

HaRakevet

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הרכבת

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118:01.

A beautiful full-scale but non-working model of Jaffa-Jerusalem Railway Baldwin-built metre gauge 2-6-0 No. 1 of 1890 has been placed outside the building for the new Israel Railways headquarters at Lod.

(Photo from IR spokesman Israel Tal, via Aharon Gazit)

EDITORIAL.

It is hard to know where to start this time. There is SO MUCH news from Israel and almost all of it positive; The first test trains are bedding the new track to Jerusalem; there is the imminent opening of the line to Carmiel as we go to press in mid-September; publication of a blueprint for a massive expansion of the network over the next twenty years - and yes, those of us old enough will know how many times politicians have announced wondrous schemes for the railways, but this time it seems they are truly meant and are realistically based, planned and funded.... If we as a magazine can keep going it looks like there will be a near-endless succession of reports of new stations, new stock arriving and pictures of lines under construction in the coming years... Hopefully this will never get boring. We include some here.

Elsewhere, well, we may have seen a Farewell Tour of at least parts of the remaining Hedjaz / ARC system; this deserves at least a decent obituary. Despite political issues which we would rather not comment on, both Turkey and Egypt and Iran are investing further in Rail..... Much is available on the internet for those who seek, but at the same time we wish 'Harakevet' to remain a publication of record that can be accessed on paper and read long after many websites will have closed.

Although I am the editor and publisher (in Berlin) it is Steve in Leeds who does the hard work of layout, printing, distribution and administration – all for love. The magazine would swiftly fold otherwise. He has recently moved house and has some family health issues to contend with and faces an operation soon so this issue will not appear for the beginning of September but we trust it will still emerge in reasonable time.

Enjoy! The Editor.



- 118:03. The first test train on the lengthy viaduct at Latrun on the new AI line to Jerusalem. The train is loaded in order to help 'settle' the trackbed and ballast. Once this line is opened next year (and electrified for operation through the tunnels) the only chance to see a Diesel locomotive or freight wagons will be when maintenance is necessary. (Image from the internet)

NEWS FROM THE LINE.

(i). ISRAEL RAILWAYS DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR 2040.

On 08.06.2011 Israel Railways Ltd. held a conference regarding its development plan for 2040 at the Dan Panorama hotel of Tel-Aviv.

The conference participants included Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz; Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Shahar Ayalon; Israel Railways Ltd. Deputy-General Manager for Developments Mr. Reuben Kogan; Israel Roads General Manager Mr. Nissim Peretz; the Transport Ministry's General Manager Mrs. Keren Terner; the city architects of Tel-Aviv, Haifa, Beer-Sheva, and Lod; senior railway officials and suppliers.

The conference was divided into several sessions. The opening was made by IR Ltd. GM Mr. Shahar Ayalon who stated that "While in the past the government policy was anti-rail and consequently the railways were short of money, currently the government is pushing us ahead and Minister Katz wants more and more tracks; the railways are working very hard to carry out many projects and, in order to be able to carry out the tasks demanded of us, a special steering committee was created and has worked on this for three years. The Railways are open to all the latest innovations and are even selling abroad some unique Israeli equipment developed hand-in-hand with the railways."

Minister Katz said: "Israel is undergoing a transportation revolution, particularly on the railways, but also with its roads and ports; as described in the presentation, the government is interested in rail links with the neighbouring countries as was the situation prior to 1948 (the foundation of Israel) and such links can only contribute to the peace and stability of the area."

The plan itself was presented by Israel Railways Ltd. Deputy General Manager for Developments Mr. Reuben Kogan. The main session - in addition to the presentation - was a panel directed by Mr. Avi Bar-Eli, infrastructure journalist of the prestigious newspaper 'The Marker', with the participation of IR GM Mr. Ayalon, IR Deputy GM for Infrastructures Mr. Kogan, Israel Roads GM Mr. Peretz and NTA Deputy GM Mr. Yiftakh.

Mr. Bar-Eli as usual started with an "attack" on Mr. Ayalon, claiming that, due to additional stations being introduced, the service becomes metro-like, causing long-distance passengers to waste too much time; Mr. Ayalon explained that all the residents along railway lines have the right to enjoy rail services; therefore, quadrupling of tracks will be carried out; Additionally, revival of the "Eastern Line" between Kfar-Sava and Hadera-East will enable direct links by-passing the congested Greater Tel-Aviv Area; Mr. Ayalon was also asked about shortage of parking areas near and around stations as well as the better coordination with feeder buses; He explained that more parking areas will encourage people to arrive at railway stations in their own cars; the tendency is to transfer demand to feeder services; the railways are now learning how to run contracts with private operators in order to improve services to/from stations.

Israel Roads GM Nissim Peretz explained that his company – previously the Public Works Department - is now building infrastructures for all new railway lines; its experience has been proved successfully in the Valley Line and the Akko - Carmiel line and will undoubtedly continue on all lines under construction and those in the design stage.

NTA Deputy GM Gad Yiftakh reported that works on the Tel-Aviv LRV/METRO Red Line are in progress and building of the Green and Purple lines will start soon.

The next session was also a panel on the subject: "The Railway and the City - a Strategic View". It was conducted by the journalist Dror Marmor of 'Globes Real Estate' newspaper. The participants were: the Tel-Aviv city architect Mr. Oded Gevuly; the Haifa city architect Mr. Ariel Waterman; the Beer-Sheva city architect Mr. Dmitri Pagliansky and the Lod city architect Mrs. Simony Mizrakhi. Whereas the first architects reported that they are working in close coordination with the railways and that the municipalities truly understand rail's importance for the city, in Lod, which is a much smaller city than the other three mentioned and an important rail hub, only now is the subject beginning to be managed in the right way.

In the last session Dr. Alex Dan - Israel Railways Ltd. Manager of the Strategic Division presented the subject: "Israel Railways Ltd. Strategy - from Dream to Reality".

This was reported as follows in 'I.R.J.' - written by Jeremaya Goldberg:-

"IR presented details of its 123.6Bn NIS (\$US 34.9Bn) 2040 Strategic Plan.... Under the plan,... the network is expected to grow from 1,232km to 2,572km between 2020 and 2040, with the number of stations increasing from 68 to 120. IR's passenger train fleet will almost triple from 139 in 2020 to 511 in 2040. The plan allocated 94.78Bn NIS for infrastructure and 19.26Bn NIS for rolling stock, 9.6Bn NIS for depots and stabling facilities, with an overall benefit/cost ratio of 1.0.

Passenger numbers are forecast to grow from 59.5M in 2017 to 81.2M in 2020 and 306M in 2040. [This is a five-fold growth!] Rail's share of journeys of more than 50km would grow from 10% to 40% and the percentage of passengers able to reach Tel Aviv in less than 1hr. 30 min. would rise from 16% to 64.

Peak passenger services will increase from 50 trains in 2020 to 128 in 2040, with 96 services running at up to 160km/h and 32 at a maximum of 250km/h.

As the number of stations increases, IR envisages separate categories of inter-city and regional services to maintain rapid links between major towns and cities. IR GM Shahar Ayalon says double-track lines will be four-tracked and the Eastern Line between Kfar Sava and Hadera East will be revived to enable direct links bypassing congested lines in the Tel Aviv area.

On the core inter-city network lines will be widened from two to four tracks to enable 250km/h operation. Lines earmarked for four-tracking comprise Tel Aviv – Haifa, Tel Aviv – Ayalon, Lod – Beer Sheva and Ashkelon – Peleshet Junction. A 20km double-track tunnel between Tel Aviv HaHaganah and Rishpon (north of Herzliyya) will provide six tracks on this section.

The plan, which was drawn up by IR and the ministries of transport and finance, has been sent to transport minister Israel Katz for feedback before submission to the cabinet for approval....

IR is proposing a number of cross-border links including a line to Lebanon; Jenin – West Bank; Hebron – West Bank; Eilat – Aqaba (Jordan); Ashkelon – Gaza and a connection across the Sinai desert to Egypt, following the alignment of the former Ottoman railway." [sic. - this was of course British and not Ottoman.]

Other major projects in the strategic plan include: Afula (Valley Line) – Hadera East; Lod station bypass; and Expansion of Ben Gurion Airport station."

(ii). LEVEL CROSSING AWARENESS DAY.

From a press release of 13.06.2017 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Dangerous crossing of rails by cars at level crossings is a worldwide phenomenon, being an important challenge for rail operators while causing high risks both for car and train passengers. In order to raise public awareness to this danger, 43 train operators worldwide have combined to create the ILCAD - 'International Level Crossing Awareness Day'.

Israel Railways Ltd. is a partner in this international effort and it is the sixth year in which a week of raising public awareness of safety at level crossing has been launched. It is performed in cooperation with the Israeli Traffic Police and the Roads' Precaution Department of the Education Ministry.

The week will include the following activities to raise awareness:

1. Training at schools all over Israel; the Education Ministry has created special courses based on the belief that the right behaviour can be achieved only by education starting from a young age.

2. Cooperation with the Union of Transportation Safety Officers in order to reduce significantly the cases of breaking barrier arms at level crossings by lorry drivers.

3. Putting explanation signs at selected level crossings.

4. Cooperation with the Traffic Police in distribution of explanatory and guidance material in meetings with the public, with the purpose of enforcing level crossing safety regulations rather than punishment.

5. Radio broadcasting through all the radio networks with the message: "Either cross safely according to the rules or do not cross at all".

An explanation campaign through Facebook.

During 2016 13,892 vehicles crossed a level crossing after the barriers were down, causing train traffic disruptions, emergency braking and risks to human life; through 2016, 81 barrier arms were broken a few seconds before a train's arrival, of which 63 were caused by vehicles; summer brought a rise of 22% in the number of breaking barrier arms.

It has been found that almost all the accidents were caused by road users who violated the traffic laws and warning lights at level crossings; despite the low number of level crossing relative to countries of a similar area, the investment in safety devices is among the world's highest.

During recent years the railways have been heavily investing in many resources to cope with the phenomena of dangerous behaviour at level crossings, both by developing and upgrading the rail infrastructure, watchmen, education and explanation at troublesome areas, as well as installing the following most modern technologies destined for warning against the approaching train, applying clear signals and monitoring any car on the track when the arms are down:

1. A preceding traffic light at some distance from the level crossing to stop cars there, particularly at such crossings with a lot of cars passing through.

2. VMD - Video Motion Detection system to monitor a vehicle stuck in the "forbidden zone" (between the barrier arms) and to transmit the message to the Railways' Safety Control Centre.

3. Radar systems which monitor the area after the arms are down; once a car or another sort of obstacle are detected, the signalling system is turned red for the train driver; If he does not apply the brakes, the train will be braked by the automatic braking system.

4. A monitoring system for vehicles in the "forbidden zone"; this is based on loop detectors installed between the barriers and identifies vehicles which remain too long in the area, or a vehicle crossing the area when arms are down.

5. Preceding signs warning car drivers who are approaching the level crossing; These are installed mainly at locations with poor vision such as a curved road or other obstacles.

Of course all these precautions cannot prevent accidents absolutely if the law is violated."

(iii). TRACK WORKS AND SERVICE ALTERATIONS:

Israel Railways Ltd. announced on their website that, due to track upgrading work, the sections between Beer-Sheva Central, Beer-Sheva North/University and Dimona would be closed for traffic in both directions from Friday 23.06.2017 at 12:01 to Sunday 02.07.2017 at 04:00. Consequently, on Friday 23.06.2017 the trains of 12:36 between Dimona and Beer-Sheva North/University and that of 13:30 between Beer-Sheva North/University were cancelled.

On Saturday night 24.06.2017 there would be no trains Beer-Sheva North/University and Dimona; bus shuttle services would be provided between the stations in both directions. On Sunday 25.06.2017 the 22.08 train from Hod-HaSharon to Beer-Sheva and 23:07 from Tel-Aviv Savidor would terminate at Beer-Sheva North/University instead of Beer-Sheva Central.

(iv). LOD STATION TRANSFORMATION:

Under 'Tenders' there is more information but those who know and love Lod station as it currently is will soon find a totally transformed and modernised and urbanised area.

From a press release of 02.08.2017 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways are currently in full preparations to move to the new headquarters at Lod station, to be called "The Railways House". More than 500 employees of the organization, headquarters and management staff will be manning the new offices.

Until the change, due in September 2017, the railways suffer from the fact that the different divisions' headquarters are scattered in Tel-Aviv, Haifa and Lod. The current management site at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station has been built over the years on a "patchwork" system consisting of many single-storey transportable caravans. In the new block, all the headquarters units will be concentrated; This will suit the company's growing activity, will strengthen the cooperation between the various divisions and will bring a much higher efficiency.

The new building includes the main structure of eight floors with offices and two basement floors with an overall area of 26,000 sq.m.; there are 30 conference rooms.

The building design has been inspired by rails and it will be lighted at night by a special floating lighting system which shows the "tracks" between the floors.

The building has been designed according to a green progressive concept with big windows which enable use of daylight, thus reducing the use of electric lighting; advanced air conditioning systems with low energy consumption; re-using gray water" systems; assimilation of air cleaning systems; etc.

After the railways' Headquarters starts working the whole area of caravans at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central will be dismantled and demolished to give space for developing a new living and employment/business site as part of the agreement signed in 2012 between the railways and the Israel Land Authority for developing station areas.

A combined transportation centre is to be built near the Railways' block; works are expected to start at the beginning of 2018 and last about three years; the centre will serve the whole area's population enabling them to reach anywhere in Israel either by rail or any means of public transport.

This project includes a 7-floor building, of which one floor will be dedicated to the new Lod railway station to be combined with business areas; 6 floors above the station will serve the public – with 600 parking spaces; beneath the station there will be two additional floors; the area of the new station will be 930 sq.m., three platforms with buildings and covered areas of 3,500 sq.m. in addition to 1,300 sq.m. of non-roofed platforms and of 350m each; a 120m long overhead pedestrian bridge is being built; this will run over the whole station area over the platforms and 15 tracks and will link the business area with the eastern platform.

Over the new station, three office towers are planned and the city's new Central Bus Station.

As part of the preparations to open the "Railway Building", a full-scale model of a Baldwin 2-6-0 steam locomotive has been placed at the entrance of the building; it commemorates the first locomotive to run on the network; this made its first journey in 1890 and inaugurated the Jaffa-Jerusalem line on 26.09.1892; the original was destroyed during World War One and carried the number 1 now on the model.

Israel Railways General Manager said: "The move of the Railways' headquarters to Lod has several valuable reasons; it strengthens the city in accordance with the government's decision; there is functionality in having all divisions under a single

(vi). COURTESY PATROL STAFF.

From a press release of 02.07.2017 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

A few days ago the railways' "Courtesy Patrol" or "Courtesy Police" started its activities, as an overall marketing process taking place for four years and for the second time in 2017; the aim is to increase awareness of correct behavior at stations and on trains, in order to improve the journey experience and so making it more pleasant and joyful for everybody under the message "When showing consideration each other - everybody has more pleasure".

The duty of the "patrol/police" is to show passengers how the rail journey becomes more pleasant if some simple rules of consideration for other passengers are kept. So far, thousands of passengers have been exposed to the "patrol/police" and willingly behaved accordingly; interest has been expressed in the internet.

The teams are not railway employees but actually professional actors and clowns; Passengers can meet them at the stations: the four stations in Tel-Aviv, the four stations in Haifa, also Netanya, Netanya Sapir, Lod, Rehovot, Ashkelon, Ashdod and Binyamina, on varying routes and in morning and afternoon rush hours, until 06.07.2017.



