN Mobile Public Network in the cabin that is used for redundancy to the VHF radio. The iDEN will be removed by ISR when the entire GSM-R network will be implemented.

Network Traffic Control Centre

The Network Management and Traffic Control Centre (NTC) is located in Haifa Hof Ha'Carmel station and uses Thales technology. This is the system in charge of collecting information related to the operating status of all wayside track elements, such as switch operation, track section occupation, identification of the train that occupies each track section. A new NTC will be located in Lod and is currently under construction.

Power supply systems

All current lines in the Israeli Railway Network are not electrified but ISR is contemplating the modernization of the current network and, actually, the future lines which are under construction will be 1x25 kV 50 Hz electrified.

Despite the future electrification of the line, power supply will be provided by the Israel Electric Corporation Ltd. (IECO) even after electrification.

Rolling Stock

Relevant rolling stock to be considered:

Shunter:

Meinfesa GA-DE 900, Nos. 261-263, built 1997 (derivation of RENFE 311, related to SBB Am841)

NOHAB/KVAB T44, one unit, No. 131 (closely related to Swedish Green Cargo Td)

Mainline Diesel:

EMD G12, Nos. 104-126 & Nos.127-130 (Egyptian origin), some already withdrawn from service, built 1954-1966

EMD G26CW and G26CW-2, 9 and 6 units respectively of which 12 units are in service, numbering block 600, built 1971-1979 & 1982-1986

EMD GT26, No.701 of 1989, six more units are currently under production/remanufacturing at NRE/ TVZ Gredelj Zagreb, closely related to ONCF DH401-420

Alstom Prima JT42BW "Mega", Nos. 731-778, built 1996-2006 at Meinfesa plant

Alstom Prima JT42CW "Semi-Mega", Nos. 702-709, built 1997 at Meinfesa plant (Mega and Semi-Mega are somewhat related to UK Angel Trains JT42HW-HS and to the RENFE 333.3/4 series)

Euro4000, Nos. 1401-1414, built 2011-2012 by Vossloh Espana at ex-Meinfesa plant, similar locomotives are in use by several European operators.

Euro3200, Nos. 1301-1324, built 2013-2014 by Vossloh Espana at ex-Meinfesa plant, related to the RENFE 334

Diesel multiple units:

ABB Scandia IC3, Nos. 01-50 Nos. 42-50 ex Swedish Statens Järnvägar), built 1992-1996 (Nos. 42-50 1990), related units also in use in Denmark

Push-Pull Power Cars:

GEC Alstom SDPP, No. 301-305, built at Haargaz, Israel, 1996

Siemens Viaggio Light SDPP, built 2008 resp. 2011, Nos. 801-810

Bombardier DDPP, series 1, Nos. 401-424, 2001-2004

Bombardier DDPP, series 2, Nos. 501-507, 2001-2004

Bombardier DDPP, series 3, 10 Power Cars, 2014

Bombardier DDPP, series 4, 12 sets, 2014

Yellow Machines Nos. 801-803, 807-810, 813-814, 831-833, 902, 904, 910-912, 915-918, 941-942, 960-965, 981-988,

Electric Locomotives:

Under tender

Electric multiple units:

Under tender

2 Regulations and Applicable Recommendations

Introduction

This section is intended to give a list of applicable standards and recommendations to be applied to the design and implementation of the GSM-R system in the Israel Railway Network (ISR). It will be structured taking into account the international standards (UIT, ISO, ITU), as well as the European standards (EN) and the Israeli standards (IS)..." and so on. But a useful overview of the IR system and its technical parameters and stock.

(xxiii). The winners of tender No. MS/RC/2016/6: Advertising on railway bridges are:

Acre and Lod: Rapid Vision Ltd.

Beer-Ya'akov and Beer-Sheva: Maximedia external advertising Ltd.

Rehovot: External Golden advertising Ltd.

Haifa, Binyamina, and Tel-Aviv: Bar-Am Original Advertising Ltd.

(xxiv). Tender No. 11611: Pest Control Services:

North: Fields A.W.R. Pest Control Services Ltd.

South: Teva Pest Control Services Ltd.

(xxv). Tender No. 11607: Providing supply and maintenance of portable firefighting equipment: Fire Beam (1992 G) Ltd.

LIGHT RAIL.

JERUSALEM.

(a). EXTENSIONS – GREEN AND BLUE LINE PLANS.

From a press release of 28.06.2016 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry, the National Authority for Public Transport, the Jerusalem Municipality, and JTMT - the Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan Team:

"All the factors involved are in preparation for implementation of the LRV Green Line after the District Council approved the alignment. The line will run from the Gilo neighborhood (southeast of Jerusalem) through Binyanei-HaUma (a conference hall adjacent to the HaUma new railway station of the A1, and the central bus station) where it will intersect with the Red Line, and then to Mount Scopus.

This line will be 19.6 km long with 36 stations and is expected to carry 200,000 passengers/day.

Due to the approval, works on the Green Line are being accelerated, while extensions of the Red Line to Neve-Ya'akov in Northern Jerusalem and Hadassa Ein-Kerem in the South/West are under way.

The third LRV line, the Blue Line is in process of approval. This line is to be 23 km long with 42 stations and expected journeys of 250,000 daily. It will run from the Ramot neighbourhood (North/West Jerusalem) through the city centre up to Talpiot and Gilo with branches to Malkha and Mount Scopus.

Both the Green and the Blue lines pass through Malkha (railway station of the old rebuilt line from Beit-Shemesh) and the Arab village of Beit-Saffafa; each line will also have its own depot.

The mayor of Jerusalem Mr. Nir Barkat said: "It is a great day for Jerusalem; the city is a leader in public transport and we're happy with the extension of this sort of smart transportation system.

Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz said: "I'm happy to see that Jerusalem will pass from just one successful LRV line to a network of three lines; the LRV has significantly changed the city's transportation; we're just at the beginning; Jerusalem deserves an LRV system like in Europe".

The General Manager of JTMT Mr. Nadav Meroz said: "We greet the approval; we have immediately started assimilating the council requests into the work plans, and soon we'll publish an international tender for constructions of the two lines".

In 'R.G.I.' 'Metro' 5.7.2016 stood:-

"ISRAEL: Tenders are to be called 'soon' for the construction of two more light rail lines in Jerusalem, following the municipality's approval at the end of June of the alignment of the proposed Green Line and the start of the approvals process for the Blue Line.

The 19.6 km alignment selected for the Green Line starts in the Gilo district in the south of the city. It will pass the Binyanei-HaUma terminus of the A1 fast line railway, then cross the existing Red Line tram route and run to Mount Scopus. There would be 36 stops, and ridership is predicted at 200,000 passengers/day.

The 23 km Blue Line would run from the Ramot district in the northwest, through the city centre up to Talpiot and Gilo, with branches to Malkha and Mount Scopus. It would have 42 stops and ridership is predicted at 250,000 passengers/day.

Meanwhile, work is also underway to extend the Red Line north to Neve-Ya'akov and south to Hadassa Ein-Kerem."

(b). BOMB ATTACK FOILED.

From 'Times of Israel' 17.07.2016: "Police in downtown Jerusalem on Sunday morning arrested a Palestinian man who was found to be carrying explosives and knives in his backpack.

The suspect, identified as a West Bank resident, was detained near the light rail stop on Jaffa Road after he raised the suspicions of a security guard.

Police said the man was standing "behind the stop, with a bag in his hand." When the guard asked to examine the contents of the bag, he noticed a bomb and called police. Sappers were promptly deployed to the scene and the road was closed off, along with the adjacent King George Street.

Police said the man was found to be carrying "a number of pipe bombs" and had been arrested and taken in for questioning. A later police statement said that sappers disarmed "three pipe bombs wired together." Mobile phones and knives were also in the backpack.

A video from the scene showed police pointing their guns at the suspect, who lay on

the ground near the train stop. A second clip showed sappers strip-searching him, apparently for explosives.

