



Recalling a time when Lebanon was a viable country with some real railways: On the 105cm gauge, an 'A' class loco leads a train for Damascus at the Beidar Pass in Lebanon c1962; crossing another freight train that is just departing for Beirut

Covid continues. At the time of writing it looks very likely that local and national restrictions and lockdowns and quarantines will mean continued restrictions on travel and tourism to Israel (and other countries) and hence further postponement of a planned visit by railway enthusiasts with special trains and travel over lines not normally open to passenger traffic. A pity, but health and life take priority. This also means that it is some time since the Editor was himself able to visit Israel and travel new lines. The magazine is prepared solely at long distance and is dependent on contributions and various sources.

The past quarter has seen many unfortunate political developments in the region, in Iran, Syria, Turkey, Egypt, but the sudden collapse of the Afghan government and armed forces in August and resurgence of what amounts to little more than a well-armed and fanatical fundamentalist militia will also have longer-term consequences. History repeats itself – the evacuation of Damascus in 1918 has some parallels with that of Kabul in 2021 with foreign troops fleeing as others arrive. What will happen to the nascent railway system of Afghanistan is of course not the most significant issue for many who fear for their lives, but we will continue to take note of infrastructure and trade developments as possible.

The Editor has spent much time recently translating excerpts of 'Die Warte', the newspaper of the Templargesellschaft, the Württemberg pietists responsible inter alia for the 'German Colonies' in Jerusalem, Haifa, Sarona etc. It is hoped to incorporate excerpts relevant to railway plans (and the road situation in Palestine from the 1860's on) in this and forthcoming issues.

In the meantime construction work in Israel on both heavy and light rail continues as though it were a form of displacement activity with a sense of urgency driving much expansion of the system. More news within. Enjoy!

The Editor.

(i). FIRST QUARTER 2021 RESULTS.

From a press release of 30.05.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

On 30.05.2021 IR published their results for the First Quarter of 2021:

"The railways' performance during the Quarter, including the income from the Passenger Sector and the number of journeys, has been severely affected by the Covid19, the limited number of passengers on trains, changes to lines and stations closed, all due to government instruction.

The quarter ended with an overall profit of \$0.55M (NIS 1.8M), compared with \$10M (NIS 32.7M) in the same quarter of 2020; down by almost 95%!

The income during the quarter was almost \$186M (NIS 605.9M) compared with \$186M (NIS 606.5M) in the same quarter of 2020; almost the same.

The EBITDA during the quarter was \$3.5M (NIS 11.4M) compared with a cash flow operating loss of \$9.7M (NIS 31.6M) in the same quarter of 2020.

Passenger Sector:

*The average daily number of passengers in the quarter was 87,000 compared with 215,000 in the same quarter of 2020; down by almost 60%!

*The number of passengers carried in the quarter was 4.4M compared with 14M in the same quarter of 2020; down by almost 69%!

*The income from passengers in the quarter was almost \$12M (NIS 39M) compared with \$45.4M (NIS 148M) in the same quarter of 2020; down by almost 74%!.

*Average punctuality has improved from 89.3% in the first quarter of 2020 to 97.5% in the current sector; this is mainly due to much less stress on the network due to a much lower traffic volume.

Cargo Sector:

*In the first quarter of 2021 the railways carried 1.9M tons, slightly less than in the same quarter of 2020; 2M tons.

*The income in the first quarter of 2021 was \$12.6M (NIS 41M) compared with \$13.5M (NIS 44M) in the same quarter of 2020; down by almost 7%.

*The loss in the first quarter of 2021 was \$5.34M (NIS 17.4M) compared with \$2.52M (NIS 8.2M) in the same quarter of 2020; up by almost 212%!"

134:03. Siemens unit.



• *New Siemens set 4041-4042 on trial at Petach Tikva (the doors match!) Aharon Gazit*

(ii). SAFETY SYSTEMS.

Israel Railways Ltd. become a world leader in Rail Safety Warning Systems:

From a press release of 02.06.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

The Railways' Directorate headed by the Chairman of the Board, Advocate Mr. Moshe Shimoni, has decided to deepen cooperation with Rail Vision who develop advanced warning systems against dangerous hazards such as: objects, animals, people etc. on and near the track, thus significantly upgrading both rail travel safety and for other users, based on visual and thermal imaging, remote sensing and artificial intelligence.

The Directorate has decided to exercise the railways' stock options in Rail Vision, according to the policy of promoting business and innovative activity, in line with a government decision from 07.05.2018.

Prior to the public offering the railways will exercise options for 4,442 shares estimated at \$0.866 Million according to the share value at the last Rail Vision stock-raising round which took place in October 2020.

Exercise of the options is against payment for their nominal value; this turns Israel Railways Ltd. into a stock shareholder in a technologically-advanced and groundbreaking company who will improve rail safety worldwide.

The process is carried out according to the cooperation agreement signed by Israel Railways Ltd. and Rail Vision back in 2016, as a part of which the system is being tested in locomotives cabs in order to improve the system; exercise of options is based on an updated agreement from January 2020.

The system identifies and classifies obstacles through thermal and visual sensors from a distance of up to 2 km in any weather, 24 hours a day and warns the driver; it is superior to the driver's own ability to detect problems.

(iii). FIRE ON THE LINE.

On 03.06.2021 a fire broke out near the Tel-Aviv HaHagana - Lod line section at the road interchange of Ganot. At about 17:30 it was realized that damage to signalling equipment was higher than formerly estimated; the line was closed and as a result trains on the lines: Ashkelon – Rehovot - Lod, Beit-Shemesh - Lod, Rishon-LeZion Harishonim - Lod, Jerusalem Navon - Ben-Gurion Airport and Modi'in - Ben-Gurion Airport did not operate. Trains operated on other lines but with disruptions. Traffic resumed only on the morning of 04.06.2021 at 07:00.

(iv). TRACKWORKS AT TEL AVIV.

From a press release of 10.06.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"As part of the annual track maintenance programme in order to improve service and safety, track upgrading works will be performed at Tel-Aviv HaHagana station on Friday 18.06.2021 only; therefore, the following traffic changes will take place on that date:

Trains between Beer-Sheva and Herzliya running through Kiryat-Gat, Lehavim/Rahat, etc. will operate between Beer-Sheva and Lod only.

Trains between Beit-Shemesh and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central will operate between Beit-Shemesh and Lod only.

The railways will provide alternative bus services between the stations of Lod and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central. Traffic will resume on Saturday night 19.06.2021 with service start.

Update: the mentioned works were postponed on 13.06.2021, until further notice.

(v). BEERSHEBA EXPANSION.

From a press release of 10.06.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways are strengthening the city of Beer-Sheva as one of the four Israeli Greater Metropolitan Areas and building the fifth track at Beer-Sheva Central railway station, which includes also an additional platform as well as an additional railway bridge over the Hebron road, realignment of tracks, replacement of signalling and communication equipment and laying an additional 1 km long new track.

These works, when completed, including also at a later stage the electrification, will enable increasing services at rush hours from the current 4 to 5 trains/hour, as well as cutting travel time between Beer-Sheva and Tel-Aviv to less than one hour.

Due to these works the following changes are to take place to train traffic from Saturday night 12.06.2021: The following additional trains each Friday between Beer-Sheva and Dimona:

*Train No. 6830 will depart Dimona at 06:29 and terminate at Beer-Sheva North/University at 07:03.

*Train No. 6831 will depart Beer-Sheva North/University at 08:26 and terminate at Dimona 09:00

*Train No. 6830 will depart Dimona at 10:29 and terminate at Beer-Sheva North/University at 11:03.

*Train No. 6835 will depart Beer-Sheva North/University at 11:26 and terminate at Dimona 12:00.

The following trains will not operate:

*The daily train No. 834 departing Dimona at 08:22. Sunday - Thursday to Beer-Sheva North/University, and the daily train No. 835 departing Beer-Sheva North/University at 09:12 Sunday - Thursday to Dimona.

*As an alternative, the railways will operate free bus services between the two stations.

*Train No. 838 currently departing Beer-Sheva North/University to Dimona at 16:15 will depart instead at 16:40.

The following trains currently starting/terminating at Beer-Sheva Central will instead start/terminate at Beer-Sheva North/University:

Train No.605 departing Rosh HaAyin North at 05:59; train No.609 departing Herzliya at 06:33; train No.613 departing Herzliya at 07:33; train No. 626 departing Beer-Sheva Central at 10:47 will start at Beer-Sheva North/University at 10:54; train No.635 departing from Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central at 14:03; train No.642 departing from Beer-Sheva Central at 14:54; train No.650 departing from Beer-Sheva Central at 16:47; train No.5058 regularly departing on Thursdays only from Beer-Sheva Central at 14:03 will depart instead at 14:08 from Beer-Sheva North/University.

(vi). CHANGEOVER OF TRANSPORT MINISTERS.

From a press release of 14.06.2021 by the Ministry of Transportation:

"On this date there was a ceremony to say Good-Bye to the former Minister of Transportation Mrs. Miri Regev and welcome her successor Mrs. Meirav Michaeli, due to the new government which had been sworn in just one day earlier.

Participating in the ceremony were senior officials of the Ministry, senior managers, etc.; While Mrs. Miri Regev was theatrical as usual and implied that all the recent achievements were only hers (such as the Eastern Line which was actually included in the master plan already in 1997 and was approved by Minister Katz), the new minister Mrs. Meirav Michaeli was more focussed on the need to continue improving public transport.