• Proposed new Facility at Lod - artists impression

roof, and also due to social reasons to integrate the railways' activities with the community; the best example is the fact that there are no fences around the building and the public is invited to visit there and to be partner in the activity."

(v). WHITE NIGHTS.

Israel Railways Ltd. announced on their website that as part of the "White Nights" in Tel-Aviv in the night of Thursday 29.06.2017 and up to the following morning the railways would add trains from Nahariya and Haifa in the north, Hod HaSharon in the centre, and Beer-Sheva and Modi'in in the south to/from Tel-Aviv.

The marketing process, which is also accompanied by a digital campaign, branding railway cars, with audio messages by the comic Tal Friedmann, is to convince passengers to keep to the right on stairs and escalators, to give priority to alighting passengers, have silent cellular conversations, listen to music only while using earphones, and to avoid putting legs on seats.

The actors at stations are dressed in red - for negative behaviour, and green – for positive behaviour; they interact with passengers.

Stickers were put on branded railway cars (the writing means: "Courtesy Patrol" or "Courtesy Police".

(vii). BRITNEY SPEARS CONCERT SPECIALS.

Israel Railways Ltd. announced on their website that on 03.07.2017 after the show of the world-famous singer Britney Spears at Tel-Aviv Hayarkon Park, adjacent to the University station, two special trains would be provided to Beer-Sheva calling at all intermediate stations; on all other lines, trains would call at all intermediate stations as well.

(viii). MACCABIYAH OPENING.

Israel Railways Ltd. announced the following on their website: Due to the opening ceremony of the Maccabiah Games (an Israeli Olympic-style sport event) on Thursday 06.07.2017 at the Teddy stadium in Jerusalem (located near Malkha railway station), the following changes in train traffic between Beit-Shemesh and Jerusalem Malkha stations would take place:

"The train of 12:29 from Herzliya to Jerusalem will terminate at Beit-Shemesh instead of Jerusalem Malkha; bus shuttle services will be provided between the stations. Between 14:29 and 19:29 passengers will have to change trains at Malkha station. In the opposite directions: between 15:16 and 21:17 trains will start at Beit-Shemesh station instead of Malkha station; bus shuttle services will be provided between the stations at 15:16, 16:16, 17:16, 18:16, 19:16, 20:17 and 21:17."

(ix). WORKS NEAR LOD.

Israel Railways Ltd. announced on their website that due to infrastructure works to take place, the section between Lod and Tel-Aviv HaHaganah stations will be closed for traffic between Thursday 20.07.2017 at 23:00 and Sunday 23.07.2017 at 05:00. Consequently, all trains from the north will start/terminate at Tel-Aviv HaHaganah; trains from the south will start/terminate at Lod.

Services between Beer-Sheva and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central through Ashkelon, Ashdod, Yavne, etc. not passing through Lod, will be strengthened by additional trains. Bus shuttle services will be provided between Lod and Tel-Aviv HaHaganah stations according to rail timetable.

(x). BLACK AND WHITE PIANOS.

From a press release of 11.07.2017 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The success of the project "Playing Piano at Stations" has been beyond expectations with deep involvement by the public. The project was launched in May 2015 when pianos were placed at the following ten stations:

Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central, Tel-Aviv HaHaganah, Tel-Aviv University, Rishon LeZion West (Moshe Dayan), Bat-Yam Yoseftal, Beer-Sheva North/University, Ashdod-Ad-Halom, Modi'in Central, Haifa Hof-HaCarmel, and Sderot.

It was exciting to see people of all ages and sorts playing any musical composition on the piano.

Due to this success, it has been decided that piano players will be able to sit and play through the 24 hours and pianos have been added at the following 18 stations: Petach-Tikva Kiryat-Arie, Haifa Bat-Galim (West), Hod HaSharon/Sokolov, Kfar-Sava/Nordau, Yavne West, Ashkelon, Beer-Sheva Central, Afula, Jerusalem Malkha, Ofakim, Beit-She'an, Netanya-Sapir, Rosh HaAyin North, Holon Junction, Netivot, Holon-Wolfson, Kfar-Yehushua and Carmiel (the last station is to be opened on 20.09.2017).

Israel Railways Marketing Department Manager Mrs. Ety Finkelstein said: "One of the main challenges of the railways is to strengthen the advantages of rail travel, also from the aspect of journey experience and making it more pleasant, thus bringing more passengers; the aim of placing the pianos at stations is to make music more accessible for the public and create a direct musical dialogue".

On the pianos is written in Hebrew 'Just simply play on the way'."

(xi). NEGEV LINE GRUMBLES.

While Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz is proud of the success of the Negev line between Ashkelon and Beer-Sheva, some senior officials of local municipalities in the area think differently.

The mayors of Ashdod, Ashkelon, Netivot, Ofakim and Sderot, as well as heads of the local authorities of Eshkol, Ashkelon coast, Gan-Yavne (not to be mixed with the city of Yavne) and the Negev Gateway sent on 09.07.2017 a letter to Minister Katz, in which they complain regarding extended journey times between the area and Tel-Aviv due to at least six "unnecessary" stops at Yavne West, Rishon LeZion West (Moshe Dayan), Bat-Yam Komemiut, Bat-Yam Yoseftal, Holon Wolfson, and Holon Junction; They explained that due to these last six stops the journey by rail is longer than by car, trains are losing their advantage, thus gaining fewer users. They require faster trains, running non-stop from Ashdod Ad-Halom to Tel-Aviv, thus saving 30 minutes.

While the railway authorities explained that the main reason for the journey-time is the bottleneck on the three-tracked Ayalon railway, which can be solved only after the fourth track has been laid, Minister Katz has instructed the railways to introduce one limited-stop fast train in the morning towards Tel-Aviv and one in the afternoon towards Beer-Sheva.

So: On 25.07.2017 another press release by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry announced: "Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz has taken seriously the complaints of the people from the south - Beer-Sheva, Ofakim, Netivot, Sderot, Ashkelon and Ashdod - regarding the excessive journey time to Tel-Aviv due to too many intermediate stops particularly at the four inner-suburban stations of Holon and Bat-Yam, and instructed today that a faster service should operate from 20.09.2017 between Beer-Sheva and Tel-Aviv in the morning and one between Tel-Aviv and Beer-Sheva in the afternoon. The train from Beer-Sheva will call as usual at Ofakim, Netivot, Sderot, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Yave West, Rishon Le-Zion West – but then go directly to Tel-Aviv Hahagana, not calling at the four stations of Holon and Bat-Yam, thus saving about 15 minutes. The afternoon service to Beer-Sheva will be the same in a reverse order."

The line has proved successful with 30,000 using the stations of Ofakim, Netivot and Sderot daily in both directions, reaching 115,000 monthly.

(xii). OVERCROWDING ON JERUSALEM LINE.

Israel Railways Ltd. have announced more than once that even on the old rebuilt line to Jerusalem passenger traffic is growing, which in itself is encouraging. However, on the much less problematic section between Beit-Shemesh and Tel-Aviv, where curves are not particularly sharp (and therefore double-deck trains can be operated), the service is deteriorating. On Wednesday, 12.07.2017 passengers to Tel-Aviv had to alight at Lod and wait for another train for 20 minutes. Angry passengers said that this is not the first time this has happened and delays of 7 to 10 minutes are common. Other complaints were about the bad condition of the IC3 trains operated on this line; toilets are out of use, ceiling panels almost falling, etc. But the main problem is the limited space for standees on these trains, which are designed for intercity work; when too many passengers are on board this activates sensors which then stop the train.

The railways explained that the IC3 is the only type of train able to negotiate the curves on the line - which is partially true but only between Beit-Shemesh and Jerusalem, However, the service could be split so that passengers from/to Jerusalem would change trains at Beit-Shemesh to double-deck trains thus reducing overcrowding.

(xiii). NEW PHOSPHORIC ACID TANK WAGONS.

On 22.04.2017 Kasper Pedersen photographed two new IR tank wagons built by Tatravagonka Poprad in Ranzirni kolodvor (Zagreb).

Chen responds: "These new wagons were not built for IR but for the private company ICL Fertilizers/Dead Sea Works, and are meant for the transportation of phosphoric acid, though their Israeli registration numbers are misleading, being prefixed ? (Het), which was last used for coal hoppers, whereas ? (Zayin) was used in the past for phosphoric acid tanks. Their UIC numbers are legitimate, but are of no use here, as our systems don't support these. The new Traxx AC3 locos also carry them." "If you examine the UIC numbers closely, you will see that they don't actually reflect the Israeli numbers in full, as there is no representation of the prefix letter,

meaning that there could in theory be two or more wagons with the same UIC number, which is obviously not allowed, hence this is not an official IR number, but something worked out from the number sent to the works by IR."

(xiv). VALLEY LINE SERVICE ENHANCEMENT:

From a press release of 08.08.2017 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways have responded positively to the request of both the Transport Ministry and the

The train of 22:50 from Beit-She'an to Haifa, which operated successfully during July 2017, will also operate in August 2017.

The reason for the request is the desire to convince people to enjoy rail travel even late in the evening, thus avoiding the risks of road travel, particularly in summer when there are a lot of events both at Haifa and the Valley; indeed, the Valley Line is proving to be popular throughout the year.

Two additional stations will be opened soon: at Lev Hamifratz Central (the starting point of the

Valley Line adjacent to Haifa Lev-Hamifratz but an elevated platform), and at Nesher (a Haifa satellite town few kilometres east of Lev Hamifratz Central) (and known to veterans as the site of a cement works with its own former sidings.)

(xv). NEW STATION FOR SHEFAYIM.

The government cabinet consisting of the Transport & Finance Ministries approved on 14.08.2017 two projects including:

1. Extension of the northern section of the Green Line (LRV) with an overall length of 18.5 km to reach the city of Herzliyya.
2. A transportation centre to be built at Shefayim (north of Herzliyya).

The centre will have an overall area of 265,000 sq.m. and

will be located between Highway 20 (Ayalon North), the Tel-Aviv - Haifa railway line, and Highway 2 (the Mediterranean coast road).

It will consist of a 3-storey parking area with 7,000 places, 80 night parking places for buses, as well as parking areas for bicycles and motorcycles, and platforms for shuttle buses.

Additionally, a railway station with the name Shefayim will be built with 80 parking places. This will be a revival of a former passing loop and small station where passenger services ceased long ago. This station, as well as the transportation centre, will be the junction with the already opened Highway 531 to Herzliyya, Ra'anana, Hod Ha-Sharon and Kfar-Sava, and the railway line with the same number

which is soon to be opened, as well as with Tel-Aviv University, high-tech areas, etc.

(xvi). TURNTABLES.

IR has issued a tender for the provision of two turntables for turning locomotives; the tender document states that: "Israel Railways has 40 freight locomotives with a driver's cab at one end of the locomotives and the engine on the other. Driving with the engine hood leading is not safe and makes it difficult to operate the locomotive. Israel Railways plans to purchase two turntables for 180 degree rotation. The systems are designed for installation in the cargo division in Ashdod and Tzefa."

(xvii). MAJOR WORKS AND DISRUPTION – FOR A BETTER FUTURE.

From a press release of 03.08.2017 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways' management has announced the following: "The railways are moving rapidly into the next generation, in which many more passengers in a variety of lines will be carried daily, for the first time through long tunnels and by operating electric trains.

This process brings new opportunities including rail links to new places, "green" transportation, etc. and is an engine of growth for the economy and employment.

The temporary line closures are necessary in order to make the railways compatible with the next generation, to build the electrification infrastructure and to install the most advanced signalling system.

In order to reduce the inconvenience from which the public may suffer, strict work planning has been prepared in order to cut line closures to the minimum; it has been finally decided to close Herzliyya station for the second half of August, during which there are fewer passengers using this section. Both the railways and the Transport Ministry promise to make all efforts to provide the best available services during line closure.

The railways are in accelerated preparations towards the opening of the A1 fast rail link to Jerusalem, the service on which will start at Herzliyya; This will also be Israel's first electric line.

The company is also preparing to open additional lines (for example the 531 from Kfar-Sava which will join the coast line north of Herzliyya, and these trains will add to the traffic volume through this station.) Due to these reasons, intensive infrastructure works are needed at Herzliyya thus requiring line closure at the station.

The result is closing the section between Tel-Aviv University and Beit-Yehoshua (south of Netanya) between Friday 18.08.2017 at 04:00 and Sunday morning, 27.08.2017 at 04:00.

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



- On 22.04.2017 Kasper Pedersen photographed two new IR 65-ton tank wagons built by Tatravagonka Poprad in Ranžirni Kolodvor (Zagreb), Croatia. As one can see one is unpainted and the other painted.

- (Photo thanks to Paul Scheller.

municipality of Beit-She'an (current end of the Valley Line) to improve services on the line; as a result an additional train is operating during August 2017; it departs from Haifa Hof-HaCarmel around midnight and calls at Haifa Bat-Galim, Haifa Central the 8, Yokneam-Kfar Yehosua, Migdal HaEmek-Kfar Baruch and terminating at Beit-She'an.

- Suburban trains from/to Binyamina will start/terminate at Beit-Yehoshua.
- There will be no fast trains between Tel-Aviv and Haifa.
- Night trains between Nahariya and Ben-Gurion airport will start/terminate at Netanya.
- Trains between Jerusalem Malkha and Herzliyya will start/terminate at Tel-Aviv Hahagana.
- Trains between Hod HaSharon and Beer-Sheva will operate as usual.

The railways and the Transport Ministry will operate bus shuttle services between the stations of the closed section; intercity bus services will be enforced.

(xviii). KISHON PORT NEW RAIL EXTENSION OPENED.



can haul 1,000 tons in 22 wagons. (See photo below)

The GM of Haifa Port Company Mandy Salzman said: "The cooperation between the port and the railways neither starts nor ends at the unloading stage, but is a product of common work at all the administrative levels."

From a press release of 17.08.2017 by the Haifa Port Company:

"Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Shahar Ayalon and the General Manager of Haifa Port Company Mr. Mandy Salzman inaugurated this morning - Thursday, 17.08.2017 - the new railway section at the dock of the Kishon Port (at the extreme east end of Haifa Port), which will be used to haul freight directly to destinations all over the network. Construction of the new 2 km section lasted about a year, and already in the middle of next week Israel's first electric locomotive (Bombardier TRAXX) + six double-deck push/pull cars already built for electric traction, which are en route by ship, will be unloaded there.

Israel Railways Ltd. GM Shahar Ayalon said: "Today's transportation work is a national challenge, and requires ideological cooperations like the one launched today; In recent years rail freight grew to a value of about \$110 Million (NIS 400 M) a year; our vision is a door-to-door service from the port to the factory and back."

Israel Railways Deputy GM for Cargo Uri Sharir said: "The cooperation between the port and the railways is in constant acceleration, and the results can be seen all over Israel in freight sidings' extensions as well as in the increased number of freight trains."

The Haifa Port Company Deputy GM for Operation Mr. David Cohen said: "The cooperation between the port and the railways is excellent; some say that private companies are more efficient than governmental; we've proved that things may be different – joint, efficient and quick work; it is not a huge infrastructure project; its contribution can, however be great".

The GM of the National Authority for Public Transport and a member of the Haifa Port Company Directorate Meir Chen said: "Exactly as is written on the boards all over the port, the cooperation between the port and the railways is border breaking."