Media reports said the man was a resident of Beit Ula, near Hebron in the West Bank. Police said he was "in his 20s." "This morning, thanks to the vigilance of the light rail security guards, a large terror attack was averted," said Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat. "Our message to the public is to return to their normal routines, to remain vigilant, and to never give in to terror."

The light rail has resumed its service. Since October, 35 Israelis and four foreign nationals have been killed in a spate of car-ramming, stabbing, shooting, and bombing attacks. Some 215 Palestinians have also been killed. Israel says most of the Palestinians killed were involved in attacks or clashes. (AFP contributed to this report)"

14.07.2016. From 'Arutz Sheva' Online: "Terror attack averted on Jerusalem light rail.

Security guards protecting the Jerusalem light rail train apprehended a suspicious man standing near the train station on Herzl Boulevard. The guards later discovered the man was carrying a concealed knife. Police were called to the scene and have taken the man into custody. Initial reports indicate the 17-year old suspect entered Israel illegally. On Tuesday Ali Abu Hassan, a 21-year old Palestinian Authority resident, was indicted for a July 17th plot to bomb the Jerusalem light rail. The attack was narrowly averted when a security guard approached Hassan, who was about to board the train, and discovered a large explosive device concealed in his backpack."

(c). REQUEST FOR INFORMATION REGARDING FUTURE OPERATION IN JERUSALEM:

"The Government of Israel, operating through the Tender Committee in collaboration with the Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan Team ("JTMT"), hereby invites entities which have proven experience as concessionaires or operators in existing light rail train PPP projects or light rail train PPP projects under construction, to provide either (a) a detailed response or (b) a presentation which contains information with respect to the issues which said entity intends to present in its response ("Response") to the request for information in connection with future operation phases of the Jerusalem Mass Transportation Plan ("RFI"). Once the RFI stage is concluded, the Tender Committee may consider issuing a tender for the design, build, operation, maintenance and finance of the third operation phase of the Jerusalem Mass Transportation Plan.

2. As specified in the RFI, only entities which have proven experience as concessionaires or operators in existing light rail train PPP

projects or light rail train PPP projects under construction shall be entitled to participate in the RFI.

3. The JTMT intends to hold RFI sessions, in order to allow entities which meet the requirements set forth in the RFI to present their Responses. The RFI sessions will be held either at the Innotrans exhibition in Berlin Germany on September 2016, or at the JTMT offices in Jerusalem, Israel, all as detailed in the RFI.

4. Responses to the RFI may be submitted to the following address: arielp@jtmt.gov.il, no later than September 15th, 2016.

5. Any questions and/or inquiries shall be addressed in writing to Mr. Ariel PIPERNO via facsimile number: +972-2-622-1063 or by E-mail: arielp@jtmt.gov.il

6. The RFI is available for review at the website
at: www.jlrt.gov.il and <http://mof.gov.il/AG/Pages/AccountantGeneralTenders.aspx>

7. The RFI is subject to the Israeli law including the Mandatory Tenders Regulations, 5753-1993 including, inter alia, the obligation to disclose information in accordance with the provisions of Section 14A thereof.

8. This notice contains general and indicative information only and does not contain all of the terms of the RFI. The complete and binding conditions and requirements of the RFI are as detailed in the RFI. In the event of any discrepancy between this notice and the RFI, the provisions of the RFI shall prevail."

(d). NEW CABLECAR PLAN – AND CONTROVERSIES.

From 'Arutz Sheva' 25.08.2016: 'Everyone will understand who is in charge in Jerusalem.'

"A new controversy may have been sparked in Jerusalem by Nir Barkat, who announced that the Jerusalem cable-car will have a station in Silwan. Barkat announced the decision in a Likud activists' assembly and they were reported this morning by 'Haaretz' reporter Nir Hasson.

The original plan for the cable-car called for four stations where it will pick up passengers, from the Khan theater near the old railway station via Upper Silwan to the Mount of Olives (near the Intercontinental hotel) and ending at Lion's gate. But according to Barkat there will now be another station at the Pool of Shiloach (inside Silwan) which is at the foot of the City of David.

Barkat told activists "I want to allow both Jews and non-Jews to reenact this experience. Whoever wishes to immerse themselves and then go up to experience the Temple Mount's holiness, whoever will do this knows exactly who the boss is in this city. When people come and experience this, even ardent left-wingers get confused because they realize that this is genuine and that our connection to Jerusalem is immutable. We need to create transportation which will enable people to undergo this experience."

"The cable-car will enable people to reach the Old City without a car or a bus. What you see today is not the way Jerusalem will look in the future. Tomorrow I want to bring ten million tourists to these places, but without an infrastructure of trains, cable-cars, a fast train (to Tel Aviv), hotels, et cetera, we will not be able to enjoy this unique experience. In order to bring people from around the world, in order to understand who the real boss is in this city, we need to create infrastructure."

The anti-Zionist Eda Haredit organization has in the past expressed opposition to establishing a cable-car which will pass the Kotel. Broadening the planned route to include the City of David may also arouse the opposition of eastern Jerusalem's Arab residents.

The municipality responded to criticism of the plan, saying "In order to fulfill the mayor's vision of a cable-car system which will connect all of the relevant holy sites of the three religions in and around the Old City, there is a group of professionals who are developing a plan. When it is completed it will, of course, be considered by all of the relevant committees. The cable-car project is part of a comprehensive transportation project which will include light rail lines and other mass transportation options which will enable quick, efficient, and safe access to the sites which attract millions of visitors yearly."

114:08.

OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.

A. ABU DHABI.

GERMAN INVOLVEMENT.

"50 Years of Know-How – Started in 1966, today DB Engineering & Consulting employs 4,000 workers from 66 nations worldwide.

The firm was founded on 26th. May 1966 by Deutsche Bundesbahn and Deutsche Bank as Deutsche Eisenbahn Consulting. One of the joint ventures is Etihad Rail DB-Güterverkehr.

A DB press release of 10.01.2015 is still on the website: "Etihad Rail contributes to the Western Region's economic growth. Abu Dhabi: Etihad Rail, the developer and operator of the UAE's national railway network, has announced that the contract for the design and build of employee residences in Mirfa has been awarded to National Transport & Contracting Company (NTCC), a building company operating in the Western Region of Abu Dhabi.... The housing complex will be built to the highest standards to accommodate employees of Etihad Rail DB – the operating partner for Stage One of the network.

Eng. Faris Saif Al Mazrouei, Acting CEO at Etihad Rail, said, "Since Etihad Rail was founded and began construction in the Western Region, the Board of Directors has had a long-term vision to help drive economic prosperity in the region, in line with the wise direction and guidance of the UAE government and leadership – via investment opportunities in residential, educational, healthcare and other facilities. The presence of Etihad Rail's operating arm in Mirfa has helped identify our first opportunity to begin fulfilling this vision, with the development of the permanent employee residences in the Western Region. Etihad Rail is also currently collaborating with the Western Region Development Council (WRDC) to explore further long-term investment prospects, given WRDC's numerous initiatives to develop residential real estate for the private sector.

..... In the presence of representatives from the WRDC, Etihad Rail DB signed a contract with NTCC to build 170 high-quality, serviced beachfront residential units equipped with advanced technology and entertainment systems. To further enhance the community's living standards, recreational facilities have also been incorporated within the design. Construction work of the long-term accommodation facilities is expected to be completed in the second half of 2016..... "

B. DUBAI.

(i). (From www.deutschebahn.com/mediathek. Translation by the Editor): "Essen/Dubai, 26. Mai 2016) DB Schenker has opened the first Logistics Centre in the Middle East and successfully brought it into operation. The center lies in Dubai Logistics City (DLC) and should be tripled in size by 2019 and will then cover an area of 25,000 sq.m. The current 7,200sq. m. on two levels for more valuable goods and spare parts includes a temperature-controlled area and so covers many different customer wishes. The area is being used to 100% capacity within two months of opening.