Mr. Uri Malev, until now the Deputy Minister of Transportation, is in principle now in the opposition, but the new minister clarified that she wants him to continue, due to her appreciation for his fruitful work."

(vii). MY NAME IS BONDS.....

From a press release of 17.06.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"ISRAEL RAILWAYS LTD. SPOKESPERSON'S DEPT. NOTICE. Israel Railways Ltd. Success: New Bond Series Issue with Lowest Yield Ever.

Israel Railways Ltd. success with new bond series issue: The Company has completed the institutional phase with oversubscription of \$116.7M (NIS 380M), almost 4 times as much as it had wanted to raise. The series, with an average duration of 5.5 years, is index-linked with a 0.8% minus yield—the lowest yield ever for a bond issue in the Stock Exchange.

The company, having signed an addendum to the Subsidy Agreement to the value of the issue, is interested in raising NIS 100M face value, to be used to improve the working capital, as agreed with the State bodies that approved the issue.

Israel Railways bonds enjoy an AA+ S&P Ma'alot rating and an Aa1 Stable Midroog rating. These are index-linked bonds with an average duration of five and a half years. The company has two other bonds series due to mature at the end of the coming months, so that Series (c) will be the only bond series of the company traded on the Stock Exchange.

The issue has been accompanied by a Companies Authority team headed by Liron Singer and Haviv Katan. It has been led by Discount Capital Underwriting under Tal Rubinstein and the Israel Railways Legal Bureau under Adv. Hila Shamir with the Gross Hodak law office under Adv. Yif'at Scheftel.

Adv. Moshe Shimoni, Chairman of the Board of Israel Railways: "We are happy to announce a further successful round of capital raising by the issue of a third series of company bonds, thanks to the support of the Companies Authority and the Ministries of Transport and Finance. The aim of this round of capital raising is to enable continued development of the company's service and operational abilities, for the benefit of the Israeli public."

Michael (Micah) Maixner, CEO of Israel Railways: "I thank the investors for expressing their faith in the railway company and its executive; we shall utilize the monies raised in a professional and responsible manner."

Ran Stromaza, Deputy VP, Finance and Economics, Israel Railways: "The present issue comes at the conclusion of trading with the present Series (a) and (b), and will enable us to maintain the link between the railway company and the bonds investment market and advance the high level of transportation activity lead by Israel Railways. I am grateful to the State bodies who assisted in the process, including the Companies Authority, and the Treasury Budgets and Accountant-General's Branches. "We hope to benefit from the capital market's assistance in the future as well, in enabling further issues as much as possible, in coordination with the State bodies."

Maya Website Notice: Israel Railways—Events and Transactions:

<https://maya.tase.co.il/reports/details/1379555>

(viii). IC3 EXPORTS

In January 2021 the MV 'Lady Hedwig' (a general cargo ship registered in the Netherlands) conveyed three IC3 sets (i.e. a total of nine carriages) from Ashdod to Denmark – with three cars carried as deck cargo, one in an unusual dark blue livery. Two – Sets 03 and 08 were sold to the Danish State Railways and are apparently in easily restorable condition whilst Set 07 was repainted ca. 2016/7 in the dark-blue single-deck carriage livery for planned use as an ECTS signalling test train and had most of the interior removed, but was then withdrawn before this project was completed. This is to go to a Danish manufacturing company, apparently to be used as a showroom.

This video (in Danish) shows the loading:

<https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/regionale/oestjylland/danske-tog-sejles-hjem-efter-naesten-30-aar-dsb-vil-skraelle-gamle-tog>

(ix). LINE PLANNED TO KIRYAT SHEMONA.

On 24.06.21 it was announced that the Northern Planning Committee of the Government had given its confirmation for the new and now planned railway route from Karmiel to Kiryat Shmona. This will be 56 kms. long, heading first 24 kms to the East and then 32 kms northwards to Kiryat Shmona near the northern tip of Israel. The budget will be over 20 Bn NIS and the work will take 6 - 8 years. First surveys were made eleven years ago but in 2013 when plans were ready there was no funding. Now – finally - the project has been given the green light by the new government.

There will be 20 kms of tunnels and 5.6 kms of bridges. The average speed of the train will be 160 kph. There will be four stations, at Hatzor HaGlilit, Meron HaGalil, Carmiel East and the terminus at Kiryat Shmona.

The plan is also to use the line for freight trains ... and – who knows? - maybe a future extension into Lebanon? A future extension down to Tiveria is planned. The work will be very expensive since all the bridges and tunnels will be made earthquake-proof up to a Richter 7.2.

(x). FIRE AT ROSH HA'AYIN.

On 20.06.2021 at about 07:00 a fire broke out near Rosh HaAyin North railway station; Arson is suspected. It was soon clear that the damage caused was much larger than anticipated and as a result the stations of Rosh-HaAyin North, Petakh-Tikva Sgula, Petakh-Tikva Kiryat-Arie, Kfar-Sava Nordau and Hod-HaSharon/Sokolov were closed; rail services were suspended between these stations and alternative bus services were operated.

Traffic resumed only on Monday, 21.06.2021 at 18:00; the first train from Herzliya to Beer-Sheva through the Western Negev line departed at 18:33; the first train from Petakh-Tikva Sgula northwards to Kfar-Sava Nordau and Hod Hasharon/Sokolov and Ra'anana departed at 18:23.

(xi). MASKS AGAIN.

Due to the recurrence of the Covid19 virus, albeit in small numbers, the Ministry of Health decided that from Sunday 27.06.2021 it would be once more compulsory to wear masks in closed areas including passenger trains, closed waiting halls, offices etc.

(xii). THE NEW INLAND LINE

This link leads – for those who can copy it, at least! - to a brief video showing work under way on the new line Hadera – Lod which runs largely parallel to Route 6. <https://www.gplanet.co.il/> then add the word 'railway'. (The problem is that the link itself uses Hebrew letters).



Eastern line

- Earthworks underway on the Eastern Line, 15.08.2021. The bridge will enable a new alignment and rise in line speed from 120 to 160kmh.(Photos Aharon Gazit)



(xiii). EVENING CHANGES FOR ELECTRIFICATION WORKS.

From a press release of 30.06.2021 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry:

"As an integral part of accelerating the electrification works, from Sunday 04.07.2021 train traffic between Tel-Aviv and Rehovot, Tel-Aviv and Ashkelon, and Lod to Rishon LeZion Harishonim, will terminate at 21:00; according to Transport & Roads' Safety Minister Mrs. Meirav Michaeli the railways will provide the following alternative bus shuttle services free of charge:

Between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central, Rehovot and Ashdod and between Rehovot and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central at 20:40, 21:10, 21:40 and 22:10.

Between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central, Beit-Yehoshua, Netanya and Binyamina at 22:30 and 23:00, and between Binyamina and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central at 22:00 and 23:00."

(xiv). TIMETABLE CHANGES FOR SCHOOL HOLIDAYS.

From a press release of 18.07.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Both Transport Ministry & Israel Railways Ltd. have announced on passenger services strengthening services between Wednesday 21.07.2021 and Sunday 08.08.2021, which is a half-term vacation for the Jewish ultra-orthodox people, whose children do not study during these dates: The following additional trains will operate:

*Train 8760 will depart at 12:23 from Jerusalem Navon station and terminate at Tel-Aviv Hahagana station at 12:55 while calling at Ben-Gurion airport station.

*Train 8761 will depart at 13:07 from Tel-Aviv Hahagana station and terminate at 13:41 at Jerusalem Navon station while calling at Ben-Gurion airport station.

These two trains will start operating on Wednesday, 21.07.2021.

*Train 8183 will depart at 12:13 from Akko (Acre) and terminate at 14:07 at Tel-Aviv Hahagana station, calling at: Kiryat-Motzkim, Kiryat-Hayim, Hutzot HaMifratz, Merkazit HaMifratz, Haifa Central the 8, Haifa Bat-Galim, Haifa Hof HaCarmel, Atlit, Binyamina, Caesarea-Pardes-Hanna, Hadera West, Netanya, Tel-Aviv University, Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Tel-Aviv Hashalom.

*Train 8084 will depart at 14:42 from Tel-Aviv HaHagana and terminate at 16:15 at Akko, calling at: Tel-Aviv Hashalom, Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central, Tel-Aviv University, Netanya, Hadera West, Caesarea-Pardes-Hanna, Binyamina, Atlit, Haifa Hof HaCarmel, Haifa Bat-Galim, Haifa Central the 8, Merkazit HaMifratz, Hutzot-HaMifratz, Kiryat-Hayim and Kiryat-Motzkim.

These two trains will also start operating on Wednesday, 19.07.2021."

(xv). BEER SHEVA AND DIMONA SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS.

As an integral part of completing the current stage of works to add a track and the fifth platform at Beer-Sheva Central station (which will enable increased service frequencies and shorter travel times) the following improvements will take place from 01.08.2021

The Sunday to Thursday train 834 of 08:22 from Dimona for Beer-Sheva North/University, and train 835 from Beer-Sheva North/University for Dimona will be reintroduced.

Train 838 from Beer-Sheva North/University to Dimona will depart at 16:15 instead of 16:40.

Extending services from 01.08.2021:

Train 605 departing from Rosh Ha-Ayin North at 05:59 will terminate at Beer-Sheva Central instead of Beer-Sheva North/University station.

Train 609 of 06:33 and train 613 of 07:33 from Herzliya will terminate at Beer-Sheva Central instead of Beer-Sheva North/University station.