(xix). TEST TRAINS ON THE AI LINE.

20.08.2017 can be considered an historic date: the first test train ran on the AI line from Tel-Aviv up to the end of the Latrun bridge (named after the

Today's inauguration is a further stage of the tight cooperation between the port and the railways; existing tracks at the eastern dock have already been extended for hauling containers; the new track, however, is to be used in addition to unload rolling stock and to haul general cargo, mainly iron for construction; a typical train



Images of the new line in the median of east-west Road 531 between Kfar Saba and Herzliyya. Taken south of Raanana on 23.08.2017 by Aharon Gazit. As one can see, once the line is opened the journey will not win prizes for the beauty of the landscape but it will provide a useful link for those heading from the region to the main line to head north, as well as for commuters heading into Tel Aviv. This loop will also presumably be electrified as part of the Tel Aviv suburban network.

nearby monastery); This is the longest bridge of any sort in Israel; the train did not go further into the tunnelled sections.

The train consisted of a Euro 4000 Vossloh (Stadler) diesel-electric locomotive 1401 and 13 fully loaded hopper wagons of 60 tons loading capacity (total weight of each car 84 tons) thus bringing the train overall to 1,200 tons. The aim of the trial run was to test the bridge's stability and settle the track bed. The process will last about a week.

Unusual is that news came neither from the railways nor from the Transport Ministry; Channel 2 of the television network reported the event, made a film, and the picture shown herewith is the only one provided to me by Channel 2.

From 'Times of Israel': (Melanie Lidman contributed to this report)

"The official opening of the new high-speed train line is six months away, in April 2018, but a deliberately weighted-down train inaugurated the track, Channel 2 reported.

The purpose of this first trip, with a freight train loaded up so that it weighed a total of 1,200 tons, was twofold: to test the bridges and rails, and to strengthen and stabilize the concrete and tracks. The train will continue to go back and forth between the two cities over the next few weeks. If all goes smoothly, the line will open for passengers in April.

Transport Minister Yisrael Katz spoke of the impact and benefit of the new train line. "This is a fast train which will take 28 minutes to get from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem," he said. "This will ensure Jerusalem's status and will give people the ability to live in it, to set up businesses and will completely change the connection between Jerusalem and the rest of the State of Israel."

The Tel Aviv - Jerusalem rail project, which is projected to cost an estimated NIS 7 Billion (\$1.8 Bn) and has been in the works since 2001, will cut travel time down significantly from the 78-minute ride on the old line built during the days of the Ottoman Empire.

The trains will reach speeds of up to 160 kph (100 mph). When fully operational, they will depart every 15 minutes in each direction, carrying up to 1,000 passengers each.

The massive public works project has faced many hurdles since planning started 15 years ago. Originally slated to be completed 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.

The longest tunnel in the Fast Line project is 11.6 km (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 the size of the tunnel in one pass. The machine used 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 are 200 metres (650 feet) below ground, as the suburb is perched on hilltops higher than the capital. In Jerusalem the train station, built near the Central Bus Station, is 80 metres (260 feet) below ground and doubles as a public bomb shelter."

(xx). INAUGURAL RUN TO CARMIEL.

From a press release of 05.09.2017 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry:

"Today - Tuesday, 05.09.2017 - was an historical one as the new Akko (Acre) - Carmiel line was inaugurated by Prime Minister Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz, Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Shahar Ayalon, Israel Roads Ltd. General Manager Mr. Nissim Peretz, and other VIP's who travelled by a special train from Ahihud station (where the ceremony took place) to Carmiel and back to Ahihud.

The line will be opened to regular traffic between Tel-Aviv and Carmiel on Wednesday morning 20.09.2017, which is the eve of the Jewish New Year.

Two trains per hour will operate on the line at rush hours in both directions; one train will run between Carmiel and Haifa Hof-HaCarmel; the other will run between Carmiel and Beer-Sheva through Haifa and Tel-Aviv; daily traffic will consist of 18 trains to Haifa and 8 trains to Beer-Sheva between 05:30 and midnight.

The 46 km between Carmiel and Haifa Central will be covered within 34 minutes; the 137 km between Carmiel and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central will be covered within 90 minutes, giving average speeds of 81 km/h and 91 km/h respectively.

Minister Katz said: "The new line will be the first rail link between the Galilee and the Negev (south), providing direct train services; passenger will be able to board at Carmiel and alight at Beer-Sheva. The new line is of high importance at the periphery; it will reduce the economic and social gaps, will raise quality of life and provide the Galilee population with a rapid and advanced transportation system, both for Carmiel and other populated areas in the surrounding region.

At the line's opening the people of Carmiel, Ahihud and area will enjoy free travel to any destination on the rail network by using the personal Multi-Liner smart card; in the following three months passengers will enjoy 50% reduction in fares.

Minister Katz finally said: "The new line will be electrified in the future as part of the railways' electrification program, which will cut journey times as well as providing emission-free air; Israel Roads Ltd., who were responsible for building the line to Carmiel, have been instructed to continue with planning the line's extension to Kiryat-Shmona in the Upper Galilee near the Lebanese border".

The \$785 Million (NIS 2.8 Bn) 23 km line between Akko (Acre) and Carmiel includes four tunnels with an overall length of 4.7 km and two stations: Ahihud with parking area for 230 cars, and Carmiel with 700 places; both can be increased as demand requires.

Israel Roads Ltd. General Manager Mr. Nissim Peretz said: "The new line was a complex engineering project which includes Israel's most significant operational rail tunnel (until the opening of the A1), with an overall length (both tunnels) of almost 10 km (each tunnel 4.7 km totaling 9.4 km); the tunnel is the first one in Israel where slab tracks have been used, and it is equipped with the most advanced safety and security systems; not less important was the environmental aspect, which has been strictly kept".

Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Shahar Ayalon said: "The Galilee train is a further stage towards the near future of the railways; a new public in new places will enjoy rail services by more trains to more destinations. We're proud to open a new line and implement the railways' vision as a social and business oriented company.

We're ready right now to start services on 20.09.2017; the two stations at Ahihud and Carmiel are already manned with the best teams; the drivers and inspectors have been trained on the new alignment and are anxious to start operating, and the control and command centre is ready for the mission; Good luck!"

(xxi). 2017 FIRST HALF FIGURES.

From a press release of 20.08.2017 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry:

"Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz announced today that during the first half of 2017 public transport traffic grew by 5% compared with the first half of 2016.

Figures received from the Ministry's National Authority for Public Transport reveal that between January and June 2017 there were 374 Million journeys compared with 356M over the same period of 2016. Further, that during the last 7 years the number of passengers carried by all public transport modes grew by 30% after many years of decline.

At the end of 2016, 806M were carried compared with 631M in 2010.

Israel Railways Ltd. carried during the first half of 2017 31.5M passengers, compared with 30M over the same period of 2016; a rise of 5%; This is remarkable considering the many line closures due to infrastructure works during 2017!

The Jerusalem LRV enjoyed the highest rise of passenger traffic; during the first half of 2017, 21M were carried compared with 18M during the same period of 2016; up by 13%! This is even more remarkable considering the many interruptions caused by terror events.

Both Minister Katz and the Manager of the Ministry's National Authority for Public Transport Mr. Meir Chen mentioned the fact that the tendency towards higher utilization of public transport is a direct result of the reform in the services introduced several years ago, which reduced fares significantly, as well as launching monthly and weekly free tickets, thus making the services much more attractive for the public.

(xxii). **TRAXX ELECTRIC LOCOS START TO ARRIVE.**

The first of 62 Traxx AC electric locomotives which Bombardier Transportation is building at Kassel in Germany for Israel Railways arrived at Kishon Port in Haifa on August 28, and was then transported by rail to ISR's Kishon workshops.

ISR currently has no electrified lines, but 25 kV 50 Hz overhead is being installed on several routes. A section of the A1 fast line to Jerusalem near the Latrun monastery is due to be used for testing and commissioning purposes.

ISR called tenders in July 2014 for the supply of between 62 and 78 locomotives as part of its electrification programme. The specification required the locomotives to be able to operate in push-pull mode with up to eight double-deck or 12 single-deck coaches at a maximum speed of 160 km/h.

Alstom, Bombardier, CAF, CNR, CSR, Hyundai Rotem, Siemens and Škoda Transportation submitted expressions of interest. Four bids were received, and Bombardier and Alstom were selected for final negotiations. In August 2015 Bombardier was chosen to supply 62 locomotives worth 1bn shekels from its Kassel plant, with an option for 32 more.

See rear cover!

118:05.

TENDERS.

A.

(i). Israel Railways Ltd. Request for Information: No. 61755: For securing and unloading steel coils on freight cars: Latest date for submission of proposals: 15.06.2017.

(ii). Important Tender No. 21615: Building a combined Transportation Centre at and around Lod station:

Works include: new platforms Nos. 2 & 3 to replace the old, linking platform 1 to the overhead pedestrian bridge, a new station combining a business floor, two underground parking floors and six upper parking floors; additional parking floors for the railway management employees, replacing the whole existing infrastructure of the station, building a bus terminal adjacent to the station, etc.

Lod station, which already carries a lot of passenger traffic to Beer-Sheva, Rehovot, Rishon LeZion, Yavne, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Haifa and Nahariya, in addition to container trains passing through to Ashdod and Haifa, will become much more important with the renovation of the "Eastern Line" between Lod, Rosh HaAyin, Kfar-Sava and Hadera East (see item on 2040 presentation).

Implementation time: 32 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 15.08.2017.

(iii). Tender No. 21706: Building a House for railway track workers at the Haifa Kishon works: Works include laying a special siding to the house. Implementation time: 22 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 20.07.2017.

(iv). Tender No. 21722: Building a Preparatory Platform for Daily Maintenance of passenger trains (electric included) at Haifa Kishon Works: Implementation time: 18 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 20.07.2017.

(v). Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 21719: Maintenance, Rebuilding, and Building of Fences and Gates along tracks and around all railway sites at the northern part of the network (from Tel-Aviv and northwards):

The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 03.08.2017.

(vi) Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 21717: Building a Waved Roof over the southern part of Tel-Aviv HaShalom railway station:

Works include: installing an upper waved roof including glasses (identical to that over the station's northern part), masts, transverse support, sun roofs made of FE355W steel, lower roof including round walls made of stainless steel and glass. *(See illustration next page)*

The station is one of the three busiest in Israel, and work must be carried out even though trains arrive/depart at intervals of 1 minute on some parts of week days. The implementation time is 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 27.07.2017.

(vii). Tender No. 21723: Supply, installation & maintenance of technological devices for Level Crossings in southern Israel: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 04.09.2017.

(viii). Tender No. 11718: Providing Maintenance & Installation services for the railways' Signalling, Electricity, and Communication facilities: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 07.09.2017

(ix). Tender No. 41733. Supply of Point Condition Monitoring Systems. Bids by 19.09.2017.

(x). Request for Information. Automatic Underground and Ground Level Bicycle Parking Systems. Responses by 16.08.2017.

(xi). Tender 41702. For the Supply and Installation of Turntables for Locomotives – planned are two, to be installed at Ashdod and Tzefa, for turning freight locos with cabs at one end and hoods at the other, to enable cab-first running for safety reasons. Proposals by 02.10.2017.

(xii). Tender No. MN/KB/01/17: Carrying out works of completion of engineering development, landscape development, gardening, landscape rehabilitation, and maintenance of Rehabilitated Landscape areas along different sections of the A1 between Modi'in and Jerusalem: Latest date for submission of proposals: 11.09.2017.

Typesetting and design layout for
HaRakevet is by
Steve Waldenberg
of CPS Airedale
and digital printing is by
Thistle Print Ltd,
both in Leeds, England

- Computer image of the new roof, courtesy of the architect Ari Goshen.)



(xiii). Tender No. 11716: Framework agreement for supply, installation, assimilation, and maintenance of Display and Presentation means, distribution system, and infrastructure works deployed all over the network: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 14.11.2017.

(xiv). Tender No. 31701: An annual frame agreement for supply of Electrical Equipment and spare parts: The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 27.09.2017.

(xv). Tender No. 2172: Upgrading & enlarging the Parking area at Lehavim/Rahat passenger station: Works to include: building a bus terminal and an access road. Latest date for submission of proposals: 02.10.2017.

(xvi). Tender No. 21703: Construction and infrastructure works at the Ashkelon Railway site: Latest date for submission of proposals: 20.11.2017.

(xvii). Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 11761: Providing services of Inventory Counting at the railways' Stores: The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 19.10.2017.

B. TENDERS AWARDED.

(i). Israel Railways Ltd. have announced on their website that the winner of Tender No. 21650: performing infrastructure works at Rishpon and Herzliyya station, as part of quadrupling the coast line, is the Israeli company Danny Va'anunu Ltd.; the value is \$4.136 M (NIS 14.716 M).

(ii). The railways have announced that the Israeli company TeraSky Ltd. won the \$456,000 Tender No. 31704 for supply and installation of IBM storage systems.

(iii). The Israeli company New Hamonitax Taxis Ltd. won Tender 170301 for operating taxi services to/from Haifa Hof-Ha-Carmel railway station.

(iv). The Israeli company Avivey Hamoshava Taxis Corporation Ltd. won Tender 170203 for operating taxi services to/from Petakh-Tikva Kiryat-Arie railway station.

(v). The Israeli company Zion Asulin won Tender 170202 for operating taxi services to/from Netivot railway station.

(vi). The Israeli company CaféNeto won Tender 170101 for operating a café at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station.

(vii). Bombardier will be sole supplier of the upgrading of the Double Deck coaches.

118:06

A. TEL AVIV.

Light Rail

(i). GREEN LINE EXTENSIONS.

The government cabinet consisting of the Transport & Finance Ministries approved on 14.08.2017 the two projects, including:

The northern section of the Green Line (LRV) with an overall length of 18.5 km. This will reach the city of Herzliyya. The length of the section from northern Tel-Aviv to Herzliyya is 8 km; progress on this section depends on the demolishing of the Sde Dov airport (city airport); NTA have prepared two alternative alignments in order not to be dependent on the airport demolition. The project includes also a depot of 20,000 sq.m. to be built at the end of the line adjacent to a mall to be built.

GREEN LINE NORTHERN BRANCHES APPROVED.

From 'Globes' Online Israel Business News, 21.6.2017:

"The National Infrastructure Committee has sent the two northern sections of the Greater Tel Aviv light rail to the cabinet for approval. A single track is involved at the beginning of the approved section, starting

at Shai Agnon Street near Sde Dov Airport and continuing towards Einstein Street, which it splits into two tracks. One goes eastward towards Ramat Hahayal, and the other northward to Hasira Interchange in Herzliya, where a maintenance facility will be built.

The now-approved northern section is 18.5 kilometres, and it includes 26 railway stations. The Planning Authority says that since the original plan refers to a track to be laid as a continuation of Ibn Gvirol Street reaching to what is now Sde Dov Airport, the plan now approved is also proposing a track along Levi Eshkol Street, in case the vacating of Sde Dov Airport does not take place according to the planned timetable.

Six months ago, the National Housing Board approved southern and central sections of the Green Line. The southern section begins with two branches, one under the Moshe Dayan station in Rishon LeZion and the other in the old Rishon LeZion industrial zone near Beit Dagan Junction. The branches meet on Sokolov Street in Holon, from where the line continues to Tel Aviv, and crosses the city from south to north.