"Dubai is our most important hub in the region. Investment in the DLC is a strategic step for strengthening our network and for expanding our service offers in the United Arab Emirates" says Ako Djaf, Regional head of Contract Logistics/SCM at DB Schenker. "With this site so close to the Al Maktoum Airport, important roads and only 15 minutes from the harbour, we can offer our worldwide customers a

first-class integrated transport and storage facility.”

“What matters here is speed, good connections and the punctual delivery of the final customers. With the partnership with global players such as DB Schenker we can make from this location one of the most important hubs in world trade” says Mohsen Ahmad, Vice-President Logistics, Dubai South.

Dubai Logistics City will expand its capacity up to 2023 for up to 12 Million tons of Air Freight. The DLC includes over 25 sq.km. of open storage and serves all transport means, all logistic demands including added-value services in the delivery chain just as assembly and production and all in a single duty-free zone.

Through its ten years of experience in Dubai and the NMEA region with its worldwide network DB Schenker has enabled the entry into the market of numerous firms and now grows together with them in this so complex region which is yet so full of potential. The area of the logistics centres run by DB Schenker has grown in the past three years from 70,000 to 170,000 sq.m.

(ii). UAE: Dubai’s Roads & Transport Authority has called tenders for a feasibility study on extending the city’s tram line. From ‘R.G.I.’ 11.08.2016: “The 10.6 km first phase of the tramway opened in November 2014 and serves 11 stops between Al Barsha’a and Dubai Marina. Phase 2 would be a short extension to Mall of the Emirates station on the metro Red Line, and Phase 3 would extend the line northeast along Jumeirah Beach Road to 2nd December Street.”

C. DUBAI.

(i). Expolink wins Dubai metro Expo extension contract.

From ‘R.G.I. Metro’: 29.06.2016. Ruler of Dubai Sheikh Muhammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum has approved the selection of the Expolink consortium for a 10.6bn dirham contract to build the Route 2020 branch of the metro Red Line to serve the Expo 2020 site.

The Expolink consortium is led by Alstom, and includes Acciona of Spain and Gülermak of Turkey. Thales will provide railway systems.

The Route 2020 project is part of the emirate’s Dubai Plan 2021 for sustainable development and improved infrastructure and services. Construction of the line is scheduled to start this year, with opening planned for May 5 2020, ahead of the start of the Expo.

The contract includes the supply of 50 trainsets, of which 15 are needed for the new line and 35 to increase capacity on the network.

The new line will start at Nakheel Harbour

& Tower station where there will be an interchange with the Red Line, and will then run for 15 km with elevated stations serving The Gardens, Discovery Gardens and Al Furjan, underground stations at Jumeirah Golf Estates and Dubai Investment Park and a terminus at the Expo site. The alignment will include 11.8 km of viaduct and 3.2 km of tunnel. An extension of the line to Al Maktoum International Airport is planned for the future.

The line will have a capacity of 23,000 passengers /direction/h. Initial ridership is estimated at 125 000 passengers/day, increasing to 275,000 passengers/day by 2030.

Dubai’s Roads & Transport Authority said 10 consortia took part in the prequalification for the contract, of which five submitted technical and financial proposals.

A 3.30min. Video embedded in the report (<http://www.railwaygazette.com/news/urban/single-view/view/expolink-wins-dubai-metro-expo-extension-contract.html>) adds the following: Travel time from Dubai Marina to the Expo site should be 16 minutes, and the line will serve an existing/future population of 2790,000.

D. QATAR.

(i). QATAR: Rail project promoter Qatar Railways Co has extended a contract for a joint venture of Hill International (80%) and ASTAD Engineering Consultancy (20%) to provide project management services for the construction of the Doha metro Green Line. (from ‘R.G.I.’ 9.8.2016)

The 30-month deal announced on August 4 is worth an estimated US\$43.1m.

The 22 km Green Line, also known as the Education Line, will run from Al Mansoura in the east to Al Riffa in the west, via Hamad Hospital and the future National Library and Education City. It will have 11 stations and is expected to carry 140 000 passengers/day by 2021.

(ii). ‘R.G.I. Metro’: 17.8.2016: DOHA METRO CONCRETE BEAMS DELIVERED.

QATAR: Heavy-lift logistics company ALE has completed the delivery of 1,470 pre-tensioned concrete pedestal, girder, bridging and segment structures between 10 and 36m long and weighing between 30 and 100 tonnes for the construction of the first phase of the Doha metro.

Over a period of 11 months ALE collected the structures from the fabrication area and transported them between 50 m and 8 km over ‘challenging roads’ to the installation points. This required the use of a 34-axle line of conventional trailers, three 10-axle extendable semi-trailers, six prime movers and 24-axle lines of self-propelled modular transporters.

E. IRAN

(a). UK – IRAN CO-OPERATION.

From ‘R.G.I.’ 10.6.2016: Iran’s Ministry of Roads & Urban Development and the UK’s Department for Transport signed a memorandum of understanding for co-operation in the rail sector when Islamic Republic of Iran Railways President Dr Mohsen Pourseyed Aghaei visited London at the end of May.

The focus of the MoU is on bilateral co-operation to share knowledge and best practice in the rail sector.

A DfT spokesman told Railway Gazette it hopes this will assist British companies in winning contracts to export their railway products and expertise as the Iranian market opens up to international suppliers.

An exclusive interview with RAI President Mohsen Pourseyed Aghaei appeared in the July 2016 issue of Railway Gazette International magazine.

(b). RAILTOUR 2017.

Far-Rail Tours are running another tour from 29.04 – 11.05.2017 – a mention in an advert in ‘Lok Report’ 9/16 refers to ‘16 cylinders against a Pass altitude of 2,000 feet’. Details from Bernd Seiler, www.FarRail.com or mail@FarRail.com

(c). CHINESE LOCOS.

From ‘R.G.I.’ 16.08.2016: “The Rail Pardaz subsidiary of rolling stock engineering company Rail Pardaz Seri has ordered 30 locomotives from Chinese manufacturer CRRC Ziyang. CRRC said the contract signed on August 9 was the first locomotive order it had won in Iran since the lifting of international sanctions. It is CRRC Ziyang’s second order from Iran, following the supply of five GK1C diesel shunting locomotives in 2008. The contract covers 15 passenger locomotives rated at 3 MW with a maximum speed of 160 km/h, and 15 freight locomotives rated at 2.43 MW with a maximum speed of 100 km/h. This is the first export order for the passenger design, which was developed in 1999 and is in service in China.”

F. TURKEY.

(i). LIBERALISATION OF RAILWAY NETWORK. From ‘R.G.I.’ 10.6.2016: Liberalisation of the Turkish market is due to take effect on June 21, following the announcement of the formal launch of operating company TCDD Ta?mac?lk in the government’s official journal on June 4.

The establishment of TCDD Ta?mac?lk marks the vertical separation of the former national railway TCDD, which will in future act as an infrastructure manager and traffic management authority. However, TCDD will be able to contract out any of its activities to outside bodies, with the exception of traffic management.

The government has agreed to

underwrite the operating deficits of TCDD and TCDD Ta??mac?lk until May 2018, after which the government will only directly fund the construction of new lines, high speed rolling stock acquisition and major route modernisation projects. Subsidised regional passenger services will be opened up to competitive tender from May 2018.

Industry insiders report that the first open access freight operators are likely to begin operations in around six months' time, once the relevant certification and licensing processes have been completed by the Directorate-General for Railways. A national network management statement is expected to be published imminently.

(ii). CATENARY FOR TRAMS ORDERED. From 'R.G.I.' 10.06.2016: CCE Elektrik has awarded Powerlines Products a contract to supply overhead electrification components for two tram projects in Turkey.

Powerlines is to supply overhead electrification equipment, including 1,400 GRP cantilevers, for use on the tramway now under construction in Izmir. This is expected to open in 2017 and will be operated with a fleet of Eurotem trams.