Train 626 departing 10:54, train 642 of 14:54 and train 650 of 16:54 from Beer-Sheva North/University station will depart instead from Beer-Sheva Central station.

Train 635 of 14:03 from Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station will terminate at Beer-Sheva Central instead of Beer-Sheva North/University station.

Train 5058 departing on Thursdays only at 14:08 from Beer-Sheva North/University station will start instead from Beer-Sheva Central station.

(xvi). TRACK WORKS.

Israel Railways Ltd. announced on 21.07.2021 on their website the following temporary changes to train traffic between Kiryat-Gat, Lehavim/Rahat and Beer-Sheva: "As an integral part of the annual track maintenance programme in order to improve safety and upgrading works, there will be temporary changes to train traffic on this section between Thursday night 05.08.2021 at 22:00 and through Friday 06.08.2021, and on Saturday night 07.08.2021. As a result, trains on the Herzliya - Beer-Sheva line will run only between Herzliya and Kiryat-Gat; there will be strengthening of alternative bus services along this section; services will resume on Sunday morning 08.08.2021."

(xvii). FURTHER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS.

On Monday, July 26: "The Ministry of Transportation and Israel Railways announced improvement of the railway service, addition of new trains and the extension of operating hours on a number of lines and stations throughout the country.

Extension of operating hours on the Valley Line: From Sun August 1 until Tues. August 31 the operating hours on the Valley train line will be extended. This is in order to allow residents of the area to enjoy the many summer events that take place in Haifa and its surroundings, Beit She'an and the valleys, and to allow many teenagers to reach places of entertainment through a comfortable, short and safe trip. Train 59 will depart Beit She'an at 23:36 and terminate at Haifa Merkaz Hashmona station at 00:23, stopping at: Afula Rafael Eitan, Migdal-Haemek Kfar Baruch, Yokneam-Kfar Yehoshua, Central Bay.

Train 60 will depart from Haifa Merkaz Hashmona station at 23:22 and terminate at Beit She'an station at 00:05. The train will stop at: Central Bay, Yokneam-Kfar Yehoshua, Migdal-Haemek Kfar Baruch, Afula Rafael Eitan.

From Sun. Aug. 1 from Sun. to Thurs. a new passenger train will be operated (number 278): Depart Rehovot 19:24 and terminate at Netanya 20:26. The train will stop at: Beer Ya'akov, Lod, Tel Aviv stations, Beit Yehoshua.

From Sun. Aug. 1 until further notice train 977 which departs Netanya Sun.-Thurs. at 18:50 to Ashkelon will be extended to terminate at Beer Sheva Central station. The train will stop at stations: Beit Yehoshua, Herzliya, Tel Aviv stns., Kfar Habbad, Lod, Rehovot, Yavne East, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Sderot, Netivot, Ofakim, Be'er Sheva North University."

(xviii). GRADUATION IN TRACK ENGINEERING.

From a press release of 25.07.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

The festive graduation ceremony for 18 graduates of the first and second curriculum of the track engineering program in the Israeli High Technical Institute-the Technion-the Israeli first academic plan of its sort provided dedicated training in track engineering-took place several days ago with the participation of Israel Railways Ltd. CEO Mr. Michael (Micha) Maiksner, the Technion Civil Engineering Faculty Dean Prof. Shlomo Bechor, Head of the Technion Transportation Research Institute Prof. Tomer Toledano, and senior manager of the railways' department in the Transportation Ministry Mr. Alias Matar.

The programme is a result of cooperation between Israel Railways Ltd., the ministry and the Technion's Unit for Continuing Studies in favour of implementation of the strategic plan of developing the rail network until 2040; the aim is to provide a solution for the national need to train track engineers, essential for implementation of many rail projects planned for the coming decades.

Israel Railways Ltd. hope that the programme will keep dozens of engineering each year to cope with the need already within few years.

Already today the railways and other infrastructure companies are facing a shortage of engineers for design, performing, and maintaining the track network; the railways are active in securing the network development by training towards a growing need for engineers.

Until 2040, the network is to grow from the current length of 1500 km, to 2500 km in 2040, while the number of stations is to grow from current 69 to 120 in 2040; the foreseen passenger traffic is to reach 300 million in 2040.

In addition to heavy rail, the LRV and METRO projects currently being promoted will further increase the need for engineers."

(xix). NEW TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR RAILWAY ENGINEERS.

Building on the above item: From a press release of 17.08.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The Institute for Transport Research and the Unit for Foreign and Continuing Education of the Technion (Israeli Technical Institute), will open - for the first time ever in Israel - on October 2021 in the Technion campus at Sharona Tel-Aviv (not far from Hashalom railway station) a new study programme of Railway Systems Engineering specializing in Rolling Stock.

The first programme of its sort comes to solve the problem of the growing need for professionals in rolling stock engineering, due to the enormous momentum on heavy and light rail in Israel; Currently there is a shortage of engineers in different railway systems fields.

The programme will train engineers to work on rolling stock engineering while developing capabilities of railway equipment maintenance. Among the subjects to be studied: Solutions for basic problems regarding train maintenance, signalling, control, propulsion systems and electrification, system engineering including railway dynamic and its systems, control, quality and reliability, etc.

The programme's graduates will have a deep interdisciplinary training in these which is currently badly needed, in order to be in the forefront of development of the mentioned dynamic fields.

The programme is being led by Prof. Tomer Toledo-Head of the Institute for Transport Research and the Unit for Foreign and Continuing Education of the Technion and member of the Civil and Environmental faculty; it is intended for Bachelors in engineering working in the field or for engineers interested to be specializing in.

There will be lectures by a variety of worldwide and Israeli specialists: Dr. Allan Zaremski from Delaware University of USA; Prof. Felix Schmidt from Birmingham University; Eng. Noam Peleg - Deputy General Manager of Israel Railways Ltd. Rolling Stock Department; Eng. Alex Dubov - formerly Israel Railways Ltd. Head of Signalling & Technology Management; Eng. Camel Case - Manager of Railway Department in the National Authority of Public Transport in the Ministry of Transportation; Dr. Alon Sne-Or - lecturer of RAMS system engineering; Eng. Gabriel Davidian - Beer-Sheva and southern depot manager; Eng. Amos Guttman - Senior engineer in the Jerusalem Master Plan Team - Jerusalem LRV project; Eng. Simcha Orenstein - Chairman of Specialists Committee for updating Israeli standard No. 5350 for construction and operation of LRV and consultant for companies; Eng. Akiva Rom - railway consultant (formerly a senior engineer in the railways' Kishon Works).

This cooperation continues a programme already successfully running for two years between the Technion, Israel Railways and the Ministry of Transportation; the programme's aim is to bring an answer forward to these fields suffering of professional human resources.

Israel Railways Ltd.: "With the growth of passenger traffic and integration of modern trains with advanced technologies like electrification and automatic control systems to monitor and prevent failures, there is a further need in reliable human resources to carry out projects, management and maintenance of motive power and rolling stock. The programme will help training the future engineers at the rolling and motive power division and enable us to increase the number of passengers to 100 million/year within five years; we're pleased at the harnessing to the programme of the ministry, the Technion, etc."

Prof. Tomer Toledo-Head of the Institute for Transport Research and the Unit for Foreign and Continuing Education of the Technion and member of the Civil and Environmental faculty said: "The Institute for Transport Research and

the Unit for Foreign and Continuing Education of the Technion, continue with the momentum of training engineers of railway and transportation infrastructures; rolling stock and railways' maintenance are rapidly developing and need a lot of professional and reliable engineers; therefore I am pleased to be a partner in the first Israeli programme of its sort to train graduates in these fields."

(xx). MORE MAINTENANCE.

Israel Railways Ltd. announced the following on their website:

"As an integral part of the annual maintenance programme there will be changes to traffic at Haifa and the north on Friday 06.08.2021 and on Saturday night 07.08.2021 due to infrastructure maintenance works, upgrading and replacement of track components at Haifa Central the 8 station.

As a result, there will be no services on the following lines:

- * Haifa Hof HaCarmel - Carmiel.
- * Haifa Hof HaCarmel - Beit She'an.
- * Haifa Hof HaCarmel - Nahariya.

The following railway stations will be closed: Nahariya, Akko (Acre), Kiryat-Motzkin, Kiryat-Hayim, Hutzot Ha-Mifratz, Merkazit Ha-Mifratz, Carmiel, Ahihud, Beit She'an, Afula/Rafael Eitan, Migdal Haemek-Kfar Baruch, Yokneam/Kfar Yehoshua."

And: From a press release of 16.08.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Track upgrading works will take place at the line section Tel-Aviv HaHagana - Lod near the Gannot road interchange on Highway 1 adjacent to the tracks.

As a result, the following temporary changes will take place from Thursday 26.08.2021 at 21:00 to Friday 27.08.2021 until about 18:30 and on Saturday night 28.08.2021 between 20:00 and 05:00 on Sunday, 29.08.2021:

Trains between Beit-Shemesh and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central will start/terminate at Lod.

Trains between Beer-Sheva, Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Herzliya will start/terminate at Lod.

Trains between Nahariya and Ben-Gurion airport will start/terminate at Tel-Aviv HaHagana.

Trains between Jerusalem Navon and Herzliya will start/terminate at Ben-Gurion Airport.

The railways will provide alternative bus shuttle services free of charge between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Lod, and between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Ben-Gurion Airport during the changes. Traffic will resume on Sunday 29.08.2021 at 05:00."