The section to Ramat Hahayal, which will pass major arteries in Ramat Aviv, including Einstein, Levanon and Rosenfeld Streets, was approved despite objections filed in late April by a group of 200 Ramat Aviv residents.

In May NTA published tenders for management of the Green Line and Purple Line (eastward from Tel Aviv to Yehud) projects, and a tender for planning engineering work on the two projects."

(ii). NTA Tender No. 053/2017: Design Checking Services – Railway Systems. Bids are invited from international consultancy firms for professional checking / verifying services with regard to NTA projects. Bids by 09.08.2017.

(iii). NTA Tender No. 054/2017: Providing consultancy services for Computers: The services are requested for: networks for communication infrastructures for IP implementations, control and computer rooms, radio communication, information security systems, low voltage, and information systems. The contract is for 60 months with optional extensions of up to additional 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 20.07.2017.

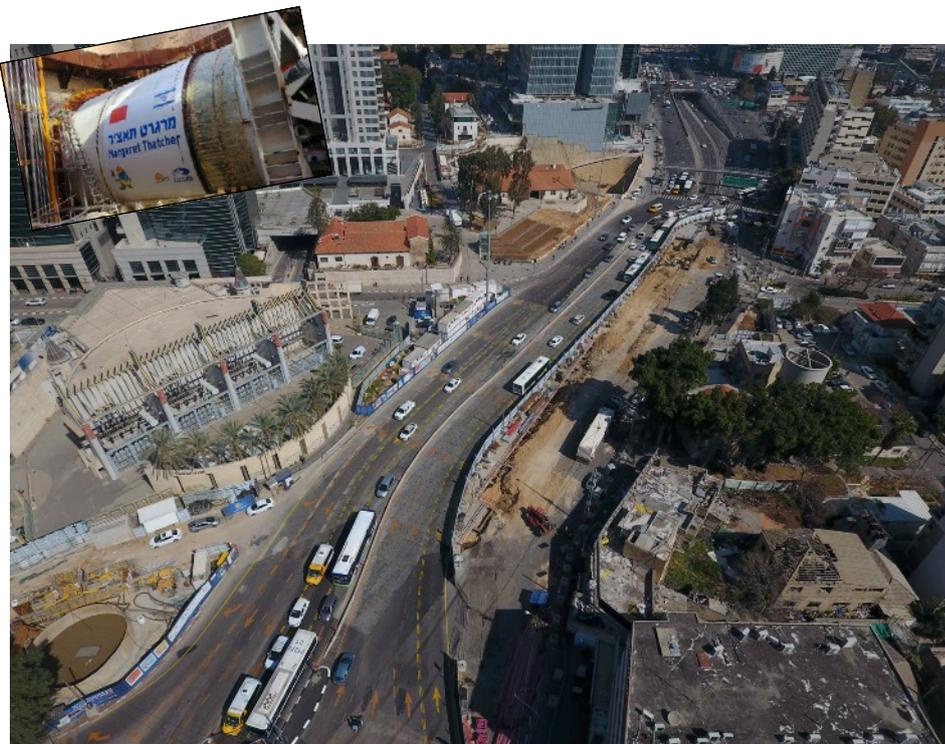
(iv). NTA Tender No. 056/2017: Providing detailed Mapping and Measuring services to the Purple & Green Lines: The contract is for 60 months with optional extensions of up to additional 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 29.06.2017.

(v). NTA tender No. 071/2017: Providing consultant services regarding Ethics and Consortium Responsibility: The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 24.08.2017.

(vi). NTA TENDER NO. 079/2017: FRAME AGREEMENT FOR PERFORMING WORKS OF INTERNAL BOXES OF THE RED LINE LRV STATIONS: The works refer to the following stations: Allenby, Judith, Shaul Hamelech, Arlosoroff, Abba Hillel, Bialik, Ben-Gurion, and Aharonovich.

NTA will select up to 6 winners to perform the works. Latest date for submission of proposals: 17.09.2017.

PICTURES OF WORKS STATIONS ALONG THE TEL-AVIV LRV RED LINE, SHOWING THE TBM AT THE DEPOT IN PETACH TIHKVA, WORKS AT YEHUDIT STATION AND GALEI-GIL STATION IN RAMAT GAN. (EACH MACHINE HAS A UNIQUE NAME CHOSEN BY NTA). ONE SHOWS WORKS AT TEL-AVIV ALLENBY STATION; IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE LRV LINE WILL RUN EXACTLY ON THE ALIGNMENT OF THE JAFFA-JERUSALEM LINE OPENED IN 1892, WHILE THE STATION IS LOCATED EXACTLY WHERE THE TEL-AVIV SOUTH RAILWAY STATION BUILT BY THE BRITISH IN 1920 EXISTED UNTIL NOVEMBER 1970, WHEN IT WAS DEMOLISHED IN FAVOUR OF A HUGE PARKING AREA. (PICTURES BY COURTESY OF MR. ASAF BAREKET FROM THE OFFICE OF MRS. GALIT PORAT, NTA SPOKESMAN.)



B. HAIFA.

(i) THE HAIFA CARMELIT FUNICULAR.

The Carmelit operator, Haifa municipality, has decided after consulting with Swiss experts that it is useless to try saving the partially-burnt trains due to their being obsolete, as is also the cable network. It has therefore decided that two new trains will be ordered from the Swiss firm Fatzak. Work will take up to 14 months, so services will resume only in the second half of 2018.

(ii). CABLE CAR UP CARMEL.

Not really 'rail' but, What the heck! It is guided public transportation.



From a press release of 27.06.2017 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry and the Haifa municipality:

"The Haifa Cable Car project got under way today when Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz, the mayor of Haifa Mr. Yona Yahav, the President of the Technion (technical institute) Prof. Peretz Lavi, and senior members of the Haifa University, the ministry, mayors from neighbouring cities, members of Yefe-Nof and other VIPs laid the corner stone for the project at the Technion yard.

station, and the futuristic tram-train to Nazareth, with the Technion and the Haifa University, both on Mount Carmel.

The \$80 Million (NIS 280M) line will be 4.5km



The cable car will link the transportation centre comprising Lev HaMifratz railway station, the HaMifratz adjacent central bus station, the Valley Line railway station being built above Lev HaMifratz railway

long, will reach a height of 460m above sea level at its last station at the Haifa University, and will have stations at the Transportation Centre, Krayot

junction (formerly 'Checkpost'), Dory Street, Technion Centre, Upper Technion and the Haifa University. It will take three years to complete.

Services will be provided by 10-passenger cars; frequency will be 30 seconds from each station; the journey between the transportation centre and the university will take 19 minutes, between the transportation centre and the Technion 10 minutes, and between the Technion and the University 9 minutes.

In the first stage the system will operate 76 cars which will carry 1,200 passengers/hour at the same time in both directions; at a later stage, 2,400 passengers/hour will be carried; the annual traffic forecast is for more than 2 million passengers.

All the smart cards like "Multi-Liner", Monthly freedom and Student freedom cards in use on public transport services will be valid here too.

Prior to the cornerstone ceremony Minister Katz was awarded the title Honorary Citizen by the mayor of Haifa as an appreciation to his activity for Haifa in the following projects: METRONIT-BRT, a new important trunk road, transportation centre, full renovation of the underground train-Carmelit, the new Haifa port, etc.

Minister Katz said: "The cable car is a real revolution in Israeli public transport, but particularly to the Haifa Greater Metropolitan Area; tens of thousands of students and research teams will be

able to leave the car at home and use the new fast, comfortable and safe mode of transport; when arriving at the university tower they will enjoy one of Israel's most beautiful landscapes."

The mayor of Haifa Mr. Yahav said: "Haifa is undergoing a huge transportation revolution during the last decade thanks to massive investments led by Minister Katz; the cable car is so far the latest innovation."

The President of the Technion Mr. Peretz Lavi said: "Our institute has always been leading with its innovative and creative mindset; we waited 13 years for the cable car and are happy to see it now under way; there is no other place more appropriate to be the first to enjoy from the new service."

Illustrations (from Yefe Nof) show computer generated images of the cable car station at the Technion and the university tower; credit: Yefe-Nof.

C. BEER SHEVA

A new entry – from I.R.J. 11.07.2017: By Jeremaya Goldberg:

"Israel's Transport Ministry has granted the city of Beer-Sheva approval to proceed with preliminary design on a light rail line linking the city centre with the suburbs and nearby military facilities.

The government decided to support the project last year in response to the transfer of most of the Israeli Defence Force from the centre of Israel to bases around the city. With the city's population forecast to increase from 190,000 to 330,000 by 2030, the current bus network is deemed inadequate to cope with future demand. The line will run on streets for most of its length and has an estimated cost of NIS 3-5Bn (\$US 850M-1.4Bn), depending on the final specification.

The municipal government will establish a public company to manage design and construction, which will not be completed until at least 2025."

118:07

- I. ARC GE U20C 2, 150 hp CO-CO (1980) no. 305 & 314 double heading a phosphate train loading under the El Shidiye loading facility on 13.5.2017. (Photo Harel Even)



OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.

A. TURKEY.

(i). ISTANBUL METRO LINE 2 TRAINS.

From 'Metro Intl.' 02.06.2017 "The Eurotem joint venture of Hyundai Rotem and Tüvasaş shipped the first train for Istanbul Metro Line M2 from its Adana factory on May 31.

In December 2014 Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality signed a €77.5M contract for 17 four-car trainsets. Deliveries are due to be completed by the end of the year.

The supplier says that the fleet is the first metro rolling stock in Turkey to be assembled with aluminium bodyshells. Aluminium will also be used for the bodyshells of the 300 metro cars that Hyundai Rotem is supplying for Line M7 under a contract awarded last year."

(ii). NEW METRO LINE FOR IZMIR APPROVED (AND TRAMWAY EXTENSION).

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 09.06.2017: "The Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs & Communications has approved a new metro line in Izmir following the completion of an environmental impact assessment.

The 4.5km route would run east from Halkapınar metro and Izban suburban railway station, which would also be the terminus of the future Konak tram line, to the coach station at Otogar. Intermediate stations would be built at Vakıflar, Altındağ and Çamdibi.

Plans were developed by Izmir Metropolitan Municipality, but the project will be delivered by the ministry, which has included it in its 2014-17 investment programme. Work is envisaged to take 30 months.

A 7.2km extension of the city's only metro line from Fahrettin Altay to Narlıdere was approved last December, and is planned to open in 2020.

An extension of the recently inaugurated Karsiyaka tram line has been approved. The first phase would take the route to Çiğli Izban station, with the second phase taking the extension to Katip Çelebi Üniversitesi via Atatürk Organize Sanayi."

(iii). IZMIT TRAMWAY OPENS.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 19.06.2017: "Governor of Kocaeli province İbrahim Karaosmanoğlu inaugurated the Akçaray tram line in Izmit on June 17.

The 7.4km route with 11 stops links Sekapark in the west with Otogar in the east via the city's railway station. The end-to-end journey time is 24

min. Gülermak acted as lead contractor. Test running started on March 23 and tracklaying was completed on May 5. Durmazlar has supplied a fleet of 12 bidirectional five-section Panorama trams from its Bursa factory under a €19.7m contract signed in October 2015. These are stabled in a depot near Otogar. Each low-floor tram is 33m long and 2,650mm wide with capacity for 300 passengers. Maximum speed is 70km/h."

(iv). EBRD LOAN FOR ISTANBUL METRO LINE 9.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 29.06.2018: "The European Bank for Reconstruction & Development has announced that it is providing a loan to Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality towards the construction of metro Line M9.

EBRD is providing an €88.3M loan, with a further €250M coming from the European Investment Bank. The total project cost is €338.3M.

Running through the European side of the city, Line M9 would connect İkitelli Sanayi in the north with Ataköy in the south. The 13.4km route would serve 12 stations, of which five would be interchanges with existing or future metro lines. Due to open in 2019, the driverless line would have a capacity of 45,000 passengers/h per direction."

(v). THALES AWARDED ANKARA RESIGNALLING CONTRACT.

From 'R.G.I.' 12.07.2017: "Thales has been awarded a contract to resignal the 36km Başkentray route which runs east-west through Ankara from Kayaş to Sincan.

The corridor is used by suburban, inter-city and high speed services and is being upgraded by a joint venture of Gülermak and Kolin under a TCDD project to increase capacity and improve suburban services. The scope of the contract announced by Thales on July 10 includes the provision of a centralised traffic control system, electronic interlockings, ETCS Level 1 and 2 automatic train protection, bi-directional lineside signalling, level crossing equipment and the interfaces between the high speed and conventional routes. Thales has previously installed signalling and telecoms on more than 400 km of the Ankara – Istanbul route. It established a Turkish subsidiary in 2009, and now employs more than 80 local signalling staff."

B. EGYPT.

(i). CAIRO METRO.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 16.06.2017: "The National Authority for Tunnels signed two fare collection contracts for the Cairo metro with Thales on June 10.

A five-year project covers 15 stations on the western Phase 3 extension of Line 3, and the other contract is for the four stations of the Phase 4B eastern extension, which will last two years. Thales will supply 70 ticket vending machines, 177 ticket office machines, 50 portable validation terminals and 460 ticket gates. These will feature Thales' TransCity TM technology. In December 2015 Thales was awarded a contract to upgrade the fare collection systems on lines 1 and 2."

(ii). BOMBARDIER TO DEVELOP CAIRO METRO.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 12.07.2017: "The National Authority for Tunnels and Bombardier Transportation signed a non-binding memorandum of understanding for the development of plans for Cairo metro Line 6 on July 11.

Under the terms of the memorandum, Bombardier Transportation is to develop a concept for Line 6 and prepare an initial indicative and non-binding offer over the coming six months. It is envisaged that a contract could be finalised during 2018.

Bombardier told Metro Report it is currently in talks with several potential partners, and is 'confident of providing a technical and financial proposal to the Egyptian government and people of Cairo that will best serve their needs'.

Partly intended to relieve pressure on the existing metro Line 1, the proposed 20 km Line 6 would run north-south across the city with 24 stations, of which 12 would be underground."

(iii). LOAN FOR NEW ENR DIESEL LOCOS.

From 'R.G.I.' 21.06.2017: "A €290m loan agreement to support Egyptian National Railways' planned acquisition of up to 100 diesel locomotives through a supply and maintenance contract was signed by the European Bank for Reconstruction & Development on June 19.

EBRD said the acquisition of new locomotives maintained by a private-sector partner would enable the state railway to provide a more reliable and higher quality service and thus generate additional revenue. The replacement of life-expired and inefficient locomotives would also reduce operating costs, fuel consumption and carbon emissions.

Procurement of the locomotives is to be undertaken under the terms of EBRD's rules for public-sector projects. It is not connected to the US\$575m letter of intent for GE Transportation to supply 100 Evolution Series locomotives which was recently signed by the Ministry of Transport and ENR.

EBRD is also providing technical assistance support to ENR with the development and

implementation of a comprehensive freight reform and commercialisation plan. This includes the separation of freight and passenger operations, and the introduction of track access charging. EBRD will also support ENR in implementing a campaign to make rail transport safer for women."

(iv). **MAJOR COLLISION.**

Two reports, both forwarded from Marc Stegemann:

From The Associated Press, CAIRO Aug 11, 2017, 11:39 AM:

"Two passenger trains collided on Friday just outside Egypt's Mediterranean port city of Alexandria, killing at least 31 people and injuring about 109, according to two medical officials. Two senior medical officials in Alexandria, Mohammed Abu Homs and Magdy Hegazy, gave the casualty tolls. Abu Homs said the death toll was likely to rise further.