A further 500 GRP cantilevers will form part of the overhead line electrification that Powerlines is supplying for the line in Izmit, also due to open next year. Durmazlar is supplying rolling stock under a contract signed last year.

Powerlines Products had previously signed contracts to supply equipment for Bursa's light rail extension and the Konya tram network.

(iii). TRAIN CRASH AT IZMIR. 27.06.2016: A main line loco hit suburban train at Izmir yesterday evening. No death or injuries were reported. The TCDD loco (33042) hit the Izban suburban train (ET 22107) from behind at 20:25. The loco was going from Halkapinar to Alsancak for the traction of Konya Mavi while the Izban train was going to Alsancak Station from Hilal Station. Preliminary analysis tell that loco ignored the stop signal while entering the Alsancak station.

The last unit of Izban train and loco were derailed due to crash. Izban trains continue service without calling at Alsancak Station for the time being. There's a shuttle service between Alsancak and Halkapinar.

(iv). ANTALYA EXTENSION OPENS. From 'R.G.I. Metro' 20.-07.2016: "Regular services on an extension of the Antray light rail network in Antalya started on July 14.

The 15.4 km eastern extension from Meydan to Expo 2016 has a 2.4 km branch to the airport. Services to the airport run every 20 min between 05.50 and 23.23. Expo 2016 is served every 80 min between 06.40 and 21:20. There are 15 stops on the new route.

The Eurotem joint venture of Hyundai Rotem and Tüvasa? is supplying 18 trams from its Adapazari factory to operate the extension.

Services had been due to start on April 22, the day before the opening of the Expo, but were delayed. Passenger-carrying tests started on June 8, but stopped calling at the airport on June 29 owing to security concerns."

(v). CRCC STARTS DELIVERING IZMIR TRAMS.

From 'R.G.I.' 09.08.2016: TURKEY: The first two of 19 five-car metro trainsets that CRRC is supplying to Izmir have left the factory in Tangshan and are due to arrive in the Turkish city at the end of August.

Ordered in March 2015 under a TL192m contract, the first of the new trains are due to enter service in May 2017. Deliveries are due to be completed by the end of 2017 and will increase the fleet to 182 metro cars.

The current metro fleet comprises 45 cars that ABB supplied for the opening of the city's metro in 2000, and 42 cars supplied by CSR Zhuzhou in time for the opening of the first extension in 2012.

The new trains will feature a passenger counting system, optical detection of door obstructions and light strips in the door windows to show when a door is out of use.

The entry into service of the new vehicles is to coincide with the commissioning of upgraded signalling by Bombardier which will enable the current peak headways of 4 min to be brought down to 90 sec."

More on 22.08 from RGI Metro: "The first of 38 trams that Eurotem is supplying for the two lines under construction in Izmir has arrived in the city. It will be on public display until September 4. The five-section low-floor tram is 32.2m long and 2.650mm wide with capacity for 285 passengers including 48 seated. One unpowered and two motor bogies have a total of eight 60 kW traction motors, giving a maximum speed of 70 km/h. The fleet will be restricted to 50 km/h in service, and average commercial speed is envisaged to be 24 km/h.

The air-conditioned interior features LCD passenger information screens, dynamic route maps and CCTV. The exterior livery includes waves, a traditional motif for the city.

In August 2014 the Eurotem joint venture of Hyundai Rotem and Tüvasa? was awarded a 83.7bn won contract to supply 38 trams by February 2017. They are being built at Eurotem's factory in Adapazar?, with 85% of the components produced locally.

Two lines will use the trams: 21 are to enter service on the 12.9 km Konak Line with 20 stops, and 17 on the 8.8 km Kar??yaka Line with 14 stops. Both lines

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are due to be operational by June 2017, with planned peak headways of 3 min and 5 min off-peak.

(A feature article on the Izmir metro and other rail projects in the city appears in the September 2016 issue of Metro Report International.)"

(vi). RESIGNALING SAMSUN TO SIVAS.

From 'R.G.I.' 10.08.2016. TURKEY: Siemens announced on August 10 that it had won a contract to supply ETCS Level 1 signalling systems for the modernisation of the 380 km line from the Black Sea port of Samsun to the junction at Kalin near Sivas in central Anatolia. Siemens is to supply its Trackguard Westrace electronic interlockings, points machines, level crossings and telecoms, and is to equip the operations control centre in Samsun.

Services on the route with 31 stations are currently suspended while TCDD undertakes a modernisation programme which will enable the maximum speed to be increased from 70 to 120 km/h and cut the journey time from 9 h to 5 h. Reopening is scheduled for the end of 2017.

(vii). SAMSUN TRAM EXTENSION.

From 'R.G.I. Metro Intl.' 30.08.2016: Samsun Mayor Yusuf Ziya Y?lmez and CEO of tram operator Samula? Kadir Gürkan inaugurated an extension of the city's tram line on August 27.

The 5 km southeastern extension from Gar to Bal?kç? with five stops forms the first phase of the 12 km extension that will eventually reach Tekkeköy. The remaining 7 km section is due to open in October. This is the first extension since the opening of the tram route between Üniversite and Gar in 2010.

Tracklaying on the extension started on January 27. In October 2015 Samsun Metropolitan Municipality ordered eight trams for the extension from Turkish manufacturer Durmazlar. The first two are scheduled for the delivery in September and will augment the existing fleet of 16 AnsaldoBreda and five CNR Tangshan trams.

G. SAUDI ARABIA.

(i). RIYADH METRO.

From 'R.G.I. Metro Report' 15.06.23016: A ceremony on June 8 marked the completion of tunnelling work on Line 5 of the Riyadh metro, when TBM Dhafrah broke through at the site of station 5B3. Governor of Riyadh Prince Faisal bin Bandar bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Transport Minister Suleiman Al Hamdan were among those present.

Line 5, also known as the Green Line, will run under King Abdulaziz Road on a north-south 13km route with 13 stations. Interchange will be provided at its southern end with Line 1 and at its northern end with Line 2.

Two 19m diameter TBMs supplied by Herrenknecht were used to bore the

tunnels for Line 5; San'ah completed tunnelling in February. Herrenknecht has supplied a further four TBMs for the six-line project, with one coming from NFM technologies.

The event also marked the official start of tracklaying on the Riyadh metro, on the at-grade section of Line 4. Alstom is responsible for tracklaying as part of the FAST consortium that was awarded a design-build contract in 2013 covering lines 4, 5 and 6. The consortium is led by FCC and also includes Freyssinet Saudi Arabia, Samsung C&T, Strukton, Setec and Typsa.

Alstom's £1.2bn share of the £5.8bn contract includes Urbalis communications-based train control, power supplies and its HESOP system which allows regenerated energy to be returned to the supply grid.

Alstom is also supplying 69 two-car trainsets from its Katowice plant in Poland. Production started in November 2015, and a full-size mock-up is now on display in Riyadh, with the first three trains to be delivered next year. The driverless trainsets from Alstom's Metropolis family will be 36m long and 2,710mm wide, with three classes including first and family. Traction subsystems and auxiliary converters are being supplied from Charleroi, with passenger information and security systems from Madrid. Alstom's French sites are also involved.

(ii). SAUDI TRAINSETS DELIVERED BY A.L.E.

From 'R.G.I.' 03.08.2016: "Specialist heavy-lift logistics company ALE has delivered the first two of the six trainsets which Saudi Railway Co. has ordered from CAF for use on the North-South line. In the latest shipment, the nine coaches and two 100-tonne diesel-electric locomotives forming one complete trainset were delivered from Spain by sea to Jubail Industrial port, where ALE loaded them onto 11 extendable step frame and multi-axle convertible trailers. They were then taken 500km by road to Riyadh in one day, where they were unloaded directly onto the tracks using two 300-tonne cranes.