From a press release of 18.08.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Temporary changes to train traffic on the Tel-Aviv HaHagana - Lod line due to building a grade separation to replace a level crossing. The following changes will take place over this section:

Between Sunday 29.08.2021 and Thursday 02.09.2021, traffic will stop each evening from 21:00.

Trains between Beer-Sheva and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central as well as between Beit-Shemesh and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central will start/terminate at Lod.

Traffic will resume on the closed sections each morning at around 05:00.

On Friday 03.09.2021 and Saturday night 04.09.2021 trains between Beer-Sheva and Herzliya as well as between Beit-Shemesh and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central will start/terminate at Lod. Regular traffic will resume on Sunday 05.09.2021. The railways will provide alternative bus shuttle services free of charge between the closed stations."

From a press release of 22.08.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

Temporary changes to train traffic at Haifa and the north on Friday, 03.09.2021 due to track upgrading and components replacement at Haifa Central the 8 railway station. Due to the changes the following trains will not operate:

Carmiel - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel; Beit-She'an - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel (the Valley Line); on Thursday 02.09.2021 the train of 23:36 from Beit-She'an will not operate.

Nahariya - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel: All the stations of the Valley Line, Nahariya, Akko (Acre), Kiryat-Motzkin, Kiryat-Hayim, Hutzot Ha-Mifratz, Merkazit Hamifratz, Carmiel, Ahihud and Haifa stations will be closed. Traffic will resume on Saturday night at about 19:00.

(xxi). LIFE SAVER EQUIPMENT IN USE.

From a press release of 03.8.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.: Drama at Tel-Aviv Hahagana railway station: A passenger's life was saved this afternoon, thanks to the resourcefulness of the station staff headed by the station master, a paramedic who was in the station, the defibrillator and a medically trained passenger who was incidentally in the station.

The passenger, about 50 years old, visually impaired and assisted by a guide dog, collapsed suddenly, probably due to a heart event. The station team immediately identified the situation and rushed to call rescue teams while starting CRP with the defibrillator and assisted by the medically trained passenger who was coincidentally in the station; simultaneously, they closed the area in order to provide privacy for the passenger and a proper environment for the medical teams; the rescue teams arrived within minutes to continue the CRP.

Thanks to the fast treatment and the defibrillator the passenger's heart rate returned and he was taken by ambulance to hospital after the heart condition stabilized and his consciousness returned. The team continued to keep the dog until the passenger was in a condition to keep him again.

Defibrillators have been installed at all railway stations and operational sites, together with other medical kits, and this was not the first time that lives of passengers and employees have been saved.

The railways' response: "We're pleased to have the ability to save a passenger's life together with the medically trained passenger; we have today additional proof of the importance of a quick response in case of a medical event; the railways' security teams, the stations' teams, and the inspectors are regularly certified to provide first aid and CRP; this has proved itself."

(xxii). SERVICES OVER THE NEW YEAR FESTIVALS:

From an announcement of Israel Railways Ltd. of 27.08.2021 on their website:

During the Eves and Holidays' Evenings during the first half of September:

On Sunday 05.09.2021 train services will be strengthened as on regular Sunday and Thursday.

On Monday 06.09.2021, the eve of the New Jewish year, trains will operate as on a regular Friday over the following lines: Beer-Sheva - Herzliya; Beit-Shemesh - Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central; Beit She'an - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel; Carmiel - Haifa Hof HaCarmel; Nahariya - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel.

On Tuesday 07.09.2021 and on Wednesday, 08.09.2021 - the two days of the New Jewish year, there will be no services.

On Wednesday night 08.09.2021, trains will operate as on a regular Saturday night over the following lines: Jerusalem Navon - Herzliya; Beer-Sheva - Herzliya; Beit-Shemesh - Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central; Beit She'an - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel; Carmiel - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel; Nahariya - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel.

On Thursday 09.09.2021 train services will be strengthened as on a regular Sunday and Thursday.

On Tuesday 14.09.2021 train services will be strengthened as on a regular Sunday and Thursday.

On Wednesday 15.09.2021, the eve of Yom Kippur – the Jewish holiest day - trains will operate as on regular Fridays over the following lines:

Beer-Sheva - Herzliya; Beit-Shemesh - Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central; Beit She'an - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel; Carmiel - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel; Nahariya - Haifa Hof-HaCarmel.

On Thursday 16.09.2021, Yom Kippur, there will be no services.

Israel Railways Ltd. announced on their website that on Friday 10.09.2021 only, trains operating between Beer-Sheva and Herzliya on Friday and Saturday night would not operate on this day, due to infrastructure works to raise the track height in order to decrease the gap between trains and platforms at the Tel-Aviv University railway station. Alternative bus services would be provided between Tel-Aviv University and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central stations. Traffic would resume on Saturday night at about 20:00.

(xxiii). NEW BRANCH LINES!!

From a press release of 30.08.2021 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"After a complex operation by the railways, four old Ficus trees were moved from the place they grew along the track near Rosh HaAyin railway station to a the nearby National Park Afek.

The trees grew there for decades, but due to intensive track works on the new Eastern Line had to be relocated as vital trees for the environment and the many birds and bats living there and eating the fruits.

- *(Photo courtesy of Matan Berkovitch, IR Spokesman).*



(xxiv) PA'ATEI MODI'IN EXPANSION.

This station now has two sets of two platforms, the original route and the curve from the Jerusalem line having platforms in parallel, the tracks joining just east of the station.

- *Paatei Modiin Station*





• The newly-expanded Paatei Modiin Station (Photos Marion) in August 2021. Electrification has not yet commenced. (Photo courtesy of Steve Sattler)

134:05..

TENDERS

(i). Tender No. 12034: Providing services of Data Security Surveys and Resilience Tests: The intention is to select up to 2 winning bidders. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 29.06.2021.

(ii). Tender No. 12197: Providing services of Cognitive Diagnosis for the railways' Candidates for Employment: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 24.06.2021.

(iii). Tender No. 22022: Performing sub-contractual works for the Network Electrification OCS preliminary design: Works are to be performed per ISREL-ECSS-SEM-DES-000-TCO-001080-01 Drawings. OCS System Description. The contract is for 60 months with optional extensions of up to additional 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 14.07.2021.

(iv). Tender No. 12195: Providing services of Assimilation of Operating and Maintaining a computerized system of Managing Tenders and Quotations: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 96 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 29.06.2021.

(v). Tender No. 12045: Providing services of Electrical Systems at railway sites, tunnels and operational areas: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 02.08.2021.

(vi). Call No 62144; Bringing to the railway stores Computers and peripheral equipment, for donation to families and children who cannot afford themselves to purchase it, rather than scrapping it: Latest date of bringing the equipment: 13.07.2021.

(vii). Tender No. 22014: Providing services of Design Management and Performance Management of building and upgrading Tracks, Stations

The contract is for 24 months with option for up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 17.08.2021.

(viii). Tender No. 12073: Providing services of Pest Control and Pigeon Eradication at all railway areas and on passenger rolling stock and all sorts of locomotives: The contract is for 12 months with option for up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 28.07.2021.

(ix). Tender No. 191203: Permission to operate a 65sq.m. site at the new Lod station as a Fast Food (Meat) selling point: The contract is based on the following terms: A 6-months adjustment period; An up to 60 months permission period; A permission period of up to additional 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 05.08.2021.

(x). Tender No. 210602: Permission to operate a 28sq.m. site at the new Lod station as a Pizza selling point: The contract is based on the following terms: A 6-months adjustment period; An up to 60 months permission period; A permission period of up to additional 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 29.07.2021.

(xi). Tender No. 12058: Development, Delivery, Management and Maintenance service of a Railway Line Learning System, including line photography and editing:

The system is intended for virtual certification and refreshing drivers' knowledge for track sections. The intention is - amongst others - to update the training videos due to the tremendous changes on the railway lines in recent years. The contract is for 60 months with optional extensions of up to additional 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 09.08.2021.

(xii). Tender No. 210502: Operating a 62.45 sq.m. non-food store at the new Lod railway station: The contract consists of the following:

*An adjustment period of up to 4 months.

*A permission period of up to 60 months.

*An optional period of up to additional 60 months.

Latest date for submission of proposals: 16.08.2021.

(xiii). Tender No. 210601: Operating a 60.70 sq.m. convenience

store + a 68.91 sq.m. shed at the new Lod railway station: The contract consists of the following:

*An adjustment period of up to 4 months.

*A permission period of up to 60 months.

*An optional period of up to additional 60 months.

Latest date for submission of proposals: 16.08.2021.

(xiv). Israel Railways Tender No. 5212: Painting and Metal and Composite material Body Sheet Repair Services for the whole railway rolling stock and motive power: The tender refers to services for all the passenger cars of Alstom, Bombardier, and Siemens passenger cars and driving trailers/power cars, diesel locomotives of Vossloh Euro 3200 and 4000, GM/EMD G12 & G26, NRE, freight cars and shunting tractors. Work has to be performed at Kishon works of Haifa, and at the depots of Lod and Beer-Sheva. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 24.08.2021.

(xv). Israel Railways Ltd. Procurement & Contracting Division. Tender No. 42011. For the Manufacture and Supply of Under Sleepers Pads, in accordance with and subject to the terms specified in the General Terms and Conditions and the accompanying Tender Documents.