A statement by the Egyptian Railways Authority said a train travelling to Alexandria from Cairo, Egypt's capital, hit the back end of another train, which was waiting at a small station in the district of Khorshid, just west of Alexandria.

The stationary train had just arrived from Port Said, a Mediterranean city on the northern tip of the Suez Canal, when it was hit, according to the statement. The statement did not say what caused the accident, saying only that the authority's experts would be investigating.

Egypt's railway system has a poor safety record, mostly blamed on decades of badly maintained equipment and poor management. Friday's collision was the latest in a series of deadly accidents that have claimed hundreds of lives over the years. Local television stations broadcast images of mangled train coaches on the tracks as crowds gathered around trying to help the victims, with ambulances standing by."

and: "A train collision near Egypt's coastal city of Alexandria on Friday killed more than 30 people and injured more than 100 others, Egyptian officials said. The two trains collided head on — one was coming from the capital of Cairo, to the south of Alexandria, and the other was coming from the city of Port Said, located on the northern tip of the Suez Canal.

The dead and injured were initially placed on blankets by the sides of the tracks amid farmland on the outskirts of the Mediterranean city. Wadi told state television that most of the injured have been taken to hospital. The health ministry later said 36 people had died.

The head of the ambulance services in the Alexandria's western sector, Dr Mohamed Abu Homs, said the collision took place in the district of Khorshid, southeast of the city. There was no immediate information on what had caused the collision. But State television, citing transport ministry officials, later reported that the crash was probably caused by a malfunction in one of the trains

that brought it to a halt on the rails. The other train then crashed into it.

Abu Homs said he fears the death toll and the number of injured could rise further.

Egypt's railway system has a poor safety record, mostly blamed on decades of badly maintained

equipment and poor management. State TV broadcast images of mangled train coaches on the tracks as crowds gathered around trying to help the victims. Egypt's transport minister has ordered an investigation into the crash, pledging to "hold accountable" whoever was responsible, state television reported.

It was the deadliest train accident in the North African country since a November 2013 collision

between a train and a bus killed 27 people south of Cairo. They had been returning from a wedding when the train ploughed into their bus and a truck at a railway crossing. That accident came months after a train carrying military conscripts derailed, killing 17 people, and almost a year after 47 schoolchildren were killed when a train crashed into their bus.

Both the transport minister and the head of the railway authority head were forced to resign as a result of that accident, which was blamed on a train signal operator who fell asleep on the job.

The government also formed a panel to investigate the incident, but that did not prevent further accidents. Egyptians have long complained that the government has failed to deal with chronic transport problems, with roads as poorly maintained as railway lines. In Egypt's deadliest train accident, in 2002, 373 people died when a fire ripped through a crowded train south of the capital."

(v). **CAIRO FAST TRAM SCHEME.**

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 16.08.2017: "The National Authority for Tunnels signed a US\$ 1.24Bn contract on August 15 for the construction of a fast tram route serving greater Cairo. Work is due to start in two to three months and will be carried out by a consortium of AVIC International and China Railway Group. The 66 km route would have 11 stops and would serve the new capital, planned to be built to the east of Cairo. It would also serve Al-Salam City, Ramadan 10 City, Obour City, Badr City and Shorouk City. Ridership is forecast at 340,000 passengers a day."

(vi). **ALEXANDRIA TRAMS.**

From 'Op de Rails', thanks to Marc Stegeman — translation from the Dutch by Editor. "In February 2017 Alexandria ordered new material from the Ukrainian tram manufacturer Tatra-Yug. The firm is situated in Dnipro (formerly known as Dnipropetrovsk) and should by 2019 deliver fifteen single-articulated trams with a length of 22m. These will be trams with high floors.

This is the first that has been heard for a while of this firm which, until now, has built only four-axle

tramcars which, as the name reveals, are based on the well-known Tatra models.

There is still some uncertainty concerning Tatra trams which Alexandria acquired earlier from Berlin and Potsdam. The nine KT4D tramcars from Potsdam were sold for a symbolic sum, and were indeed shipped from Hamburg to Egypt, but have not yet arrived - according to some reports they are still standing in a port area. In mid-February seven KT4D trams left Berlin for the Port of Hamburg. Fourteen should have been acquired. The tramway company still has some 50-year old Düweg trams from Copenhagen and has refurbished some of these and modernised them to some extent. A ride in these green-painted trams costs double the normal fare. At least six Düweg cars have also been refurbished for use on the interlocal line to Ramleh. For this purpose they have acquired an additional pantograph on the second section of the car. Three of these trams have been painted blue and white. Coffee may be obtained on board. A ride with such a 'coffee car' costs five times as much as a normal fare!"

(vii). **E.N.R. PLANS INDEPENDENT FREIGHT BUSINESS.**

From 'R.G.I.' 30.08.2017: "The European Bank for Reconstruction & Development has invited expressions of interest in a contract to assist Egyptian National Railways with the planned conversion of its freight business into a stand-alone subsidiary company. The intention is that this would have managerial independence and operate through commercial relationships with the remainder of ENR.

Phase 1 of the project would establish the necessary track access charging regime and identify where the new Freightco would require formal agreements with ENR, and would propose a legal framework, governance and organisational structure and develop an outline business strategy.

Phase 2 would assist ENR in the formal establishment of Freightco, drafting articles of association and any legislative and regulatory changes. It would also help with developing formal relationships between Freightco and the remainder of ENR and preparing an initial three-year business plan.

ENR is currently divided into three business divisions covering long-distance passenger services, short-distance passenger services and freight, as well as seven support segments covering infrastructure, maintenance, shared services (station staff and train control), safety, human resources, finance and engineering projects & development.

According to EBRD, ENR's freight business currently handles 4 M. to 5 M. tonnes/year, with an average haul of 309 km, generating average revenue of 0.15 £/net tonne-km. It has around 2,000 staff, 217 locomotives of which about 90 are operational, and 5,400 operational wagons."

C Iran

(i). TEHRAN METRO LINE 7 INAUGURATED.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 13.06.2017: "The first phase of the sixth metro line in Tehran was inaugurated on June 10, connecting San'at Square to Basij on a 22km alignment.

Line 7 will eventually be 31km long, once extensions at both ends open in March 2018. Nine more stations are to open on the initial section, in addition to the seven currently operational.

Line 7 is the deepest on the network, with the deepest parts 56m below ground. Services are operated using 20 eight-car trainsets.

In the longer term, the city plans to put into operation two more metro lines by 2020."

(ii). TEHRAN METRO LINE (EXTENDED TO AIRPORT.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 11.08.2017: "The southwestern branch of Tehran Metro Line 1 from Shahed to Namayeshgah-e Shahr-e Aftab was rebranded as Line 8 when an extension to Imam Khomeini International Airport opened on August 7.

This is the second metro link to the capital's airports, with Line 4 already serving Mehrabad airport. The extension to Imam Khomeini International Airport runs at ground level, paralleling the alignment of the Tehran – Qom motorway. A further extension to the satellite town of Parand is under construction. This will be Tehran Metro's first 'express' line, with a maximum operating speed of 120 km/h."

(iii). FS GROUP SIGNS IRANIAN AGREEMENTS.

From 'R.G.I.' 13.07.2017: "Three co-operation agreements were signed in Tehran on July 11 by CEO of Italy's national railway group FS Renato Mazzoncini and Islamic Republic of Iran Railways President Saeed Mohammadzadeh. The first agreement is potentially worth €1.2Bn and covers the provision of design and construction services for the planned Qom – Arak high speed line, subject to the finalisation of Italian export credits.

The second agreement was signed by FS Group, RAI and Iran University of Science & Technology and covers staff training. The third agreement covers technical co-operation with the university.

The deals build on preliminary agreements signed when Iran's President Rouhani visited Italy in January 2016."

(iv). CASPIAN AND CENTRAL ASIA RAIL CONFERENCE: NEW CONFERENCE

This will be held at Baku, Azerbaijan , (Marriott Hotel), 6-7th. December 2017. From the online brochure: "Over the last 20 years, executives from all around the world have joined our renowned global rail series of conferences. They are packed with inspiration, latest trends and provide networking opportunities on the highest level. We sit on the brink of a new dawn in railway technology and cross-border connectivity as we discuss trends such as reconnecting Eurasia, creating integrated corridors, and envisioning interoperability of the future. Now, more than ever, disruptive forces are reshaping the competitive transportation landscape across the Caspian, Central and West Asian region. Join us as we hear from rail operators on how they are transforming operations in the age of digitalisation, building new high speed rail lines, or managing cross-border efficiency and security.

In official partnership with Azerbaijan Railways, Caspian & Central Asia Rail 2017 brings together the biggest global innovators, regional rail leaders and futurists that have exploded onto the railway landscape in recent years to inspire you. With more than 600 decision makers attending, Caspian & Central Asia Rail is the critical platform to realising ways in which government, state-owned rail companies and contractors plan, build, upgrade, operate and maintain their regional rail networks. Join this conference to learn about the latest project updates and investment opportunities as the Caspian, Central and West Asian region moves into a new era of passenger and freight efficiency.

Azerbaijan Railways (ADY), Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI) and Russian Railways (RZD) have signed an agreement to further develop the North-South Transport Corridor. The Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI) has identified \$25Bn worth of rail projects, plus "incentive packages" to attract domestic and foreign investment in the next 6 years. The 'Belt & Road' initiative will also strengthen foreign investment opportunities as China and Iran agree to increase trade to \$600 Billion over the coming decade. Kazakhstan's planned rail links with China would make this route one of several strands in China's "Silk Road high-speed railway" – linking China, Central Asia, Iran and Europe."

For more details write to: eloqua.me@terrapinn.com

(v). ALSTOM PLANNING IRANIAN JOINT VENTURE FOR ROLLING STOCK:

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 25.07.2017: "Alstom, Industrial Development & Renovation Organization of Iran and Iranian Rail Industries Development Co. signed an agreement on July 23 defining the terms for the potential formation of a joint venture to produce urban and suburban rolling stock in Iran. This builds on a memorandum of understanding signed by Alstom and IDRO on January 27 2016 which envisaged co-operation to support the development of the country's public transport infrastructure.

According to local media reports, Alstom would have a 60% stake in the proposed joint venture, with IRICO and IDRO each holding 20%. Rolling stock could be produced at IRICO's factory in Abhar, with the partners envisaging a domestic market for 1,000 vehicles over three years as well as opportunities for exports."

(vi). SHIRAZ METRO EXTENSION.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 24.08.2017: "A southeastern extension of Shiraz Metro Line 1 was inaugurated on August 22.

The 10.5 km extension runs from Vali-e Asr to Shahid Dastgheyb. Intermediate stations are open at Fazilat and Shahid Doran, with five more due to open later. The initial 10.5 km section of the city's first metro line opened on October 11 2014. Services are operated with a fleet of five-car trainsets supplied by China CNR Corp and local partner IRICO under a contract awarded in November 2010."

(vii). TRANSMASH LAUNCHES JOINT VENTURE FOR ROLLING STOCK.

From 'R.G.I.' 01.08.2017: "An agreement to establish a joint venture to produce rolling stock in Iran was signed on July 31 by Transmashholding and Industrial Development & Renovation Organization of Iran.

The companies plan to form a joint venture owned 80% by Transmashholding and 20% by IDRO. This would use the Wagon Pars plant to produce rolling stock using Russian financing.

The deal is worth €2.5bn, according to local reports, and builds on a memorandum of understanding signed in March.

On July 23 IDRO, IRICO and Transmashholding shareholder Alstom had signed a separate memorandum of understanding for the potential formation of an urban rail rolling stock manufacturing joint venture."

(viii). SINARA TO SUPPLY TRACK MACHINES.

From 'R.G.I.' 6.7.2017: "At the Expo 1520 trade show in Moscow on August 31, Sinara Transport Machines signed a contract with Iranian contractor Ferrotek Steel worth €24m for the supply of 36 track machines. These will be used for maintenance and renewals across the main line

network in Iran. The vehicles are to be produced by STM subsidiary Kalugaputmarsh and delivery is scheduled for 2018. Sinara also plans to establish a servicing centre in Iran.

Completion of the contract has been supported by the Russian Export Centre Group, the Russian Agency for Export Credit and Investment Insurance Exar. It was signed by Sinara President Sergei Papin and Ferrotek Steel President Bakhtiyar Garachorlu

D. SAUDI ARABIA.

(i). FUTURE PLANS.

From 'R.G.I.' 04.07.2017: "The national Public Transport Authority has invited international railway operators and investors to express interest in forming a long-term partnership to operate the country's rail network.

The process forms part of the Saudi Vision 2030 programme, which aims to increase the role of the private sector in the country in an effort to increase the quality of service provision and reduce dependency on the government.

The planned contract would cover the operation of passenger and freight services on the 1,412 km Riyadh – Dammam network currently run by Saudi Railways Organization as well as on the 2,390km North–South Railway which is managed by Saudi Railway Company.

Proposed lines such as the Riyadh – Jeddah Landbridge could also be included, but the Haramain High Speed Rail line, where test running is now underway, is specifically excluded.

As part of the expression of interest process, PTA is seeking to engage with potential partners to obtain input on the partnership framework, such as the optimum contract length and the degree of risk sharing. Options could include contract models that are commonly used in the international railway market or some form of closer partnership arrangement.

PTA will be hosting a dedicated event for this partnership opportunity later this year, and envisages a 'prompt' partner selection process."

(ii). NORTH SOUTH RAILWAY TRAFFIC GROWTH

From 'R.G.I.' 01.08.2017: "North–South Railway operator Saudi Railway Co reports that it carried 4.06 million tonnes of phosphate and bauxite in the first half of 2017, a 27% increase on the same period in 2016.

Each SAR freight train comprises three EMD locomotives and more than 160 wagons supplied by The Greenbrier Companies, and can carry more than 16,000 tonnes, equivalent to taking 640 lorries off the roads.

In May SAR began carrying molten sulphur from the Eastern Province city of Waset to Wa'ad Al-Shamal in the north, while the commercial transport of phosphoric acid from Wa'ad Al-Shamal to Ma'aden's refinery in Ras Al Khair began in June.

The passenger service between Riyadh and Al-Qassim, which was launched in February and is operated using CAF trainsets, is projected to carry an average of 1,100 passengers/day by the end of this year, with ridership expected to average 6,575 passengers/day in the future. In the longer term the service will be extended to Al-Qurrayat, 1,242 km from the capital near the Jordanian border."

E. IRAQ.

(i) THE BAGHDAD BAHN IS TO BE MODERNISED.

Not 'News' by any means, this comes from the 'Eisenbahn Magazin' 7/79 (i.e. almost 40 years ago):

"On the Iraqi section of the Bagdadbahn, which with its entire route from Istanbul – Bagdad – Basrah links the Bosphorus with the Persian Gulf and which was to a large extent built under German leadership at the beginning of this century, the DDR is at present installing modern signalling and telecommunications. The southern section from Bagdad to Basrah has already been so equipped from the end of 1978; northwards from Bagdad via Mosul to the Iraqi border station of Raibia'a the works should be completed in the first quarter of 1980.