'The client was impressed that we could complete the scope safely in such a short time period,' said Andrew Spink, General Manager for ALE's Saudia Arabia branch. 'By successfully completing the unloading in just one day, it demonstrates ALE's sought-after capabilities to handle and deliver a large shipment in one go.' "

H. JORDAN – HEDJAZ RAILWAY AND AQABA RAILWAY CORPORATION. RAILTOUR.

Ian Scotchman of the Branch Line Society has sent on 20th. July current details of a proposed tour of the Hedjaz and the more modern Aqaba Railway Corporation lines in November this year:

"Significant progress has been made with this tour, such that we would hope to be able to issue a booking form in the near future.

Outline details of the tour are given on the attached flyer, with the tour being offered as train-only over the Jordan-Hijaz Railway (JHR) / Aqaba Railway Corporation (ARC) lines from Amman north to Al Mafraq and south to the Red Sea port of Aqaba. The tour will feature steam haulage (hopefully 1950's North British Loco Wks 2-8-2) for the Amman - Al Mafraq return trip and for the Amman - Al-Jiza section. South of Al-Jiza the tour will be hauled by JHR GE diesels: the use of the requested ARC large GE diesel locos has been refused and looks unlikely, although this is being further pursued.

The tour will cost will be £700 per person with a minimum requirement of 25 bookings for it to proceed, with a cut-off date of 30 September 2016. At this stage the tour is not confirmed and many details are still being worked on. Importantly no non-refundable bookings of travel or hotels should be made. Also, please note that adequate travel insurance cover is a condition of booking. Travel to and from Jordan and hotel accommodation cannot be offered by BLS due to the regulations governing the travel industry and will be your responsibility - however assistance will be given where possible: again this is "work in progress".

Jordan is a tourist-friendly country and welcomes Western visitors. Security is clearly a potential issue and, although the FCO terrorism rate the risk as "high", it should be borne in mind that this is the same as for France and Germany, particularly after the horrific very recent events.

At this stage, we want to judge the level of support for the tour.....

Negotiations for this tour have proven to be a long, slow process but last week I received a real breakthrough with an affirmation from Jordan-Hijaz Railway (JHR) that they could resource a tour over the whole line from Amman both to the north to Al Mafraq and, critically, to the south over the Aqaba Railway Corporation (ARC) route to Aqaba, along with a price quotation. Since then, discussions have proceeded such that I feel that the tour can now be run, dependent on sufficient support. Once outstanding details have been addressed, we hope to issue a booking form in the next week or so.

Details of the tour as presently offered are given below. These are still undergoing work by JHR and we hope they will not change significantly.

The tour will be offered on a train-only basis, starting from Amman on 10 November 2016, ending in Aqaba Port on the Red Sea on 14 November. Cost of the tour will be £700. A minimum of 25 bookings

are required and if this is not reached by the cut-off date of 30 September, the tour will be cancelled.

At present we do not have confirmed break-downs for each day and, crucially, where the overnight stops will be. The train will comprise restored and modernised JHR stock hauled by their locomotives. At present the requested use of ARC locomotives appears unlikely due to their non-authorisation for passenger train use – please be assured that this is being pursued further but at this stage the desired outcome is looking unlikely.

International standard hotels are available both in Amman and Aqaba: other more out of the way places may require coach transport to/from hotels. However, we will investigate use of local travel agents to assist and will endeavour to assist with any queries (the Trip Advisor website is particularly useful in this respect).

Tour Outline

Outline details of the tour are as follows with two sections of the tour operated by British-built steam locos: Details can be found at <http://www.internationalsteam.co.uk/trains/jordan01.htm>

Day 1 – 10 November: JHR: Amman Station, visit to Museum and locomotive depot / workshops requested, train to Al Mafraq (60km) and return to Amman station – Steam. Buffet lunch at Al Mafraq can be arranged.

Day 2 – 11 November: JHR: – Train from Amman station to Al Jiza (37.5km, Steam)(2 Hrs), Buffet Lunch can be arranged. Train onwards to Qatrana (Diesel) – 3.5 Hrs (67km). O/N stop.

Day 3 – 12 November: JHR/ARC: Train south of Qatrana to Aqaba Railway to Ma'an. El Hasa mine branch requested, along with train finishing the day in the former JHR station. O/N stop.

Day 4 – 13 November: ARC: - Train from Ma'an – to Wadi Rum (7 Hrs, 120km). Visits to ARC loco depot and Aqaba Phosphate terminal line requested. O/N stop. Here Bedouin-style campsites with all facilities and entertainment are available or Bed and Breakfast facilities are available at Rum Village. – Details at:

<http://uk.visitjordan.com/Wheretogo/wadirum/Accommodation.aspx#sthash.jqZRLDrN.dpuf>

Day 5 – 14 November: ARC - Train from Wadi Rum to Aqaba Port. Visit to Aqaba loco depot requested. End of tour.

Day 6 – 15 November: Post-Tour - If required, return to Amman by scheduled bus (NOT part of tour package), the fastest taking 4 hours (see http://www.your-guide-to-aqaba-jordan.com/buses_to_aqaba.html) or other travel / tourist options.

Various subsequent mails have indicated developments and anyone interested should make contact direct as soon as possible! So, if interested, please let Iain know: Iain Scotchman isco@btconnect.com

I. EURASIAN CONFERENCE.

From R.G.I. 10.06.2016: Toma Bacic reports from the XI International Rail Business Forum 1520 Strategic Partnership in Sochi

INTERNATIONAL: Prioritising planned developments in the 1,520mm gauge area and co-ordinating efforts to create a better environment for Eurasian rail customers are the main themes of the XI International Rail Business Forum 1520 Strategic Partnership, which is being held in Sochi on June 1–3. The event has brought 1,300 people from more than 35 countries to the Russian resort.

In his opening speech, Russian Railways President Oleg Belozherov emphasised that the main challenge was to create an integrated infrastructure platform for international traffic in the 1,520mm gauge area, which covers the former Soviet Union, Finland and Mongolia, with extensions into neighbouring countries.....

Negative trends included economic sanctions on Russia, with a 30% reduction in imports including a 41% drop in imports from the EU, and a 37% decline in transit rail freight. As a result of this, he explained, RZD would now focus on the Asia-Pacific region to develop the Primorye 1 and Primorye 2 transport corridors between its far eastern regions and China. RZD is also focusing on the 7,200 km North-South corridor from St Petersburg to Mumbai via Iran. On June 2 it signed a tripartite agreement with the national railways of Iran and Azerbaijan for further development of the North-South corridor. The first Bandar Abbas – Moscow container train is expected to run shortly.

RZD also signed an agreement with Kazakhstan's KTZ for co-operation on the electronic interchange of international freight consignment notes and communications with customs authorities. A similar agreement had previously been signed with Belarussian Railways. An annex covers the protection of confidential commercial and technical information.

(From R.G.I. 1.7.2016: "A trial India – Russia freight service is being planned for late August, with a sea link from Mumbai to Banda Abbas in Iran, then by rail to Rasht, by road to Astara in Azerbaijan and thence by rail to Moscow.")

J. EGYPT: The European Bank for Reconstruction & Development is considering providing a sovereign loan of up to €150m to support a €224m plan for Egyptian National Railways to purchase up to 50 diesel locomotives as part of a strategy to reform and commercialise the rail freight sector. RGI 10.08.2016.

The intention is that the new locomotives would be provided under a competitively tendered supply and maintenance contract and would offer greater availability, reliability, efficiency and environmental performance than the current fleet. Outsourced maintenance would be undertaken at a new depot to be built on ENR land.

The wider commercialisation programme includes the proposed separation of ENR's freight operations into a separate subsidiary with managerial independence, and the introduction of track access charges which would provide a framework for future private sector involvement in the rail market.

K. IRAQ.

DIESEL LOCOS FOR THE IRAQI STATE RAILWAYS.

Not 'News' – in 'Lok Magazin' No. 59 of April 1973 pp.126f. is a brief article by Günter Stetza on this topic: "The Consortium Alstom, Brissoneau & Lotz has delivered in 1972 to the IRR (Iraqi Republican Railways) a series of Diesel-Electric locomotives from their works at La Rochelle-Aytré (France). The construction is modelled on that of the series 67300 of the SNCF. In consequence only brief notes are necessary to indicate where the two designs diverge.