1. Pre-requisites for Participation in the Tender (the "Pre-requisites"):

1.1 The bidder must be the manufacturer and supplier of the Under Sleepers Pads ("USP").

1.2 The Bidder has manufactured and supplied, commencing from 2018 and up to the final submission date, at least 60,000 USP (one USP per one Sleeper) for conventional railway tracks complying with the Design Approval Test specified in EN16730...."

(xvi). Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 12055: Supply, installation and maintenance of Signage systems at railway stations and sites: Work includes also: upgrading of signs at stations, dismantling and assembling of signs as per requirements. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 25.08.2021.

(xvii). Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 22023: Building the Eastern Entrances to Jerusalem Navon railway station: The railways' intention is to select one winning bidder. Implementation time: 18 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 10.10.2021.

(xviii). Tender No. 22125: Performing Maintenance and Subcontracting works regarding Construction and Renovation at all railway stations and operational sites: The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 14.09.2021.

(xix). Tender No. 32103: An annual framework agreement for Supply of Computerized Equipment to all the railways' departments: The contract consists of 2 baskets:

Basket 1: Portable computers, work stations, screens and printers.

Basket 2: Scanners.

The intention is to select up to three winning bidders. The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 07.10.2021.

(xx). Tender No. 12125: Providing services of Training for Safety at Work:

The services include also: Training days, Continuing Education and Courses. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to an additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 25.08.2021.

(xxi). Tender No. 2215: A frame agreement for providing services of Shortcut to the Electricity Grid, electric vehicles, etc.: The shorting services are needed for shutting off the electricity grid in case of electric works being performed. The intention is to select 1 winning bidder only. The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 30.09.2021.

(xxii). Tender No. 210501: Operating a 52 sq.m. Store (plus an attached storage room) at Jerusalem Navon railway station: The contract consists on the following: Up to 4 months adjustment period. 60 months permission period. Up to 36 months of additional permission period. Latest date for submission of proposals: 13.09.2021.

(xxiii). Tender No.12041: Providing services of SMS through Cloud Saas: The contract is for 60 months with optional extensions of up to additional 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 19.10.2021.

(xxiv). Tender No. 3211: Providing services of management and construction of transformer stations (substations) (TS) and electric feeding systems (OCS): The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 14.10.2021.

B. TENDERS AWARDED.

(i). The winner of Tender No. 32101: An annual frame agreement to supply Tablets (board computers) is Team-Netcom Ltd. At \$231,876.00 p.a.

(ii). The winner of Tender No. 32102: An annual frame agreement to supply Traction Batteries for passenger cars is Israel Industrial Batteries Ltd. at € 251,852 p.a.

(iii). The winner of Tender No. 41907: ISA Services is: RINA Consulting S.p.A; 4th Line Ayalon - € 80,898.00. Eastern Line - € 217,668.00, 431 line: - € 126,488.00

(iv). Israel Railways Ltd. have announced on their website that the winner of tender No. 32105: Supply of 26,400 Covid19: GATING test kits, is the Israeli company Geffen Medical Ltd. at the value of \$105,764 (NIS 340,560).

LIGHT RAIL.

134:06.



Map of the projected and planned Tel Aviv light rail network



A. 'TRACKLESS TRAM' TECHNOLOGY.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 16.06.21: "The Australasian Railway Association has published a report highlighting the social benefits of light rail and making recommendations to help support future development, and also cautioning against 'gambling' with what ARA describes as unproven and untested 'trackless tram' technology-guided bus systems.

The 'Renaissance of Light Rail' report which ARA commissioned from RPS Group found that trackless trams have been attracting interest because their implementation costs are said to be 50% to 65% lower per kilometre than conventional light rail and 90% cheaper than a metro. However, it says trackless trams are 'a largely unproven mode' which has had limited use globally, with the technologies being considered in Australia being currently limited to Zhuzhou and Yibin in China.

A number of guided bus systems outside Australia were being decommissioned owing to challenges with delivering reliable services; examples cited included Eindhoven, Nancy and Caen, as well as buses designed with tram-like features in York and Las Vegas.

Concerns raised by the report include operation in snow, heavy rain and fog, regulatory requirements, a need to design road surfaces specifically for trackless trams, and proprietary technologies meaning supplier lock-in and a lack of competition in the market. 'International

experience has shown that while the technology may offer lower costs in the beginning, problems delivering reliable and comfortable journeys can lead to trackless trams being retired after a relatively short time in operation', said ARA Chief Executive Caroline Wilkie...."

The jury remains out as operational experience is gathered. At least in most parts of Israel (outside the mountains) snow and fog are not major issues.

B. TEL AVIV.

(i). On 31.05.2021 the Tel-Aviv LRV made by CRRC made its first test run on the Red Line from the depot at Petakh-Tikva Kiryat-Arie, located adjacent to Israel Railways Ltd. station of this name, through the exit tunnel and then to Shenkar portal on the Jabotinsky Road in the median of which the line runs.

The test run was accompanied by a special Police unit to have the public getting used to the new mode of transport to move there.

All the systems including safety, signalling, communication and electricity have been checked and will be checked further on additional test runs. NTA General Manager Mr. Hayim Gluek said: "We took a ride on a modern and quiet train; I'm proud of all we have done; it is a huge step for NTA which proved that we're able to do what we've promised; within a few days we'll perform a test run along the whole alignment of the Red Line within Petakh-Tikva; we'll study closely every aspect and correct everything needed to be done".

- *Photos courtesy of NTA. We see the depot with the IR line passing adjacent and as the tram ducks down into the tunnel, an IR suburban train in the distance.*

Here is a more official press release, as printed in 'Metro Report Intl.' of 7.06.21: : "Tel-Aviv light rail project promoter NTA has started test running with its Chinese-built LRVs on the first section of the Red Line, which is now under construction between Petakh-Tikva and Bat Yam. The first of 90 low-floor cars ordered from CRRC Changchun in 2015 was rolled out in China in April 2019, and several vehicles have now been delivered to the Red Line depot at Petakh-Tikva Kiryat-Arie. On May 31, a pair of units operating under their own power left the depot adjacent to the Israel Railways station, passing through the exit tunnel and down the depot branch as far as the Shenkar portal on Ze'ev Jabotinsky Street, along which the main route runs in a central median. The first low-speed move was protected by a police unit as local inhabitants were unfamiliar with the new transport mode. 'This is a huge step for NTA', said General Manager Hayim Glueck after the inaugural run. 'We took a ride on a modern and quiet train, and I'm proud of all our achievements, which proved that we are able to do what we have promised. Within few days we will perform test run along the whole of the Red Line alignment within Petakh-Tikva.'

A second trial on June 2 saw the test train continue along the outer section of the Red Line as far as the eastern terminus at the Petakh-Tikva central bus station. Further tests are to be undertaken to verify the performance of the 25kV 50Hz power supply, plus the safety, signalling and communications systems ahead of opening."



(ii). V.I.P. RUN

From a press release of 09.06.2021 by NTA:

"Today was another milestone on the Red Line when the LRV not only travelled the whole length of the line within Petakh-Tikva, but it was full of VIP's; it included a ceremony with participation of the then-still-Minister of Transportation Mrs. Miri Regev and NTA General Manager Mr. Hayim Glueck.

Mrs. Regev said: "There is no secret in the fact that today we are in a non-reversible process; the LRV and METRO lines will create a revolution in the Greater Tel-Aviv Area, which is the most congested area. Mr. Haim Glueck said: "Dozens of worldwide companies took part in the project and more than 1.5 million cubic metres of cement were needed; at the end however the passengers will enjoy a quiet and smooth journey."

(iii). BUSINESS COMPENSATION.

From a press release of 20.06.2021 by the Finance Ministry, the Ministry of Transportation & Roads' Safety, and the Tel-Aviv Municipality: The three bodies have decided to provide financial aid of up to \$77,000.00 (NIS 250,000.00) for each business located near the works being performed over the Green Line.

(iv). Tender No. 108/2021: Providing Security Services for the Red Line:

NTA intends to select one winning bidder only. The contract is for 48 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 11.08.2021.

(v). Tender No. 159/2021: Purchasing of an Insurance Policy for Professional Liability: NTA intends to select one winning bidder only. The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 29.07.2021.

(vi). Tender No. 059/2021: Providing services of Producing Events for NTA:

The contract is for two sorts of events: Group 1 Big events; Group 2 Small events. NTA's intention is to select one winning bidder for each group. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 13.07.2021.

(vii). Tender No.229/2021: Providing Management Services for the stage of Locating Underground Infrastructures along the planned Metro lines:

The services include: Management of Planning, locating of infrastructures where the underground stations are to be built, operational elements, shafts, portals and depots sites, and at a later stage managing and inspection on locating infrastructures to be performed by selected subcontractors. NTA's intention is to select up to two winning bidders. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 05.08.2021.

(viii). Tender No. 071/2021: Providing Consulting Services on Security and Emergencies for the LRV Green & Purple Lines, and the METRO lines:

NTA's intention is to select one winning bidder. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 04.08.2021.

(ix). NTA Tender No. 186/2021: Providing services of Performing Simulations of LRV systems: NTA's intention is to select one winning bidder only. The contract is for 36 months with optional extensions of up to additional 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 26.08.2021.

(x). NTA International Tender No. 306/2021. For the Execution of works for the development and relocation of infrastructure on Raoul Wallenberg Street in Tel Aviv. The Green Line, Section G4 (Subsection G4-9). The Submission Date of the Bids is no later than 2.9.2021 at 13:00. The Bids shall be deposited in the designated Tender box located at NTA's offices, Haroknim 26 Holon, building A, 9th floor."