For the 598km-long line Bagdad – Basrah via Iskanderiyah – Al-Hilla – Diwaniyah – Al-Harnza – Samawa – Nasiriyah with a branch line to Um Kasir the VEB-Werk für Signal- und Sicherungstechnik (for Signalling and Security) 'telesig' in Berlin has provided a Despatcher central work station for Bagdad, 40 track panel signalboxes, a subsidiary signal box for a swing bridge over the new ship canal Schatt al-Basrah and 15 hand-worked full-barrier level crossings as well as Basa-telephone equipment to the Reichsbahn standard. On the track layout panel a total of 540 light signals, 785 automated Track Free reporting switches, 552 points and 69 track blocks have been installed.

At present work continues on the modernisation of the signalling and telephone equipment on the northern section from Bagdad to the Iraq-Syria border near Rabia'a. Instead of the telegraph cables used before new line telephone cables are being laid. In the larger stations a total of 29 track display panels are installed and the Despatcher Central post in Bagdad has been expanded accordingly. At important road crossings fifteen level crossing barrier installations have been established, whereby in contrast to the southern section, initially train-operated half-barriers have been installed. In several stations additional loops have been constructed, and loops where required lengthened to 600m. The signal construction works of the DDR had already fitted colour-light signals interlocked with the points here in 1972-74. In the larger stations electrically-operated points have now been installed to replace hand-operated points."

(ii). BAGHDAD METRO PLANNED.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 01.09.2018: "The government is reported to be seeking an operator for two proposed underground metro lines in Bagdad.

Both lines would be 23 km long. Line 1 would have 25 stations and Line 2 would have 22, with one interchange station serving both lines. The main maintenance depot would build be alongside Line 1, and there would also be a depot at the southern end of Line 2."

F. ETHIOPIA.

From 'Fahrplancenter News' 56 p.11. "Works on the new 388km line from Awash to Weldiya are making good progress. Under the supervision of the Turkish company Yapi Merkezi work began on several sections in October 2016 with tracklaying. In September 2016 the breakthrough was made on the 1,530m longest railway tunnel of Ethiopia. The line has five other, shorter tunnels. The line begins in Awash at 988m above sea level on the line Djibouti - Addis Abeba which is currently in a phase of trial operations, and heads north-eastwards over the 1,842m high Kombolcha and will end in Hara Gebeya, not far from Weldiya, at an altitude of 2,122m. The line will be built as single track but with a total of 18km of loops to allow trains to cross. In addition there will be some 40km of additional tracks, for example for connection to industrial complexes. The line will then serve both passenger and freight traffic and will be equipped for electric operation from the start, so that the locos which work the line Addis Abeba – Djibouti can also work this route. Total investment amounts to some US\$ 1.7Bn."

G. SYRIA.

RAIL TRAFFIC RESUMES.

From 'Fahrplancenter News' No. 56 p.17:

"Although the bloody civil war in Syria is not over, the CFS (the state railways) has resumed some modest operations in those areas that have become calmer. Around the turn of the year 2016/17 it was reported that the two serviceable diesel locos that had been stored in Tartous during the war have taken up working a modest goods traffic between Tartous and

Banyas along the coast. Products for daily consumption and fuel are transported. CFS staff have begun repairing the track in the direction of Jableh and Ladhagiyah (Latakia). Since there are no construction machines in the area, all work has to be carried out by hand. Fortunately the damage to the railway alignment outside the cities has been kept within limits. Since much fruit and vegetables are grown in the coastal region, the railway can play a significant role in providing food to the major cities.

On 25.01.2017 the railwaymen in Aleppo began local services with two diesel railcars over the 20km line Aleppo – Jibrin. Jibrin lies roughly eastwards of Aleppo on the line that runs further to Deir-ez-Zor and on to Iraq. Since damage had to be repaired only really within the city limits of Aleppo and the Eastern part of Aleppo has been reconquered by the Syrian Army, it was relatively easy to restore traffic here. Two train pairs run daily, around midday and in the afternoon. Due to the security situation no trains run after dark, but the trains should help to give the population a feeling of a degree of normalcy.

In order to restore further stretches of line around Aleppo greater efforts will be required. The Northern line to Mouslimiyé and Turkey is completely destroyed from a point some 2km from the main station. The line to the South and West, which diverges from the Eastern line by means of a triangle of tracks in the city district of Sukkari, is wholly destroyed for several kilometres; tracks in useable condition are found only after the junction station of Wadahi, some 7km from Aleppo. No rail traffic had taken place in Aleppo for four and a half years."

H. ERITREA.

BAD NEWS FROM ERITREA.

In the excellent 'Narrow Gauge World' March/April 2016 pp.22-25 is an illustrated article by James Waite of a visit to Eritrea in 2005 and contrasting it with the current situation. From this:

"I had arrived at Asmara late on a Friday evening in March 2005..... in the hotel lobby was a notice I'd missed the evening the day before – 'Day trip to Massawa by steam train leaves Asmara station at 8.00am.' Massawa is the railway's eastern terminus on the Red Sea coast and this seemed a perfect opportunity to explore the rest of the line, the only trouble was that it was well past 8 o'clock. The young lady at reception phones for a taxi driver.... we reached Nefasit station after half an hour's drive, hoping we'd overtaken the train....We were a small group of passengers as the train made its leisurely progress down the hill. Gradually it dawned on us all that this this was a day trip to Massawa, as the notice had said. It didn't involve coming back! It turned out that the train needed to be at the port to meet a cruise ship from Japan the following day. As we disembarked one of the passengers, a lady doctor from Italy, who knew the country well, hailed down a lorry. Its driver was very happy to take us to the bus station on the far side of town....

Eritrea became an Italian colony in the 19th century. The railway was built to the 950mm gauge which became something of a standard in Italy for narrow gauge railways. It is said to have originated with a horse-worked coal railway on Sardinia which was intended to be metre gauge but which measured its

gauge between the mid-point of the rails instead of their inside edges. The limitations of this became apparent when heavier rails, with wider heads, were laid a few years later to enable steam locos to take over.

The line climbs up from the Red Sea at Massawa up the escarpment of the Great Rift Valley to Asmara at an altitude of 2,390 metres. It's a masterpiece of Italian engineering and the scenery of the mountains is stunningly beautiful. Construction began on the coast in 1887 and was completed as far as Asmara in 1911. It continued on into the interior and reached its eventual terminus at Agordat in 1928. In the 1920's and 1930's the Italians invested heavily in Eritrea and established the basics of an industrialised economy. Asmara expanded enormously and became a test bed to try out new architectural techniques. Many of the buildings and some aspects of the Italian way of life survive there to this day.

The British took over as caretakers during the Second World War until the country was handed over to Ethiopia in 1950 as part of a UN-sponsored cold-war deal. There were obvious difficulties in absorbing an egalitarian Western-style society into a country run by an absolute monarch who believed in the divine right of kings and who relied on feudal warlords to impose his rule. A war of liberation soon began. The Eritreans fought almost alone against an enemy supported at first by the US and later by the Soviet Union. They eventually achieved their independence in 1991.

The railway was severely damaged during the fighting and closed altogether in January 1976. Much of it was dismantled and a lot of the rail was used by both sides to reinforce trenches and dugouts. Landslides and washouts destroyed parts of the trackbed through the mountains and blocked some of the many tunnels.

The Great Rebuild.

In the 1990s it must have seemed fanciful to suppose that the line would ever be rebuilt, but as many enthusiasts know very well, this is just what the Eritreans achieved. An initial feasibility study concluded that it would cost more than US\$400M; even the cost of a detailed report by foreign experts was more than the impoverished country could afford. But there was a determination that whatever had been destroyed during the years of Ethiopian rule should be restored, and if foreign aid wasn't forthcoming then the Eritreans would do the job themselves. In 1994 the Eritrean Railway Rehabilitation Project was launched under the leadership of the late Amanuel Ghebreselassie, initially to rebuild the 117km stretch between Massawa and Asmara.

Amanuel was an inspired choice for the job and soon proved to be a remarkably resourceful individual with a can-do approach to his job. Initially he doubted whether the reconstruction was feasible but was soon persuaded that it could be done by harnessing the skills of the old railway workers and passing them on to a new generation. This was urgent as nearly 20 years had gone by since the closure and the men were no longer young.

A survey showed that despite the washouts and landslides the tunnels and bridges were in excellent condition. A 5km line was quickly rebuilt in Massawa as a pilot project to test out how resources could best

be deployed. Amanuel oversaw a physical count throughout the country of where all the rails had ended up. He calculated that enough survived to rebuild through to Asmara, although some of it proved to be unuseable and track still in situ beyond Asmara was lifted and used instead. There was a shortage of fishplates, clips and other smaller parts for which replacements were bought from Italy. The railway through to Asmara was complete by February 2003.

Fortunately the Ethiopians had taken steps back in 1976 to safeguard what was left of the rolling stock. This included the last two of the 31 '440' class 0-4-4-0 Mallet tanks mostly built between 1907 and 1915, eight of the eleven '202' class 0-4-0Ts built between 1927 and 1937 and all eight of the big '442' class 0-4-4-0 Mallets originally supplied in 1938 to assist in the Italian invasion of Ethiopia. There were two left from four Krupp Bo-Bo diesels bought in the 1950's, three 1930's-built railcars and three Drewry diesels which had arrived during British rule.

By the 1990s some of these had gone, but at least enough locos remained to provide motive power for the reopening. They were restored and maintained largely by the staff of the old railway, some of whom by then were in their '70's or '80's.

Darker Times.

Those who worked on the rebuilding were immensely proud of their achievement, but the willingness of the populace to muck in and restore the country's shattered infrastructure has given way to something much darker. Indefinite military conscription is now compulsory for both sexes. Conditions are harsh, the pay is far too small to support a family and some people have been conscripted for decades. There are more conscripts than are needed to defend the country and it's been likened to state-sponsored slavery. No wonder huge numbers of young people are fleeing to avoid the draft and seeking refuge in Europe.

With so few people in productive work the country's fragile economy has disintegrated and the consequences for the railway have been disastrous. The plan was always that modern locos and stock would be acquired and that the railway would play an important role in the country's transport infrastructure – but now the government can't afford to pay for them. Western countries are aghast at the wholesale loss of personal freedom and won't offer aid. Pleasure rides and the enthusiasts' charter trips have provided just about the only traffic the revived railway has seen.

Even this hasn't been without its problems. I'm told that at least two enthusiast tour firms took advantage of the Eritrean's goodwill and didn't pay for their trips until outside pressure was applied.

I had the privilege of meeting Amanuel in 2005. He was clearly a man who was doing his utmost to promote the railway's interests despite having to rely on elderly, and increasingly frail, locos and equipment. Very sadly he died in May 2014 and his determination to keep the trains in operation is greatly missed. Few trains have run since 2014. As I write this there have been none at all since January 2016 and there's little prospect that any will run in the foreseeable future. It wasn't what was originally intended but for several years this was one of the world's most spectacular heritage railways. Its virtual closure is a tragedy after all the work that was put into rebuilding it."

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

(i). HEDJAZ PHOTOS.

Thanks to Lorenz Degen for this link to a wonderful collection of photographs of the Hedjaz Railway system as it was in the 1980's to 2000's.

<http://www.railphoto-art.org/collections/springer/middle-eastern-railways/>

(ii). SOME CORRECTIONS TO ISSUE 117.

Thanks to Reinhard Dietrich for the following:

- at the foot of each page stood '116' although this was issue 117! An oversight.
- 117:09:A:(v) – Iran & Russian Electrification – although this item, taken from 'Railway Gazette International', states that Russia is electrifying the line Garmsar – Mashhad to the border station of Incheh Borun, in fact this station lies at the northern end of the Trans-Iranian railway, not on the Garmsar – Mashhad line. Therefore Russia is electrifying the northern end of the Trans-Iranian Railway, whereas the Garmsar – Mashhad line is being electrified by an Iranian – Chinese cooperation.

- 117:09:D (I) and (ii): Al Qassim is not a city in which the train can terminate, but a Saudi province. Presumably the terminus for passenger workings is therefore the provincial capital of Buraida.

(iii). MORE INFORMATION ON THE JAFFA - JERUSALEM BALDWIN 2-6-0 LOCOS.

Chen Melling has been pursuing researches into this arcane topic and the following is some of the result:

"The Jaffa & Jerusalem Railway's first locomotives were built by Baldwin (of the USA). This was often viewed as strange by past researchers, as the company was French. A reason often mooted was that they were actually intended for another customer, specifically the failed Panama Canal Company (also French, by the way.)

In hindsight this is easily refuted, as the order specification cards for the two batches (Nos. 1-3, 4-5 respectively) are available on-line, and they clearly give the years of orders as 1890 and 1892 respectively (i.e. after the collapse of the Panama project) and the purchaser as 'Société de Travaux Publics et Constructions'. This was indeed the contractor who built the J&J and operated it at first, but this does not necessarily mean they were built for this specific line. However, these spec. cards also give painting and marking details, and these are 1-3 for the first batch, named 'Jaffa', 'Jerusalem' and 'Ramleh' respectively, and 4-5 for the second batch, named 'Lydda' and 'Sejed' respectively. Thus they were clearly ordered for the J&J.

So the question remains – why did the contractor purchase from the US rather than French/Belgian makers, as it did with the rolling stock?

A recent finding I had in the same specification cards might give a clue. It appears the same contractor had already ordered two batches of metre-gauge Baldwin 2-6-0s for another railway, in southern Brazil, in the early 1880's. [Specification for Engines Class 8-22, Drawing No. 15, 3/2/1882.] Besides the obvious similarity, these earlier locos were also marked very similarly with numbers and names of locations along the line, and they also bore the same type of oval plate as found on the J&J locos, the sort of which I have not seen on any other Baldwin so far.

It may be the case that they just had good experience with Baldwin, and thus came back to them for a similar project, though this time buying slightly larger locomotives."

(iv). NOTES ON THE NUMBERING OF NEW BOGIE TANK WAGONS ON IR.

(See also 'News from the Line'.) On 19.07.2017 Paul Scheller wrote: "On 22.04.2017 Kasper Pedersen photographed two new IR tank wagons built by Tatravagonka Poprad in Ranžirni kolodvor (Zagreb)."

The Editor responded:

"What is fascinating is that these are the first wagons I have seen with the full UIC code for IR painted on them. In Israel I have seen some second-hand wagons with 'SK' country markings, for instance, often brought to the country by contractors for construction trains, but not 'IL'. Can you advise - they look to



me somehow more designed for chemicals or acid traffic than just fuel...?"

Chen responded: "These new wagons were not built for IR but for the private company ICL Fertiizers/Dead Sea Works, and are meant for the transportation of phosphoric acid, though their Israeli registration numbers are misleading, being prefixed (Het), which was last used for coal hoppers, whereas (Zayin) was used in the past for phosphoric acid tanks. Their UIC numbers are legit, but are of no use here, as our systems don't support these. The new Traxx AC3 locos also carry them."

The Editor answered: "Interesting - of course, if the messianic time should ever come when through vehicles from ESR and CEL and CFS and TCDD run through - then one would need the international numbers. But it raises the interesting point - SOMEBODY somewhere must know the relevant numbers and has applied them at the manufacturer's works. Ditto the locos and who knows about future double-deck multiple units? Does this mean that there ARE such numbers on paper but not in the computer system? How many of these wagons are there, by the way?"

Chen's response: "If you examine the UIC numbers closely, you will see that they don't actually reflect the Israeli numbers in full, as there is no representation of the prefix letter, meaning that there could in theory be two or more wagons with the same UIC number, which is obviously not allowed, hence this is not an official IR number, but something worked out from the number sent to the works by IR."