The locos for Iraq weigh 76t and have two S.E.M.T.-Pielstick Type 16 PA Diesel motors fitted within the main frames. These are each rated at 1765kW (2400hp) at 1500rev/min. Top speed is only 120km/h, which matches the demands of the purchasers. Due to the difficult topographic and technical conditions of the route network of the Iraq State Railways no higher speeds can be allowed.

The new standard-gauge Bo'-Bo' locos have four electric DC driving motors mounted in the bogies, which are fed via transformers from the AC-Diesel Generator pack. The locos have a starting power of 26,600kg and the lowest constant speed of 24.8 km/h. They are fitted with buffers and a central coupling."

114:09.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

(i). Re: 113:08 (iii): STUTTHOF MEMORIAL. Thomas Kautzor writes:

"Regarding Stutthof KZ in Poland, two plates are fixed onto the wall of Nowy Dwor Gd. station (transfer from SG to NG) remembering the transports (attached picture is from April 28, 2012). I remember reading in the book on the Westpreussische Kleinbahnen that given the short distance these took place in open narrow-gauge wagons from here to the KZ. I visited the KZ in the early/mid-1990s and remember that there were still tracks going into it."

(ii). AFULEH PLAQUE

On the old Hedjaz station building at Afule stands a plaque with a Hebrew text – Sybil Ehrlich has translated it as follows:

"IN MEMORIAM

On November 14, 1942, 69 Jews from the Land of Israel who happened to be in Europe before the war and were in territory conquered by the Nazis arrived at this station, on a train journey from Nazi-occupied Europe. These returnees were exchanged for Templers, German residents of Palestine who were suspected of being a fifth column. The returning Jews were warmly welcomed by the residents of Afula, who gave them a hot meal.

Testimony of the arrivals on the train corroborated for the first time the reports of the destruction of the Jews of Europe ("the Final Solution"), and the names Auschwitz, Treblinka, Sobibor were heard in Palestine for the first time.

As a result of the testimony of these returnees, the administration of the Jewish Agency published a notice stating that the reports had been received from trustworthy and documented sources that the Nazis had begun the systematic destruction of all the Jews. Demonstrations and assemblies were held throughout the country, and the Hebrew newspapers appeared with their front pages in black borders."

It is worth noting here that in June 2016 a large placard stood near the station indicating the plan of the local authorities to erect a Railway Museum or Centre here – similar presumably to those in Beer Sheva, Jaffa, Jerusalem - and information from the Railway Museum in Haifa indicates that the intention is to source standard gauge exhibits from abroad, maybe even from China – i.e. this will be interesting but in no way 'authentic'. We await further developments with interest. The station area is nicely restored, together with the water tower and other subsidiary buildings, and along the former track alignment to the north-west are various metal sculptures formed of bits of scrap railway equipment – an LMS standard gauge carriage bogie and then, across the road in a 'Park Mesila' some rather rusted bits of genuine HR 105cm track and items mounted upon it. The new railway alignment curves around the north and east sides of the town.

(iii). OBITUARY: RAY ELLIS.

It is always sad to record the passing of another enthusiastic railway historian – Ray Ellis of Queensland, Australia was someone who was in frequent and helpful correspondence with many like-



TZEMACH STATION.

minded people worldwide and who seemed to know a vast amount about the railways of the Middle East and on railways in wartime – and was always willing to share information from his notes. He passed away in early July 2016.

(iv). TZEMACH STATION.

Some years ago this was a derelict roofless ruin; now it has been beautifully restored together with the former goods ramp and a toilet block and is situated within the grounds of a student residential complex. Many information panels are attached to the buildings and poles around the site and an unidentifiable Hedjaz railway bogie van stands on a short section of track at the ramp along with the body of a wooden standard-gauge PR goods van – both acquired from private sources. Outside the fenced-off site can also be found a concrete Mazout tank from the World War 2 period and the base of the turntable which has been, as noted, excavated by Yehudah Levanony. Yehudah has also published an extensive and excellent and well-illustrated history of the Valley Line in Hebrew: "Mey-Chamoro shel haSultan le'Rakevet HaEmek" – "From the Sultan's Donkey to the Valley Railway" – in two hard-backed volumes and printed in 500 copies. (photo above and p 27)

(v). ANOTHER MEMORIAL VAN IN GERMANY: LÜNEBURG.

In 'Lok Magazin' 07/2016 p. 86 in an article on the railways of Lüneburg in Northern Germany is a photo of a former DR G10 4-wheel goods van plinthed at the Lüneburg Museum on the Wandrahmstrasse, not far from the station. It is restored as 'G Kassel 2 475'. This is a memorial to an air raid and massacre on 11th. April 1945 – so close to the end of the war in Europe. According to the caption, concentration camp inmates, primarily French resistance fighters, were being transported from the KZ Aussenlager Wilhelmshaven to KZ Neuengamme; in Lüneburg the train was hit by Allied planes and many were killed; others escaped but were rounded up and shot and a total of 256 prisoners were killed in this way.

The website of the KZ-Gedenkstätte Neuengamme gives a slightly different and fuller version of the ghastly events. "On 7 April 1945 a train carrying around 400 prisoners from the Wilhelmshaven satellite camp (Alter Banter Weg) who were "unable to march" was attacked by Allied bombers at the Lüneburg railway station. At least 256 prisoners died in the attack. The survivors were rounded up in a field. The next day, the SS took around 140 of them to Bergen-Belsen. The remaining 60 to 80 prisoners, some of whom were injured, were murdered on 11 April 1945 in Lüneburg by the Wehrmacht soldiers who were guarding them and by the single remaining SS officer, Gustav Alfred Jepsen.

In the Tiergarten cemetery there is a burial site for the concentration camp prisoners who died in the bombing raid on 7 April 1945 and those who were killed in the massacre on 11 April 1945. 256 victims were buried there originally, but some were moved and reburied elsewhere, so today there are 167. A memorial stone was erected in 1954.

The "Geschichtswerkstatt Lüneburg" (Lüneburg history workshop) is planning to open a small permanent exhibition in a historical goods car." In fact their website reveals that the train of KZ prisoners comprised four vans of which one caught fire – all the prisoners were of course locked in. By 11th. April some 140 of the survivors had been transported onwards to Bergen-Belsen. In October 1945 256 corpses were moved from temporary graves alongside the railway line to the KZ memorial cemetery at Tiergarten. The wagon was set up on 22nd. March 2015.

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TRAVELS IN UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AND OMAN.

Torsten Kautzor has written:



"From May 15-19, 2016 together with Torsten Schneider I visited the U.A.E. and Oman to take photos of trains. Abu Dhabi:

Our two-day visit to Abu Dhabi to photograph Etihad Rail went well (= we were not arrested). I had written twice to the railway through their online contact form to ask for permission to visit their maintenance facility at Al Mirfa but never got an answer. On site we met the head of security, a South African ex-SAP who had previously worked in Afghanistan, and he told us that we should be very careful with Abu Dhabi Police not seeing us as the railway is considered a "Critical National Infrastructure" and we could have problems if we were seen photographing it. ER is being operated by DB Schenker, with DB International in charge of infrastructure and DB Cargo in charge of operations. As a result, most loco drivers are German and British expats who previously worked for DB Schenker in Germany or the U.K., although officially there are also some Emiratis drivers. The only product being transported is granulated Sulphur, a by-product of the oilfields, which is carried for ADNOC, the Abu Dhabi National Oil Co.