(xi). NTA Tender No. 242/2021: Performing works of locating, validation, exploration, exposure, measuring, and mapping without destructing underground infrastructures: NTA intends to select up to 4 bidding winners.

The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals:30.09.2021.

(xii). NTA Tender No. 158/2021: Building a Website and Application and providing Maintenance Service; NTA intends to select one winning bidder only. The contract is for 36 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 20.10.2021.

(xiii). NTA Tender No. 494/2021: Providing services of managing a Call Centre combined with a CRM and additional systems: The intention is to select one winning bidder. The contract is for 36 months with optional extensions of up to additional 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 11.10.2021.

(xiv). Pre-Qualification 478/2021 : "INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION IN RELATION TO THE PARTICIPATION IN A TENDER FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF (EACH OF) THE TEL AVIV METROPOLITAN METRO LINES .

Introduction and General Description of the Programme

NTA – Metropolitan Mass Transit Systems Ltd. is a government company tasked with the development of the Tel Aviv Metropolitan Mass Transit System, which includes, inter alia, a metro network, comprising three (3) mostly underground metro lines of approximately 145 kilometres in length, 108 Stations and more than 760 vehicles and seven (7) transportation hubs.

The Tender Committee is issuing this Invitation as the first stage of the selection process of three (3) consortiums, which will be responsible each, for the management and design of one of the Metro Line Projects comprising part of the Programme ("Line Managers").

General, indicative information with respect to the Metro Line Projects is further detailed in Annex I (General Description of the Programme).

1.3. The Selection Process

The Tender Committee intends to select three Successful Bidders, each to be appointed as a Line Manager for purpose of managing and designing one of the Metro Line Projects through the following stages:

1.3.1 this Pre-Qualification Process; and

1.3.2 one Tender Process with respect all three (3) Metro Line Projects...."

(xv). TV PUBLICITY. On 14.07.21 Steve Sattler wrote: "In a long interview on Israeli TV tonight ... One of the main engineers took the TV crew into the new train stations under Tel Aviv - 35 metres underground - and showed the 'almost-finished' platforms and rooms. Lots of marble walls and very fancy 'ceramic' platform floors. Automatic doors for the trains at the stations.

The big and main station cavern under the very busy Allenby St will be an interchange point for the Red and Purple lines. The Purple line links the Eastern suburbs and cities to central TLV.

The Red Line [From Bat Yam in the South to Petach Tikva in the East] will be operational in Nov. 2022, with ten underground stations and 54 kms of tracks. All together 34 stations. Each station will be automated with AI computers: for doors, elevators and escalators, ventilation, fire-sprinklers and even bomb-proof sections for Nuclear attacks. A train will arrive every 3.5 to 4.00 mins.

So far the engineers have used 15% less concrete and steel in the construction than the original plans allowed for. The central section is underground - and the two branches are above ground. The through Jaffa section [above ground] is almost finished."

C. JERUSALEM.

(i). HAREDI OPPOSITION TO GREEN LINE.

From 'Jerusalem Post' 09.07.2021:

"In a tiny apartment in the haredi neighborhood of Geula late one night earlier this week, a skinny young man wearing the typical black coat of the Edah Haredit (Neturei Karta) is sitting, speaking softly. On the large table in front of him are a few rugelach, a bottle of soda and some plastic cups. The man – who asked to be identified only by his first name David, barely 25 but already the father of two – is the brains behind the recent violent haredi



• Tel Aviv tram on Rehov Yerushalayim

protest against the planned Green Line of the light rail, whose route crosses the heart of the Geula/ Bar Ilan neighbourhood.

David speaks softly, but is adamant against what is considered by the Transportation Ministry and the municipality to be the flagship of the development plans for the capital.

“We are here to stay. The sooner the authorities grasp and understand this, the better it will be. We are not going anywhere and we will never accept this plan as it is proposed. We ask for a tunnel and will not accept any other solution.”

Asked why this strong opposition to the light rail, David replies, “Nobody asked us. Nobody tried to find out what we really need or want, what fits our way of life. Nothing. They [the municipality, the Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan] just came one day and said, ‘This is what we plan, you may submit objections, but we are not committed to accept them.’ “Hence, left without choice, we fight back.”

The strong (more than once turning into rioting) opposition of the haredi sector, or at least a substantial part of it, to the light rail is not new. The reasons for it are varied – from the deep sense of insult that they were not asked for their position before approving the project, to the genuine fear this project is seriously threatening their way of life. But in the past few months there were a few cases of damage caused to heavy construction equipment, including pouring concrete into tractor engines and such. David says this was not done on his behalf, but doesn’t condemn these acts.

“We want to stop this work. What we usually do is lay on the land, or under the wheels of the tractors – anything that can stop the teams. That’s what we do. There were cases that some of the protesters went far, that was not our initial plan.”

David and the large community behind him are called the “Zealots” of Jerusalem, albeit the historical contexts are quite different. The Zealots of the Second Temple era called for rebellion against the Romans, out of nationalistic – and religious – fervour. These days, the Zealots of Jerusalem are anything but nationalists, and if rebellion still seems the main message, it comes from a stubborn refusal to become part of the mainstream Israeli discourse, of a strong adhesion to the old traditions, and a refusal to enable any slight change. For the past few years – some of them say at least five years – the major struggle was against the path of the Green Line.

David runs a Kollel and has managed to gather support from all the different factions inside the capital’s haredi sector – from the most extremist side of the Neturei Karta (of which he is a member) up to the “mainstream” haredi part, including those represented at the Jerusalem City Council and the Knesset.

“We, at the Edah Haredit,” asserts David with a touch of irony, “always knew that haredim of all streams would never really be accepted by the ‘Zionist Establishment.’ We always knew that behind the nice smiles, there will always be contempt, even hatred. So we never wanted to be part of it. “We are against this project as it is planned – with the brutal crossing inside our neighbourhoods, without any consideration for our way of life, our customs, our needs – just because someone in the government has decided this is a good idea. We say, ‘A light rail? Okay. Underground, build a tunnel – just like what was approved for the line planned on Yehezkel Street nearby.’

“But they won’t even listen to us – so we do everything we can to stop it.”

Asked to detail the reasons for this opposition, David mentions several points.

“The crossing of the line through the heart of the neighbourhood will simply ruin our life; there is no reason we should be sacrificed for this development that does not serve us. Moreover, this plan says that high towers can be built along the line. We can’t prevent an entrepreneur from buying land to build a 12- or 14-storey building. Who will live there? Not us, of course, we do not use the so-called ‘Shabbat elevator.’ So people who are not part of our community will come in – here is a simple, quick way to get rid of us and expel us – because once there are non-haredim living in the neighbourhood, there will be no place for us.

“Is that what’s behind the plan? To eject us from our homes?”

After the first spontaneous protest, David and a small group of his Edah Haredit peers decided to get more organized. They found the little apartment where they agreed to meet me, bought the basic necessary equipment (printer, computer, etc.) and now even employ a communications consultant, himself a member of the no-less-radical Peleg Yerushalmi faction. One of the first goals was to obtain the blessing of the rabbis from all haredi streams. David succeeded in enlisting an unprecedented level of cooperation.

Posters and brochures were dispatched to synagogues; everything was done to garner as much support as possible. The next step was to raise money for the struggle. Again David was successful, especially when armed with all the official blessings and support declarations.

“This is going to be a long struggle, but we are not going anywhere and we will not surrender. The Master Plan, the municipality and the government – they will all have to understand that the fact that we are haredim and members of the Edah Haredit doesn’t mean we do not have rights. There will be a tunnel for this line or no light rail.”

In one of the surprising plot twists that Jerusalem so often provides, an alliance is being forged between David and his partners and the secular and Zionist residents of the German Colony opposed to the path of the light rail's Blue Line on Emek Refaim St. A few meetings have already taken place. The parties exchanged ideas, and though there is no plan to use the Eda Haredit methods, this quite unexpected bond underscores this city's special character.

Shortly after the end of the meeting, on the same little street in Geula, an attempted murder took place. Two former haredim riding a motorcycle approached a young haredi from Geula and stabbed him several times. They disappeared before anyone could stop them and the victim was taken to a hospital.

Asked how this could happen in such a neighbourhood, one of David's friends explained that "these thugs" are not haredim anymore. "They come from another neighbourhood. None of them are from here."

(ii). Then more in 'Times of Israel' on 24.08.2021: "Cop maced in clashes with ultra-Orthodox over Jerusalem light rail. Officer lightly hurt as police arrest 4 on suspicion of disturbing the peace; water cannons used to disperse protesters, who deny using violence.

Ultra-Orthodox protesters on Tuesday clashed with police in Jerusalem over work on a new light rail line through the area. Police said that a female officer was lightly hurt after being maced with pepper spray on the capital's Bar-Ilan street. Cops arrested four protesters on suspicion of disturbing the peace. A police statement said that officers were using "means at their disposal" to disperse the protesters, which included mobile water cannons. There were no reports of injuries among the demonstrators. The group that organizes protests against the light rail work denied demonstrators used violence against officers. "Testimony from the field indicates the officer fell while chasing after passers-by as part of dispersing the protest," the group was quoted saying by the Walla news site. They also claimed the police statement was meant "to justify the excessive use of violence and water cannons.