And Paul's further elucidation: "The 'UIC numbers' of these wagons are pseudo-UIC numbers. '09' is no real exchange code and the real IR number is only filled with '00' to get an 11+1 number (the last digit is a mathematical control number). The correct UIC number of a tank wagon must be a number with xx xx 7xx x xxx. '7' would be the correct translation of the IR prefix letter.

Because all wagons in a train must be registered with 11+1 numbers to fit with the continental railways computer systems, such pseudo numbers were used in wagon transfers to foreign countries.

In the last years most UK goods wagons were built by Polish or Rumanian wagon works. Most were delivered with international numbers, but some wagons for internal use should be registered only in the national TOPS system and their numbers were "filled" for transit through Europe like the numbers of the IR wagons. Also prototypes get such fictive numbers, e.g. a powder wagon built by Feldbinder for VTG UK with number 00 00 403 3 154-8. The series wagons were 81 70 931 6 001-5 to 067-6 ...

Besides: There are two types of ICL tank wagons. Phosphoric acid could be transported in non-insulated tanks, but what is transported in the insulated, silver looking type?"

(v). ANOTHER MILITARY RAILWAYMAN.

In 'Railway Magazine' July 2017 p.46 in an article on the catastrophic collision at Thirsk in July 1967, the driver of loco DP2 on the northbound express was 'Jock' Evans, born in Berwick-upon-Tweed – "He had started his railway career as a cleaner in 1937 and then fireman at Duns on the Kelso branch in Borders country. He had served in the Second World War as a train driver attached to 192 Railway Operating Company Royal Engineers, seeing significant military service in the Middle East and Italy. After the war Jock had moved to Blaydon and then Stirling before coming back to Gateshead in 1948. he steadily moved up through the links, eventually reaching the top link..."

(vi). MORE ON THE HEDJAZ RAILTOUR IN JORDAN.

From 'Railway Magazine' July 2017 p.97: More on the ambitious and successful (and possibly final...) railtour– this report appeared in the British enthusiast press:

"BRITISH GROUPS RUN COMPLEX RAILTOUR IN JORDAN.

"Two volunteer-managed UK rail enthusiast societies joined forces to operate the first (and probably only) comprehensive tour of the railways in Jirdan in mid-May.

The tour was run by the Branch Line Society with the LCGB from May 10-15. It took more than two years of planning with local rail and tourism operators assisting in making the trip a great success, based upon feedback from participants.

The tour used several different locos and successfully traversed the remaining operational section of the unusual 1,050mm gauge former Hedjaz Railway (HR) between Al-Mafraq – Amman - Ma'an to the 1970's constructed junction with the Aqaba Railway Corporation (ARC) line north of Batn el Ghoul and then the ARC freight line to Aqaba Port, located on the Red Sea.

The entire tour was run through the Jordan-Hedjaz Railway (JHR).

Currently the former Hejaz route from Damascus, Syria to Medina in Saudi Arabia only remains operable within the Kingdom of Jordan. The northern section across the Syrian border north of Al-Mafraq reportedly saw its last passenger train on January 1, 2011, prior to the Syrian civil war. Although nominally operable between Al-Mafraq, north of Amman, southwards to Qatraneh, currently the only regular train operations by JHR are Friday/Saturdays-Only excursion trains from Amman to Al-Jizah.

South of Qatraneh, the JHR to Al-Abiad has been long out of use but was re-fettled to allow a JHR loco to work through to Wadi Rum in October 2016 to collect the tourist train which resides there and take it back north to the JHR workshops in Amman for maintenance. The train was returned to Wadi Rum the following month.

South of Al-Abiad through Ma'an to the former divergence of the HR line at Medina, near Batn el Ghoul, the JHR is leased to the ARC, with the ARC-owned line beyond through Wadi Rum to Aqaba Port.

Tour participants were interested to find British-made colour light signalling supplied by Plessey in the 1970s – much of it now out of use – on the upgraded JHR line south of Al-Abiad.

The tour was planned with use of British-built 2-8-2 No. 23 (RSH 7433/1951) for the first two days, firstly northwards to Al Mafraq and on the second day southwards to Al Jizah, where diesel power would take over for the rest of the tour.

Unfortunately No. 23 suffered a leaking boiler tube in the smokebox, which was welded shut after the fire was dropped, and GE-built 'U10B' A1A-A1A diesel No. 40210, dating from 1976, took over. For the second day another steam loco – Jung-built 2-8-2 No. 52 (12083/1955) renumbered 53 in place of its scrapped classmate – performed faultlessly on the run down to Al-Jizah. The GE-built diesel loco was used for the remaining part of the tour.

The tour ended in the port of Aqaba with a VIP reception from the port management. Participants were told that the current port and railway are likely to close in two years time as the whole area has been bought by an Abu-Dhabi developer with plans to build a new hotel complex and ocean liner terminal on the site. A new port will be built further south to handle the phosphate export traffic although this is unlikely to have a rail connection."

(vii). GÖRLITZ CARRIAGE WORKS.

Since so much of IR's rolling stock now comes from this factory, an article by Guus Ferrée in 'Eisenbahn Magazin' 9/2008 pp.28f, though old, is interesting. The double-decker saga began with the rather unusual articulated sets for the Lübeck-Büchener Eisenbahn in 1936 but following this things went quiet for the heirs of the WUMAG (Waggon und Maschinenbau AG Görlitz). From 1952 as 'VEB Waggonbau Görlitz' a large number of double-deck coaches were built not just for the DR but other railways in the then Eastern Bloc. At present carriages are under construction at the Bombardier works in Görlitz for DB, KM (Koleje Mazowiecki in Poland) and VIRM-type for the NS. There is also a contract for a further 890 carriage bodies for 20 more high-speed X200 units for SJ. PKP will get 37 coaches, the NS 205. With Deutsche Bahn a contract for 298 double-deckers was signed in 2003 with an option for a further 300 – of which 225 have currently been also ordered. Some 1,350 workers earn their living here. Before 'die Wende' there were some 3600 workers and in the DDR time there were three large factories close to each other – two were later sold and since 2008 the 338,943 sq.m. of Hall 2 suffice. Between 1948 and 2007 some 16,765 carriages were built, of which 6,821 were double-deckers; between 1990 and 2007 4,585 carriages were built in Görlitz of which 2,337 double-deckers for the DR and DB (later combined to DBAG), but also 183 for the Landesverkehrsgesellschaft Niedersachsen; DSB ordered 67 through Porterbrook Leasing and other clients have been Luxemburg in 2001/2 (85 carriages) and Israel Railways (147). The population of Görlitz has shrunk from 83,000 to 60,000 so employers like this are very important for the region.

(viii). ISRAEL RAILWAYS IN PICTURES.

This is a link to an interesting set of images of modern operations on IR: (with Hebrew captions)

http://view.co.il/ytbwa/israel_railways/behind_the_scenes

and here to a 6-minute video on the line from beit Shean to Haifa, by Gabriel Locker:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QGKg3HWc-Ig&feature=youtu.be>

and here the first 'Israel Railways' train to Jerusalem in 1949!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzOhgInybPM>

(ix). SYBIL'S PROBLEMS.

I'd like to include this account here since it mirrors the experience of several of us over the years....

"I had quite an adventure in Beit Shemesh a couple of weeks ago. After about two years of work on widening and upgrading Road 38 (from Sha'ar Hagai to Beit Shemesh) the new road opened to great fanfare on August 9 (ceremony with the PM and Transp. Min.), and for public use the following day. I knew there would be a great view of the station and level crossing from the new bridge. So

on Thursday August 10 I trotted along there with my camera. There is no pavement (pedestrian walkway) on the bridge. I got some quite decent shots. I decided to go back on the Friday to get some more.I was in position on the bridge; the 12:30 departure from Beit Shemesh arrived and sat in the station. Then I was jumped on by two policemen!!! "What are you doing here?" I said photographing trains is allowed. They said they didn't care in the least about the trains, but it was forbidden to stand on the bridge since there is no pavement and it's dangerous. Can we see your identity card? "Oh, please," I begged, "just let me take a few photos of the train. I promise not to come here again," handing over my ID and praying desperately that I wouldn't miss the moment. Took pictures, and was invited to enter their car. "Where are you planning on going now?" they asked. "To a bus stop, to get a bus home." "We'll drive you to BIG [shopping mall at entrance to Beit Shemesh]." That's fine, I said, less for me to walk. It was all very friendly and quite amusing, especially when one of the policemen told me a friend of his built a railway in his home!"

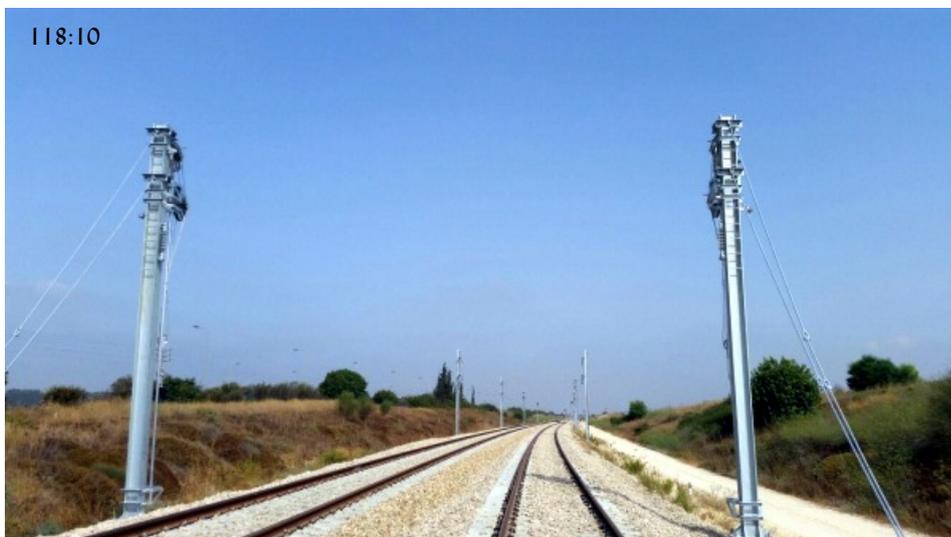
(x). OLD PHOTOS.

The following links show some nice photos – some well-known, some less so – from Ottoman archives:

<https://heplev.wordpress.com/2017/08/20/historische-fotos-aus-israel-eisenbahnbau-beer-sheva/>

<http://www.israeldailypicture.com/2017/08/the-ottoman-imperial-archives-rare.html>

118:11.¹



Some of the first electrification masts erected on the AI route near Latrun in early September.



'I SAW PALESTINE'.

From 'Trains', February 1949, pp. 46-49, by Robert W. Richardson. (Note from Ed.: I have retained, exceptionally, the American orthography in this fascinating article which also uses much American railroad terminology.) Thanks to Klaus Matzka for the link to this historic article.

Introduction: "Robert W. Richardson.... bought his way into the cab of the Palestine Railways trains by slipping the engineer a package of American-made cigarettes. It was a dark night, and the engineer did not use his headlight because the generator had worn out some years before and had never been replaced or repaired.

"Visions of what might be ahead were rapidly chilling my previous enthusiasm for the engine ride," said Richardson. "Not even a smooth-running machine and a hospitable crew could dispel thoughts of what might happen if some prowling partisan had lifted a few spikes or if one of the huge limestone boulders had rolled onto the track."

(A photo shows the author in his G.I. Uniform at Jerusalem station.)

"There was no shooting in Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem in 1945, but men with guns rode the trains and the passengers looked like refugees in nightshirts.

If Americans think of the Palestine railroad system at all, they probably have visions of bomb-shattered cars and locomotives and a right of way littered with bomb craters and the debris incidental to civil war. My brief tour of the Palestine Railways fortunately took place in more peaceful times in that country. Then, in 1945, the rest of the world was busily blowing things up and Palestine's warring factions were observing a duration-only truce. True, sentries rode each coach, and police were numerous at depots, but acts of violence were not to be seen or heard.

I got my first glimpse of a Palestinian train on the evening our truck convoy arrived from Iran in the all-Jewish city of Tel-Aviv. The evening passenger train came thundering up from Jaffa with labouring Baldwin Ten-Wheelers front and rear, as the short grade from the old port city is steep. The train looked more than a little American, for the engines sported electric headlights and (except for the lack of a bell and the use of buffers and links instead of automatic couplers) were much like many Ten-Wheelers still to be seen on some American lines. Even the coaches with their vestibules were vaguely more to our style than British. I was to learn later that the coaches were British in interior appointments, particularly in the absence of heat.

The prospect of a ride on a Palestine Railways train took me to the depot the next morning. Tel-Aviv's station

is (if not now a pile of rubble) located away from the business center, but what was probably more important to its builders, it is on the first leveling-off of the grade from Jaffa. Moreover, the railroad was built before Tel-Aviv was, so if there is any criticism regarding the location of the station it should be leveled at the builders of the city, not the railroad.

For such a large and modern-appearing city, the depot was disappointingly small, and this was reflected in its patronage. No crowds awaited the trains. I seemed to be the only person interested in the three large sheets posted in glass cases on the walls. Each of these sheets was a timetable in one of the three official languages: Arabic, Hebrew and English. The tables listed not only the local connections but included those of neighboring countries and connecting lines to Syria, Lebanon, Trans-Jordan and Egypt. I noted with some amusement that all trains went to Vice-Versa. "Jerusalem – Tel-Aviv – Jaffa and Vice Versa", "Haifa – Acre and Vice Versa", "Deraa – Amman and Vice Versa". The "vice versa" of the the timetables was easier to read than the 'return' side of American timetables, however, they read down, not up.

Station names on the timetables were those that ancient lands such as these could be expected to provide: names familiar to many a student of the Bible or history. Train listings included narrow-gauge lines that ran through the remote valleys of 'beyond the Jordan' once a week as well as express trains to Damascus and Cairo. All schedules used the 24-hour clock.

The original Palestinian railroad was a tourist line built in Turkish Empire days from the port of Jaffa to Jerusalem, and many important people as well as thousands of lesser tourists have traveled this route through the coastal plains and the mountains of Judea to the Holy City. But in later years this line has become only a branch of the newer main line, and as highways were built the tourists as well as the Palestinians took to the quicker method of transit.

The present main line parallels the Mediterranean coast from the Egyptian frontier at El Kantara to Syria. At some places it comes close to the sea, and at others it is miles inland. It crosses the old main line at Lydda, about 15 miles from Jaffa. This almost forgotten center of Roman times is again important as a junction, with a small shop and a small yard. [sic. A workshop is meant. Ed.]

The main line continues north along the coastal plain to Haifa, largest city of the mandate. A branch continues north a few miles to Acre, with a way stop at Qishon, the road's chief shops. A freight-only line starts at Tulkarem midway between Lydda and Haifa and runs through the mountains of Samaria to connect with the line from Haifa to Damascus.

This latter run, when I was in Palestine, boasted only one mixed train a day from Haifa to the frontier, plus a 'sentinel car' for third-class passengers only. This car, from descriptions, was just a gas-electric. It ran only as far as the frontier station of Samakh at the mouth of the Sea of Galilee, at the head of the Jordan Valley. From this point a mixed train provided uncertain connections through desert and mountains to Damascus, connecting at Deraa with the once-a-week, for Amman, capital of the Trans-Jordan kingdom. Before the First World War this route enabled Moslem pilgrimages en route for Mecca from all over the world. The fabled Lawrence destroyed the Arabian portion, and track is now used only as far as Maan, in southern Trans-Jordan. All track was meter gauge. [sic]

During the Second World War military necessity pushed through a long-projected connection between the standard-gauge Palestinian line and other standard-gauge lines to Turkey and to Baghdad, Iraq, by way of a coastal route through Beirut and Tripoli. Before the Iron Curtain

clamped down there was the possibility of interchange with all Europe. Connections now in the construction stage will extend the standard gauge trackage on through Turkey to the Iranian capital and the Persian Gulf. So, if peace returns to the Middle East, the Palestine Railways may likely see cars of a dozen nations on its line.