The line runs for about 100 km along the coast and then 160 km inland past Liwa oasis to the loading point at Shah (km 264). There is another loading point at Habshan, between the coast and Madinat Zayed. There are loops for the trains to turn at both loading points and at the unloading facility at the port of Ruwais. ER has seven 4500hp EMD SD70ACS (identical desert locos operate with SAR in Saudi Arabia and with SNIM in Mauritania) and 240 Chinese-made covered hopper wagons, with 11,000-tonnes 110-car 1.8 km-long trains hauled by three locos. Empties travel at 100 km/h, loaded trains at 80 km/h.

The trains leave the depot at Mirfa to the loading points, then run to Ruwais to unload and then return to Mirfa. The

Habshan run takes place mostly at night, with only the Ruwais to Mirfa section during daylight, but apart from the closed motorway bridge at Ruwais there is no access to the line, and the day we went there we had just missed it as it had left earlier than scheduled. The longer Shah turn is more favorable to photographers as it leaves Mirfa shortly

after daybreak and comes back in the afternoon. The line is fenced-in all of its length, but there are a few bridges over the railway from where the train can be photographed.

The line along the coast is double-track as it was going to be part of the GCC Rail Network which was to link Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the U.A.E. and Oman. After the official opening of the existing line in 12/2015 (which has seen test runs since 09/2013), it was however announced in 01/2016 that the tendering process for Phase 2 of Etihad Rail (628 km) had been suspended until further notice as a result of the low oil prices. This included the link from Ruwais to Ghweifat on the Saudi border as well as from Liwa Junction (Tarif) to Al Ain (on the border with Oman). Since then, the Saudis have stated that they had changed their priorities to building up their domestic network and the Omanis have also suspended the tendering for their part of the network in order to rethink their priorities in view of the fact that the connection from the U.A.E. will not be built in the near future.

In Abu Dhabi city, we also visited the Khalifa Park Railway, AD's first railway (609mm) opened in 2007. The loco is Severn Lamb "Lincoln" class 2131.FEB.03, with the 68hp Kubota V3300 engine in the tender. As there were no other passengers for the first train of the day at 3 pm, we were able to turn it into a photo charter with the friendly assistance of the Bangladeshi train crew.

Dubai:

After Abu Dhabi, we spent two days photographing the various metros and trams of Dubai. First was Baguley-Drewry 4wDH 3655/1968 (12 tons, 80hp Perkins 6.354 engine) at Mushrif Park. Together with two other BD No. 3656-7/1968 and two RH 0-4-0DE 165DE 418595/1957

and 418599/1958 it was used in Dubai by Costain International Ltd. as No. L1-L5 during construction of Port Rashid from 1968 to 1971. After completion, all five locos and the 18 Butterley Co. Ltd. flat cars were put into storage in Dubai and in 1975 L1 and two of the cars donated to the city for use on an 0.8 km long line at newly-opened Mushrif Park (10 km east of Dubai Airport). The two flat cars were fitted with passenger car bodies made of plywood and benches. Although initial plans were for the line to be extended into a loop around the park, the railway only lasted until 1981 when it was replaced by a road train and the train was put on display next to the passenger loading platform.

Since then, apart from a park railway at Safa Park, Dubai had been without a railway until the opening of the first section of Dubai Metro's Red Line in 2009 and of the Palm Monorail the same year. Since then, Dubai now has two metro lines, a tram line, a trolley (tram) and a monorail.

Dubai Metro consists of the 52 km-long Red Line from Rashidiya to Jebel Ali and the 22.5 km-long Green Line from Etisalat to Creek. 79 five-car driverless trains built by Kinki Sharyo are in use on the system (60 on the Red and 19 on the Green Line), which are maintained in three depots (Rashidiya, Jebel Ali and Etisalat). One car on each train has a "Gold Class" section (double the fare) as well as a "Women & Children" section. Most of the lines are elevated, except in the city center where they are underground. The two lines connect at both Union and Bur Juman stations. The Metro is difficult to photograph from public ground because there are few vantage points above the tracks; the only possibilities are a few road bridges or parking facilities. The other option is to photograph through the station or the trains' front windows. All stations are air-conditioned and fully enclosed. Dubai Metro is operated by Serco for the Dubai Roads & Transport Authority (RTA). There were once great plans to extend the metro with four more lines to 421 km of track, but that is momentarily on hold. However, a 14.5 km extension of the Red Line to the Expo 2020 site has been approved and construction is to start soon, while design work for a 20.6 km extension of the Green Line is to start in 2017.

Dubai Tram serves the Dubai Marina as well as the Al Sufouh neighborhood since 2014. The present 10.6 km line has 11 stations and is equipped with APS II ground-level power supply (only track within the maintenance center is

equipped with overhead catenary). There are presently eleven Alstom Citadis 402 7-section trams, of which six are in use during non-rush hours. There are plans to extend the line by 5 km from Al Sufouh to the Mall of the Emirates and to Burj Al Arab (initial plans were for the tram to run all the way along Jumeirah Beach Road to the old center of Dubai). The Tram is also operated by Serco for the RTA, as with the Metro each tram features a "Gold Class"



and a "Women & Children" sections, and all stations are fully-enclosed and air-conditioned. In order for the doors to align correctly, after the driver stops the tram at the station an autopilot takes over for a final move. At one point we were asked at a station by a Filipino security guard whether we had a permit to take photos of the trams, but we told him "no" he said that it was OK anyway.

Dubai Trolley started operating next to Dubai Mall in Downtown Dubai in 2015 with one double-decker hydrogen-electric battery tram built by TIG/m in California (of the same type as the trams in Aruba).

Although the line is officially 1.1 km long with three stations and a crossing loop in the middle, it measures at only 0.6 km. It is essentially a tourist tram, as is the case in Aruba it is faster to walk. There are plans to extend the line by 4.6 km to loop around the Burj Khalifa (the world's highest building), which would include a section through the parking garage of Dubai Mall, and a second trolley is expected soon. The Trolley is owned by real estate giant Emaar.

During the hotter summer month the lower level of the trolley can be enclosed and air-conditioned, as can waiting rooms at two of the three stations.

The Palm Monorail links the Gateway parking garage on the mainland (served by a Dubai Tram station) with the Atlantis Aquaventure hotel complex on Palm Jumeirah (a palm-shaped man-made island) since 2009. It is operated by Serco for real

estate firm Nakheel. Two out of four three-part driverless straddle-beam monorail trains built by the Marubeni Corp./Osaka Monorail Co. Ltd. in Japan are in operations on a 23 min. frequency. The ride only takes 10 minutes and is used mainly by tourists as it much easier and cheaper to drive onto the island. Moreover, connections to other modes of public transport at the Gateway are poor. Initial plans called for an extension of the monorail to Dubai Internet City metro station, which would have made it more attractive to commuters. There are two intermediate stations, but although trains stop there for a few seconds, these are not open yet.

Oman:

Oman Air not only had the cheapest fares on the Dubai - Beirut route at USD 130, but also allowed us a 24 hour stopover in Muscat. With Oman Rail (founded in 2013) yet to build its first mile of track, the only existing public railway in Oman is at Al Hoota Cave near Nizwa, 190 km inland from Muscat. This railway is only 1 km long and links the visitors' center with the entrance of the cave. It features the Austrian narrow gauge of 760mm because it was designed by Johannes Wunder Maschinenbau of Mariazell, Austria and opened in 2006 with a battery-powered open-sided articulated railcar. This train however did not fare well and it was replaced by an air-conditioned two-car EMU built by Severn Lamb Ltd. in 2011. The Austrian train has since been moved into the parking lot. We knew that the cave has been closed since 2012 because of water infiltration, but after visiting some desert castles we were hoping to least be able to photograph that train. We were however not allowed inside visitor's center to see the Severn Lamb train.

On the way back to the airport we stopped at An Naseem Garden in Seeb (30 km NW of Muscat Airport), where we found what we believe to be the former station of the long-closed 15-inch gauge 1.5 km-long park railway which used to operate here after 1985 (with a train also built by Severn Lamb)."

Chen Melling drew my attention to a link to this publication, which covers a variety of memoirs of the deportation of German Templars (and others) from Palestine during World War 2. The first essay (p.2ff.) is entitled 'A Forced Farewell to Home' and although not specifically given an author's name it is noted that an initial version was published in the 'Templer Record' of August 1991.