(iii). A PERSONAL IMPRESSION From Steve Sattler: "Last night Deena & I took the tram into the city at around 8.15 pm - it's 5 stops from my Ramat Eshkol home. (WE all wear masks). We walked a bit and then ate supper at Harvey's - near Kikar Tzion. A TRAM rumbles by every 9 minutes and although Jaffa Road is absolutely full with people [hundreds of them - of 1 billion varieties] and at any one time about 30 will be standing on the tracks - including prams and kids talking: - as the tram approaches - the people [and a few dogs] all AUTOMATICALLY move to one side - and allow the tram to pass. THIS IS A MIRACLE !! In real life it is impossible to get an Israeli to move unless you are driving a tank - but here - and with a high degree of 'dance' they move, the tram passes and then they block the tracks again for 8.99 min till the next time."

(iv). EXTENSION TRACKLAYING BEGINS.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 18.08.21:

Ceremonial first rails for the expansion of Jerusalem's light rail Red Line were laid in the presence of Mayor Moshe Lion on August 11. The line is being extended north to Neve Ya'akov and south from Mount Hertzal to the Hadassah hospital, adding 11 stops. Opening is scheduled for the first half of 2023.

Construction is also underway on the 22 km Green Line, and procurement has begun for the 20 km Blue Line which is expected to open around 2030. 'There is no doubt that the moves we are making these days in Jerusalem will be an inspiration for other big cities,' said Zohar Zoller, head of the Transport Master Plan team."

The following article and pictures have been provided by courtesy of the Israeli newspaper 'Jerusalem Post': AUGUST 11, 2021.

Jerusalem light rail: New track installation under way

27 Km of routes will be added to Jerusalem's light rail, with more than 50 new stops. By Jerusalem Post staff.

The first tracks for the new Jerusalem light rail lines were laid down on Wednesday morning in the presence of Jerusalem's mayor, Moshe Leon. The new tracks, which were installed on Hantke street, are the first step in 27 Km of extra railway and more than 50 stops that will be added to the current light rail network.

The Red line will be extended southward toward Hadassah-Ein Kerem and northward toward Neve Yaakov. In total there will be 11 new stops. The train is expected to make the full route for the first time in the first half of 2023, but the date may be delayed.

"In the next few days we mark a decade since the red line's activation, and I am excited to open a second decade for the



• Track laying begins on Rehov Hantke, 11.08.2021. (Pictures thanks to Jerusalem Post, by Abir Sultan)



• Artist's impression of Green Line Tram near the Stadium

revolution of public transport in Jerusalem with the launch of the extended red line," said Jerusalem Mayor Moshe Leon. "I would like to thank all involved and wish us all luck on this project."

"The laying of the Red Line tracks is launched parallel to the rapid infrastructure works for the Green Line and the advertisement of the Blue Line, which will be the third in the light rail system in Jerusalem," said Zohar Zoller, CEO of the Transportation Master Plan. "There is no doubt that the moves we are making these days in Jerusalem will be an inspiration for similar moves in other big cities, and that we are creating a new urban standard for transportation systems."

"Today marks an important milestone for Jerusalem's transport revolution, and Kfir is excited and

proud to take part in the actualization of this vision," said Oren Cohen, CEO of Kfir Light Rail.

Transportation Minister MK Merav Michaeli added that "this is another move in the reordering of metropolitan and national priorities for the sake of lessening the use of personal vehicles and toward a more advanced transportation system."

(v). BODY FOUND.

From 'Times of Israel' 12.08.21: "The body of a suspected Jordanian soldier was unearthed on Wednesday at Jerusalem's Ammunition Hill, the location of a fierce battle between Israeli and Jordanian troops during the 1967 Six Day War. The body was found during construction work on the light rail system, Channel 12 reported Thursday. Alongside the body, a knife, Jordanian Army helmet, military watch, and ring were found, the report said. According to the network, police suspect the man was killed during the fighting there in June 1967.

Thirty-six Israeli soldiers and 71 Jordanian soldiers were killed in the Battle of Ammunition Hill." The body was later given a formal burial.

D. MODI'IN.

No news yet, but Aharon reports: "It has been recently reported that in the city council meeting many of the participants mentioned that due to the planned growth in the population from the current 125,000 to more than double in 2030, the planning must include an LRV system.

However, as a citizen of this city between 1999 and 2015, and being aware of its tough mountainous topography, it will be interesting to see what solutions are eventually found."

OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.

134:07.

A. TURKEY.

(i). ISTANBUL METRO LINE M9 OPENS.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 02.06.21: "Line M9 on the European side of Istanbul opened on May 29. M9 combines a newly-built metro route between İkitelli Sanayi and Bahariye, which has been under construction since 2016, with the İkitelli Sanayi – Olimpiyat line which opened in November 2013 as branch of M3. The full M9 route is now 6 km with five stations. A further extension to Ataköy is planned to open next year, taking the line to 17.4 km and 14 stations."

(ii). VELARO HIGH SPEED TRAIN SETS DELIVERED.

From 'R.G.I.' 02.06.2021: "National operator TCDD Tasimacilik has taken delivery of the last of the 19 Velaro TR high speed trainsets ordered from Siemens Mobility. TCDD bought its first Velaro in 2013, when a Velaro D trainset for Germany was taken from the production line and refitted for operation in Turkey. This entered service between Ankara and Konya in May 2015.

The operator placed a order for six eight-car Velaro TR trainsets in July 2013, worth around €285m including the initial trainset and seven years of maintenance. An order for a further 10 trainsets was confirmed in April 2018 at cost of around €340M, and two more were ordered in 2019. Siemens said the average time between contract signing and passenger operation was 24 months.

The Velaro TR sets have three business-class compartments each with four seats, 45 seats in first class and 426 in economy class. The dining car has eight bistro and 28 restaurant seats. Passengers can access video on demand, e-books or games from their own mobile devices, or from at-seat screens in business and first class.

'Delivering the last train of the Turkish Velaro fleet well ahead of schedule marks an important milestone in our partnership with the Turkish state railways,' said Siemens Mobility's CEO Rolling Stock Albrecht Neumann on June 3. 'Our proven high speed trains, developed for the global market, enhance passenger experience by providing comfort and convenience. We are proud to contribute to a project that significantly develops the infrastructure of Turkey and enables people in this large country to travel at high speed yet with a low CO₂ footprint.' "

(iii). MAJOR NETWORK EXPANSION PLANS.

From 'I.R.J.' 09.06.21: By David Burroughs: "Turkey is planning to expand its network from the current 12,803km to 16,775km by the 100th anniversary of the Turkish Republic in 2023, as the country looks to cement a position in China's 'Belt and Road' initiative.

Highlighting the investments Turkey has made in rail over the past 19 years during a visit to the central province of Yozgat, transport and infrastructure minister Mr Adil Karaismailoglu said the country was also developing national and indigenous technologies to modernise its railways, the state-run Anadolu Agency reported.

The Belt and Road initiative plans to connect Asia with Africa and Europe via land and maritime networks along six corridors with the aim of improving regional integration, increasing trade and stimulating economic growth.

The first train to run from Asia to Europe was via the Middle Corridor and the Baku – Tbilisi – Kars railway (BTK) in 2019. The Middle East Corridor runs from Turkey via Georgia, Azerbaijan, and central Asia to China, with Turkey hoping it will become an alternative to both shipping routes and the Trans-Siberian Railway. In January, Turkey operated two pilot services from Ankara via the BTK railway to Russia and China respectively."

(iv). ESKISEHIR TRAMWAY.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 16.06.21: "A 2.4 km extension of Eskisehir tram Line 13 from Opera to Kumlubele was opened by Mayor Yılmaz Büyükeren on June 14. Travel was free until June 19."

(v). GEBZE METRO. From 'Metro Report Intl.' 16.06.21: "Tunnelling for the 14.6 km Gebze Metro was officially launched by Minister of Transport & Infrastructure Adil Karaismailoğlu on June 14. The first section of the line is scheduled to open by the end of 2023. The line in Kocaeli province to the southeast of Istanbul will run between Gebze OSB industrial zone and the adjacent district of Darıca, with 11 stations and all but 900m of the route underground. It will have a capacity of 330,000 passengers/day, with trains running at up to 80 km/h and an end-to-end journey time of 19 min. Passengers will be able to interchange with inter-city services and the cross-Istanbul Marmaray commuter line which terminates at Gebze. The metro project was initially

developed by Kocaeli municipality, but responsibility was subsequently passed to the Ministry of Transport & Infrastructure because of the expected outturn cost of around TL2.5Bn. Bozankaya beat CRRC to win a TL349.8M contract to supply seven four-car driverless trainsets within 30 months. These will be stabled at a depot to be built 1 km north of the Gebze OSB station."

(vi). **FREIGHT LINKS.** From 'R.G.I.' 14.06.21: "ÖBB Rail Cargo Group's TransFER service linking Curtici near Arad in western Romania with Istanbul in Turkey in 72 h has been increased to two round trips per week from June 2." And on 21.06.21: "ÖBB Rail Cargo Group and TCDD's 'Pasifik Eurasia' have formed a partnership to develop rail freight between Europe and Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and China via the Köseköy Terminal to the east of Istanbul. Pasifik Eurasia will be responsible for services in Asia, and ÖBB RCG for the European activities."