PR needs such connections to become a really prosperous system, for it runs through a land that is often barren and empty, where irrigation must be used to make any crops practical. To most Americans this land looks of little value and it seems incredible that it could have been a source of contention since prehistoric times. Many Palestinians barely make a living, and by American standards that 'living' is hardly more than a mere existence.

When I was in Palestine, most passenger traffic had been diverted to buses, and consequently most passengers to or from the Jewish 'capital', Tel-Aviv, used this means to reach the main line at Lydda. Taxis did a good business, particularly because two of the four daily trains were mixed and packed full with third-class passengers, mostly Arab peasants traveling to and from market. All trains started at Jaffa and made stops at Tel-Aviv as well as the Arabian villages of Es-Safiriya en route to Lydda. It took nearly an hour for the run when the trains were on time – and they usually ran as mixed trains do everywhere, late.

I found that obtaining a ticket was not just a matter of stepping up to the window and paying the necessary mils or piastres. First I had to go to the Military Transport Office, state my destination, and produce authorization and identification. The red-capped soldier on duty filled out a large printed form entitled 'H.M. Forces in Palestine' on which he detailed, in the three official languages, all anyone might ever need to know regarding my journey. Then, and only then, could I buy a ticket.

The pasteboard was no larger than those we have in the United States, but somehow, in a sort of proof-reader's nightmare, it managed to include everything ours do, and in three languages. The ticket clerk was scandalized at my prodigality when I sought to buy a couple of extra tickets at 20 mils (about 8 cents) each to keep as souvenirs. He dug up some used ones to put an end to this extravagance. Travel was rationed and the railroad people didn't think it proper to sell extra tickets even for a mixed train. To quote the ticket seller: "It just isn't done."

As the hour of my train's departure approached a tank switcher and a Ten-Wheeler roared up to the depot yard with a string of freight cars, uncoupled, and vanished back towards Jaffa. The yardmaster, after 20 years of service in Palestine, was as British as ever but proved a talkative sort and directed my attention to a 40-ton lend-lease box car. The car wouldn't have been large in the U.S. but it loomed as a giant over the four-wheeled vans to which it was coupled. What puzzled the yardmaster was how we used such cars in America and especially how we could brake a train of such 'awkward vans'. He was not impressed by my statement that air brakes did the trick and frankly regarded as unthinkable our brakemen's practice of climbing upon cars and setting brakes from that vantage.

On the Palestine Railways a crew member never gets on the roof of a car; in fact, only a shop repairman ever has reason to do so, and he would need a ladder to get there. For yard braking the Palestinians use a sort of wagon-type brake on the side of the car, operated by a switchman standing or trotting alongside. The lend-lease car had no air and only a brake wheel set at floor level, but no PR brakeman had much luck trying to turn that wheel enough to stop the car and still retain his footing.

My ineffective defense of American rolling stock and railroading methods ended when the other half of the mixed train came pounding up the grade and into the station. Behind the Ten-Wheeler were a couple of wooden third-class coaches, and while the Ten-Wheeler was getting another head of steam and the passengers were boarding the cars, the switcher added a long string of flats and box cars. The flats served as auxiliary passenger equipment and soon had quite a crowd of Arabs. The coach seats were filled with well-dressed Arabs and Jews and luckier villagers who had managed to squeeze in.

The guard whistled shrilly and with a boost from the tanker we were off. The Arabs on the flat cars, with their fluttering robes, looked for all the world like refugees in nightshirts.

The conductor was somewhat puzzled by my presence, as G.I. passengers were few and far between, and he reserved a plush seat for me. I tried hard to snap a picture of him collecting fares on the rocking flat cars, but crowded vestibules prevented that. As in all the East, natives in Palestine never pay anything without argument, for they love to haggle and make a game of it. The conductor evidently was used to this, for in three languages he skilfully and without loss of temper extracted the fare from each reluctant traveler. U.S. trainmen who think their passengers give them a hard time should see the daily routine of a P.R. conductor.

As Tel-Aviv's glaring white modern buildings receded from view we passed through a pleasant, almost tropical countryside of orange and other fruit groves and neat farms which wasted not a foot of land. The first stop was at Es Safiriya, a typically squalid Arab village of baked mud huts, noise and smells. The contrast was even greater after just leaving the neat newness of the modern Jewish city.

Es Safiriya had no depot; the train merely stopped on a slight fill at the centre of the settlement. The bare-footed passengers disembarked amid a crowd of screeching urchins and a mob of other passengers who were eager to get aboard. The streets were simply muddy alleys branching away from the railroad. Except for the rails, the little village must have looked much like villages of centuries ago.

The train started up as the last shouting passenger pulled himself aboard. We rolled steadily along for a few more minutes until we came to a junction, and then went a mile or so more to Lydda station. Across the way were small shops, yards and a scattered variety of rolling stock of British design. An occasional lend-lease car added contrast.

Lydda station seemed much like an American suburban station with subway passages to the several tracks. The lines from Jaffa and Haifa entered jointly from the east while those from Jerusalem and Egypt came from the west. The British NAAFI had a sort of canteen operated much like a U.S. Army Post Exchange, and this was in a stand on the station platform. The day's menu was limited to paste sandwiches and (of course) tea, and so I whiled away a few minutes munching a sandwich new to my experience. 'Spam paste'. It was very accurately titled, for while it tasted undeniably

of the well-known canned meat, it also tasted a lot like I imagine library paste does! As the trains on the main line did not carry diners, this stand with its weird menu was a mercy for Allied servicemen.

The mixed train, of course, was late when it arrived at Lydda; it was due at 4.25p.m. but less than an hour had elapsed before the 5.30 switching operations began to prepare for the arrival of the through train from Haifa to Egypt and of the train from Jerusalem. This latter train would be cut up, with the main portion going on to Haifa while one coach would be put on the returning mixed to Jaffa, the train I would take back to Tel-Aviv.

The Jerusalem train got there first, at 6.12 as scheduled. A neat 4-6-4T, rebuilt in 1935 in the road's Qishon Shops, headed a string of five coaches packed with natives and British servicemen returning from leave in Jerusalem. The Haifa train arrived about 6.15, powered by a U.S. lend-lease Mike. [i.e. 'Mikado' or 2-8-2] It trailed a long string of cars, every one different, including a couple of war-orphaned wagons-lits.

From the moment of the train's arrival the station resembled a New York subway rush from a United Nations assembly. The NAAFI stand was hidden by a crowd of hungry military. Passengers of a dozen nationalities swarmed the platform and train crews added to the din by generously blowing their shrill signal whistles.

After the mainline trains had departed, our Baldwin Ten-Wheeler, without turning, coupled on and soon we were backing at a sedate 20 miles an hour through the inky night without a headlight on the tender. Es-Safiriye was almost invisible as we jolted to a stop, the freight vans bunching up their slack against the coaches. From several hut doors the feeble eyes of kerosene lamps provided visual evidence to support one's nose and ears that humans live here.

When the bright electric glow of Tel-Aviv came closer upon the horizon it was like entering the 20th. Century from the times of Crusades and Biblical tales.

The Army provided trucks to take us to such places as Jerusalem, but I preferred to go by train, and for this journey I took the early morning passenger train for Lydda. This met another train from Haifa and the two were combined at the junction for a 9 a.m. run to the Holy City.

While I was waiting at Lydda, the daily express from Egypt arrived. It had left the frontier before midnight. It was headed by another lend-lease Mike. As it slowed down for Lydda a horde of military men jumped out of the windows and doors and ran, tin teacups in hand, for the NAAFI booth. It was like trying to stand your ground in a subway at rush hour – probably even worse, for an Englishman without his tea for some 12 hours is a thirsty man indeed! Perhaps they got so thirsty just from watching the clouds of steam leaking from the Mike much like a giant tea-kettle too long on the fire. Maintenance of these engines was apparently at a minimum – or perhaps the maintenance men just did not know how to take care of engines weighing nearly twice as much as most PR power.

Despite the hazards of night runs, the Mike lacked a headlight. This omission was blamed for more than one derailment. Before the Palestinians obtained these engines they had used some British Ten-Wheelers and Consolidations. [i.e. 4-6-0 and 2-8-0's]

As soon as the Haifa train took off with its ill-fed contingents, another neat 4-6-4 tank engine coupled on to our five coaches for Jerusalem. These tankers were rebuilt about 10 years ago from Baldwin Ten-Wheelers such as the one on the mixed run to Jaffa. Someone figured it a waste of energy to haul a tender up the grades to Jerusalem, since the schedules were easy and water stops not objectionable. Some were converted to 4-6-2T type.

Only an hour late, we were off at last at a smooth 30 miles an hour for the Holy City, some 35 miles away. The servicemen – particularly a coachful of sailors fresh from months at sea – hung out the windows as it unable to see enough of such a peaceful land.

For a while we curved to follow the slightly rolling fertile plains with pleasant rural vistas, occasionally thick with sugar and banana field. At the several way stations Arab urchins offered bananas and giant oranges at a few mils apiece. Their salesmanship was attested by the multitude of banana skins making station areas tricky under foot. One negative among my numerous picture attempts achieved a definite blur due to this.

The track gradually became more rolling and finally we rounded a long reverse curve and entered a winding narrow valley through the mountains of Judea. The hills became bare and rocky, littered with neat limestone blocks, and houses became infrequent. The bed of the stream was dry except for occasional pools, yet there was ample evidence that at times it must be a vast stream of great force rushing throughout the desolate valley.

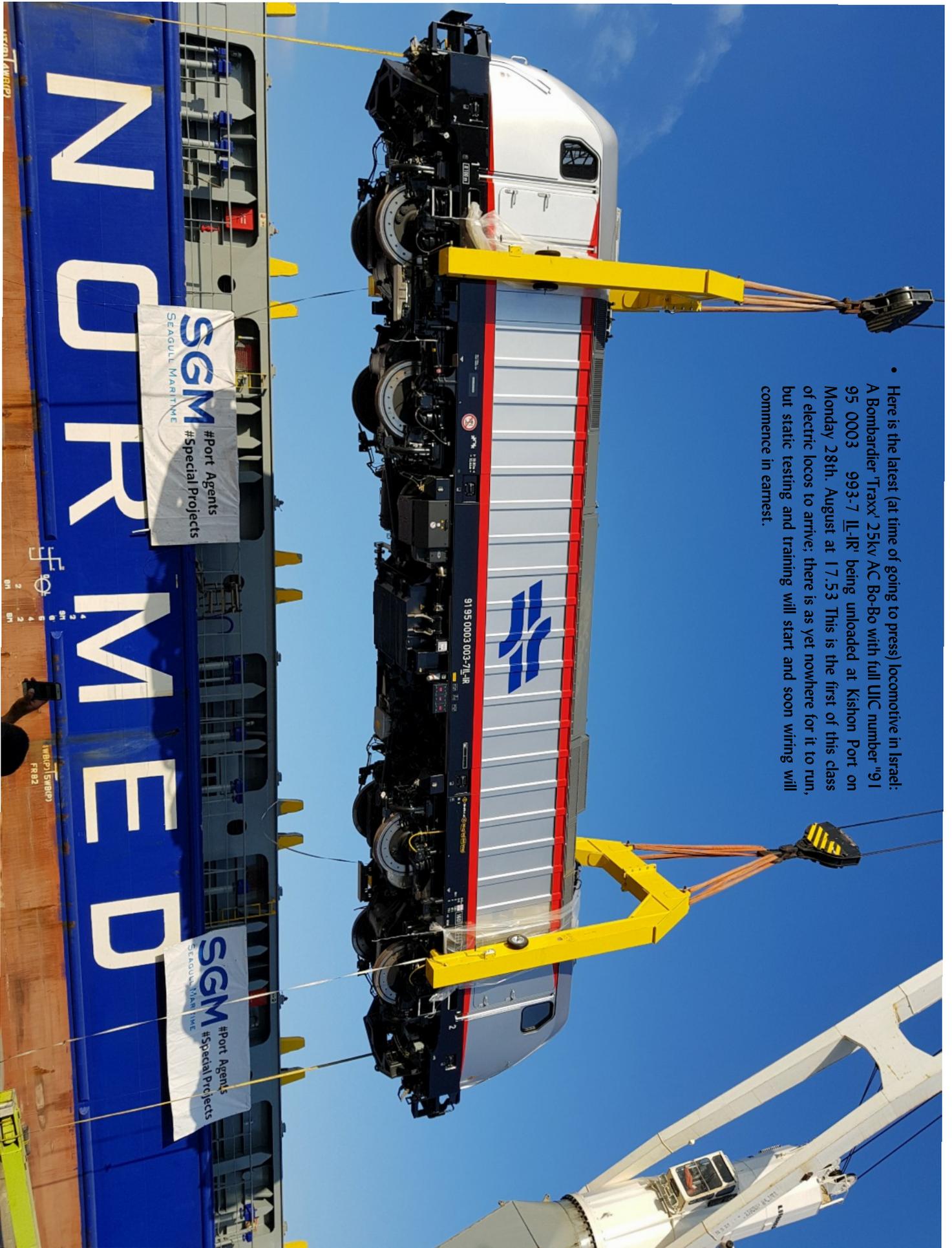
We occasionally passed small bridges with concrete pillboxes and armed sentries on duty, and an armed guard stood in each vestibule of the train – ample evidence that at any moment the country might erupt into violence. In my compartment a police sergeant on furlough told me some of his experiences during the Arab uprising several years before, and the country appeared totally suited to the tye of warfare he described. Then, the trains had dared operate only irregularly, pushing a couple of weighted cars ahead to test for mines.

It was upgrade all the way, and the tank engine made several thirsty stops on the 2½ hour run. The last several miles were on a stiff grade up an increasingly narrow valley; we sometimes nearly doubled on ourselves, then finally burst over the top and drifted down past the scattered outbuildings of the new city of Jerusalem. Beyond the depot with its trilingual signs I could see the walls of the old city a good half-mile away.

It was four years ago when I was in Palestine. Trains were running on 'peacetime' schedules, although most of the world was at war. Today I suppose the mixed train runs later than it did before, if it runs at all, for Palestine is no longer peaceful. But I can see it now as I saw it then – that morning mixed running through the groves with its flat cars laden with Arabs bound for market and its conductor threading his way among the flapping robes of the passengers, dark-skinned peasants looking for all the world like refugees in nightshirts."



[Note: Most readers will cope with the terminology – 'depot' for 'station', 'shops' for 'workshops', 'switcher' for 'shunter', etc. and some have been clarified in the text. A 'gas-electric' is a reference to an internal-combustion-powered railcar – clearly the author was unaware a 'Sentinel' car was powered by steam.]



- Here is the latest (at time of going to press) locomotive in Israel: A Bombardier 'Traxx' 25kV AC Bo-Bo with full UIC number "91 95 0003 993-7 LL-IR" being unloaded at Kishon Port on Monday 28th. August at 17.53 This is the first of this class of electric locos to arrive: there is as yet nowhere for it to run, but static testing and training will start and soon wiring will commence in earnest.