"July 1941! The war has been raging for almost two years. In Palestine, administered by Britain under mandate from the League of Nations since 1922, the German Templars have been confined to their settlements since the day Britain and France declared war on Germany. The agricultural settlements Betlehem, Waldheim, Saron and Wilhelma have been turned into internment camps by the authorities. The Germans from the cities of Haifa, Jaffa, Jerusalem and Nazareth were transferred to those camps. A number of men, apparently considered a higher

114:11.

"TRANSPORTED TO THE END OF THE WORLD" - THE EXPULSION OF GERMANS FROM PALESTINE IN 1941. A COLLECTION OF MEMOIRS; COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY HELMUT RUFF.

security risk, were separated from their families within hours of the outbreak of war and held under primitive conditions first in a camp at Acre (Akko), later near Jaffa. Amongst them was our father. My mother, sister, brother and myself were transferred from Haifa to Betlehem in December 1939.

In July 1941 we are informed that a large group of us is to be transported to another country. Each adult is allowed 40kg of luggage, children less. The destination is not disclosed but we are told it is to a warm country, no heavy winter clothing would be needed!

Thursday, 31st. July 1941: we have to say goodbye to grandfather and the aunts and to all the other friends and relatives who stay behind. We assemble in the schoolgrounds and our hand luggage and the contents of our pockets are inspected. Then our Jewish guards order us onto buses. Ernst and I get separated from our mother and sister who are still in the school building being searched. When our buses

reach Haifa central railway station we wait in vain for the others from Betlehem and Waldheim. Now I am really getting worried, after all, I am only thirteen and Ernst not yet ten. Eventually a police motor cyclist turns up and we return the way we had come. At Neshar railway siding, east of Haifa, we are reunited with mother, sister and the others and board a train.

The train leaves, we pass through Haifa again, get a last glimpse of our 'Kolonie-strasse' and shortly after of our German cemetery and then the 'Muschelesberg', where we had spent many a Sunday with our father, swimming and collecting shells. Then we round Cape Carmel and travel south along the coast. We pass Neuhardthof, the small Templar settlement where we used to enjoy many hot summer days on the beautiful surf beach.

Lydda: Our train is joined by internees from Sarona and Wilhelma and the men from Jaffa. Mother and we children are excited to see our father again. But no, the guards in our carriage will not let anyone enter! In the other carriages men are allowed to join their families but not in ours. Eva gathers up all her courage and asks the British police sergeant in her school English to let our father through to us. She gets a curt reply "I haven't seen my mother either for a long time." I hate the guards! A group of Italian internees is also on our train.

During the night we cross the Sinai desert. The hard seats are uncomfortable. We are tired, dusty and hot. The air is stifling, as all windows have to be closed. We are disturbed frequently by the sergeants coming through to count us. Finally one of them relents and lets the windows be opened a little bit. Fresh air but also smoke and cinders from the engine come in as we are in the first carriage, behind the tender.

Early in the morning we stop at Kantara on the east bank of the Suez Canal. This is Egypt. We are given sandwiches and tea in a large shed or tent, then cross the famous canal on a ferry. On African soil, on another continent!

Our hand luggage had to be left behind when we got off the train. We find it together with the big 40kg luggage in several huge heaps on the other side alongside another train. Utter chaos as we try to find our belongings whilst the men stow the big luggage in the baggage vans and the guards urge us onto the train. Wishful thinking. Our Jewish guards prevent any traffic from carriage to carriage even when it turns out that in the rush to board, some cars were overcrowded, others had seats left vacant. Pure chicanery and harassment? Or are they so frightened of us and worried that we might escape? British police sergeants continuously come through counting us

while the Jewish policemen stand at both ends of the carriage with bayonets fixed to their rifles.

During the luggage scramble we lost the bag with our food, so we have nothing to eat all day. Someone else has taken care of it but cannot get it to us on the train. When we receive it late the next day the food has spoiled in the heat – it is in the mid-thirties every day – and has to be thrown away.

One good thing comes out of all this; our father is with us at last, mother and we children feel much safer now.

The train takes us south along the west bank of the canal. We see the upper structures of ships and boats, occasionally the distinctive large lateen sail of a Nile felucca.

At Ismailiya our elders wonder if the train will branch off towards Cairo, where Templars had been interned during the first war after British forces occupied Palestine. No, the train continues south. The Bitter Lakes appear. Here the ships, travelling the canal in opposite directions, wait to pass each other. The desert, baking in the heat, stretches away to the right.

We pass huge depots of war material, vehicles and aeroplanes parked by the hundreds. Then troop trains travelling north pass us. The soldiers stripped to the waist in the heat yell and wave to us: Australians on the way to the war. (Later we learn that they arrived on the ship which was to take us away.)

Then a large camp appears, the tents partly buried in the sand, surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by armed sentries on towers. German prisoners of war. Our guards object when we call across.

Darkness comes and with it Suez. Our train shunts back and forth, then backs up the way we came and stops. Another night on a train? An Australian Army officer comes up and talks to our father who mentions that we have had nothing to eat or drink all day. The officer returns with a field kitchen and other vehicles and speaks to our guards. We are allowed off. Having no plates or dishes we hold out our open hands: mashed potatoes into one, a piece of meat in the other. It tastes beautiful.

I shall never forget the night: trying to sleep on the hard, dirty floor, babies crying, men cursing the guards, sergeants coming through with torches shining into our faces, counting and recounting. Father demands to be taken to the police superintendent in charge of the train in order to complain., the guard threatens him with his bayonet. A woman calls for help, her husband is ill. A sergeant comes through with the Italian doctor, who gives the man an injection.

In the direction of Suez searchlights reach up into the sky. Occasionally a faint

rumbling can be heard. Is it an air raid?

Eventually the night ends. Our train starts off again, reaches Suez and finally stops in the port area. All off again!

With our hand luggage we struggle towards a long pier. The sun is high and burns down relentlessly. Elderly people and women with little children sit exhausted at the roadside. Men carry additional loads. Trucks carrying our big luggage and our guards pass but do not stop to help. Finally we reach the end of the pier and are directed onto large ferries.

An Arab seaman tells father that we are to be taken to a ship anchored well out in the Gulf, safe from air attacks on Suez. We see results of such a raid, a burnt-out steamer, stern down in the water. After about half an hour we reach a huge grey ship. It is the 'Queen Elizabeth', with 85,000 BRT the largest passenger ship in the world.

Before we board, our heavy luggage has to be transferred, hard work in the hot sun for our men who had nothing to eat or drink all day. I see some of the big luggage slings dip into the sea as they swing across from our ferry. By accident or on purpose? Will the contents of the wet boxes and cases be alright?

From a row of portholes men look down to us, call out in German: prisoners of war, destined to share our voyage.

On board, the men are separated from their families again. We four are allocated an 'inside' cabin, no portholes to let in light or air. All lightglobes have been removed, all we have is the dim light from the passage. But there are four comfortable beds and, what luxury after the past three days, a bathroom. It does not matter that only seawater seems to come out of the taps.

In the late afternoon our ship raises anchor and heads south, onto the Red Sea. It is Saturday, 2nd. August 1941. We have survived the first leg of our journey into the unknown. What does the future hold in store for us?"

[Editor remarks: It is interesting to see that standard-gauge passenger stock was worked along the dual-gauge section of the Emek line as far as the cement works to allow the deportees to be loaded away from any passenger station. The Canal Bridge is not yet at this point ready for through working and so presumably they were loaded into ESR stock at Kantara West. It is unclear who the 'Jewish Guards' are, referred to repeatedly – possibly Supernumary Policemen. The journey was certainly unpleasant but in comparison with some others at the same period....]

More views of the old Tzemach Station



הרכבת



Beit Shemesh station as it was (above and right) and nearly finished the new station below