(vii). **THRACE LINE SIGNALLING CONTRACT.**

From 'R.G.I.' 29.6.2021: "The joint venture which is modernising the line linking Istanbul with Bulgaria has appointed CAF Signalling as subcontractor to install signalling on the 153km western section between Cerkezköy and the border at Kapikule. The 233 km main line between Kapikule and Halkali on the west side of Istanbul is being extensively rebuilt in two segments under a €530m contract signed in April 2018 with a consortium of Italy's Salini Impreglio (now Webuild) and Turkey's Kolin Insaat. The project includes long sections of new alignment and the construction of three stations. Most of the new sections are on the 144 km between Edirne and Cerkezköy, and require 10 tunnels, 16 bridges and two viaducts. CAF Signalling will supply electronic interlockings and a centralised control system compatible with ETCS Level 1 and operations at up to 200 km/h. CAF Signalling said the contract announced on June 29 is worth more than €15M, adding that its third signalling project in Turkey in recent years has helped to establish a strong presence in the region's signalling market."

(viii). **SHIP CANAL PLANS.**

From 'R.G.I.' 28.06.2021: "Turkey: Canal plan puts brakes on rail projects. Turkey's plans to build a ship canal connecting the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara are being carefully monitored by the European Commission in case the scheme interferes with the project to upgrade Turkey's main line link to Bulgaria and the rest of Europe."

(ix). **TURKISH E.M.U. UNDERGOES FINAL TESTS:**

From 'I.R.J.' 6.7.2021, by David Burroughs: "Turkish Rail System Vehicles Industry (Türasas) has begun the final tests on its first locally-produced 160km/h five-car EMU, which will be delivered to TCDD from next year. Türasas plans to deliver a total of 56 trains by 2025, including four in 2022 and 15 in 2023."

The launch of the "National Electric Train" in Sakarya was attended in person by minister of transport and infrastructure Mr Adil Karaismailoglu, TCDD general manager Mr Ali Ihsan Uygun, TCDD transportation general manager Mr Hasan Pezük, and Türasas general manager Mr Mustafa Metin Yazar, and via videoconference by Turkish president Mr Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Türasas was created in March 2020 following the merger between the manufacturers Tülomsas, Tüdemsas and Tüvasas. The company says it plans to produce the trains for domestic operation and is also looking to export them to the European market.

The prototype vehicle was 65% locally produced, but Türasas plans to increase this to 75% during mass production. The trains have an aluminium body which was manufactured at a new facility in Sakarya, which was inaugurated in June 2019.

The EMU has capacity for 324 passengers including two spaces for passengers with reduced mobility, and five toilets, including one which is fully accessible. Each car has a driving bogie and a non-driving bogie, with an axle load of up to 18 tonnes. The trains operate under 25kv 50hz ac electrification, with ac/ac traction motors.

(x). **CZECH SERVICES.**

From 'R.G.I.' 05.07.2021. "Turkish freight forwarding company Mars Logistics has launched an intermodal service connecting Halkali in Istanbul with the new T-PORT terminal at Kolín in the Czech Republic. The first train departed on June 19 and arrived at Kolín five days later, carrying 45 ft containers and swap bodies loaded with goods primarily for the automotive industry. The service will initially run weekly, increasing to three train pairs a week in late August. Haulage is provided by TCDD Tasimacilik, PIMK Rail, Srbija Kargo and PKP Cargo International."

(xi). **DESIGN WORK FOR SIVAS – ERZINCAN HIGH SPEED LINE COMPLETED.**

From 'I.R.J.' 13.11.2021: "SWS Engineering has completed the detailed design for the 247km Sivas – Erzincan high-speed railway under a contract with Turkish State Railways (TCDD).

The 250km/h line, which will have five stations, (named are Hafik, Zara, Imranli, Refahiye) will be part of a strategic corridor linking China and Central Asia to Europe via Istanbul, Ankara, Sivas, Erzincan, Kars, Tbilisi and Baku.

SWS Engineering says the mixed-use line passes through zones with exceptionally high seismicity, very poor soils and complex hydrogeological conditions. The route includes 59 viaducts with a total length of 17km, as well as 35 tunnels with a total length of 170km. The line will also require 35 cut-and-cover sections, 18 overpasses, 32 underpasses, and 226 culverts. Testing is nearing completion on the 405km, 250km/h Ankara – Sivas line. The first section of the Ankara – Istanbul high-speed line, the first in Turkey, opened in July 2014."

(xii). **IZMIR NEW TRAMS**

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 30.07.2021: "Bozankaya submitted the lowest bid of TL749.75m for a contract to supply 26 trams to Izmir Metro for use on the Konak and Karsiyaka lines and the future Cigli line which is currently under construction.

The contract will be awarded after a detailed examination of the submitted bids. On July 28 Izmir municipality said six companies has purchased tender documents, with Bozankaya, Hyundai Rotem and CRRC submitting bids. Requirements included 51% local content, and delivery of the first two sets within 18 months and all 26 within 27 months. The new vehicles will take the city's tram fleet to 64.

The 11 km Cigli line is being built by Nurol Insaat under a TL414m contract signed last year, with work getting underway in February this year and scheduled to be completed within two years. The mostly double-track line will have 14 stops and a 500m combined tramway, pedestrian and bicycle crossing over the ring road. The completion of the new line and a 1 km extension to the existing 8.8 km Karsiyaka line will take the tram network to a total of 33.6 km."

(xiii). **IZMIR METRO: EUROPEAN BANK LOAN AGREED.**

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 30.07.2021: "The European Bank for Reconstruction & Development is to provide Izmir municipality with a €125m loan to support construction of the first phase of the Üçyol – Buca driverless metro line.

The 13.5km line will be entirely underground, with an end to end journey time of 20 min and interchanges with bus, tram and suburban rail services. It will have 11 stations, including Üçyol where it will interchange with the Fahretin Altay – Evka 3 metro line, Sirinyer where it will connect with the Izban railway line, Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi and Camlikule.

The total cost of construction is put at €1.07Bn. EBRD announced the co-financing loan for the first phase on July 28 as part of its Green Cities programme, with the metro project's aims including replacing private vehicles and shared minibuses, reducing traffic congestion and noise pollution and halving greenhouse gas emissions in the local area.

'The project will leave a lasting mark on Izmir and will radically solve the traffic problem of Buca, the most congested district of our city', said Mayor

Tunc Soyer. 'The new metro line will connect with other urban transport links, promote modern, fast, eco-friendly and safe commute, create employment and attract investors.'

The latest loan builds on the EBRD's long-term cooperation with the city, where it provided an €80M loan in 2018 and a €25M B-loan to co-finance the construction of the 7.2km Fahrettin Altay – Narlıdere – Kaymakamlık western extension of the east-west metro line, €23.5M of financing for 85 metro cars and a €33M loan for five car ferries."

(xiv). SCANDINAVIA LINK.

From 'R.G.I.' 02.08.21: "Turkish logistics association UTİKAD has signed a memorandum of co-operation aimed at developing an international rail and multimodal corridor linking Turkey, Ukraine, Lithuania and Scandinavia. Other signatories include LTG Cargo Ukraine, Ukrainian Railways, Liski Transport Service Centre, Ukrferry and FerryPlus."

(xv). IZMIR METRO TENDERS.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 19.08.2021: "Seven companies or consortia have applied to prequalify for the contract to build İzmir's planned Otogar – Kemalpaşa metro line.

The 27.5 km line with 19 stations will link the inter-city coach station with the future Ankara – İzmir high speed rail line and the existing Otogar – Halkınar light rail line.

The potential bidders are:

Kaiser Mühendislik ve Müşavirlik;

Tekfen Mühendislik;

Yüksel Proje Uluslararası;

Team Group;

Su-Yapı Mühendislik ve Müşavirlik and Metro İstanbul Sanayi ve Ticaret;

SWS Engineering and Tümas

Prota Mühendislik Proje Danışmanlık Hizmetleri.

Subject to meeting the tender requirements, they will be invited to submit technical proposals and then if these are considered suitable they will be invited to submit financial bids. It is envisaged that construction would take two years from the signing of a contract.

Announcing that tendering for the Otogar – Kemalpaşa project was underway, Mayor Tunc Soyer said the municipality was continuing with studies started late last year for another planned metro line linking Karabağlar to Gazimir.

The municipality has also called tenders for final design of the planned 5 km nine-stop Örnekköy – Girne tram line."

(xvi). MERSİN METRO PLANS.

"Mersin municipality has formally awarded the contract for construction of the city's first underground metro line. The winner was a consortium of US company Dillingham Construction International and Turkey's Kaska-Kom, which submitted the lowest bid of TL3.379Bn.

Bids had also been submitted by a consortium of Doğu, Ticaret, Yapı Merkezi and Sanayi (TL3.810Bn) and Cengiz (TL4.122Bn). The award of the contract follows five months of negotiations with the competing bidders.

The 13.4 km line will run from the main railway station to Mezitli in the city centre, with nine intermediate stops.

The municipality has authorised the issuing of a TL900M bond to help cover the cost of the project, and said construction would begin as soon as possible. The contract includes the construction and fitting out of 8,070m of cut-and-cover tunnel, 4,880m of single bore tunnels, the stations and also associated

road and landscaping works. The winning consortium will then maintain the line for the first 24 months of operation.

The municipality has also announced that planning work will soon be completed for two light rail lines to connect the railway station with the university and main hospital."

(xvii). ELECTRO-DIESEL LOCOS DELIVERED.

From 'R.G.I.' 08.09.2021: "The first two of seven Stadler EuroDual electro-diesel locomotives ordered by Körfez Ulaştırma have been delivered to the port of Derince in Kocaeli, two weeks after leaving the factory in Valencia. Approval testing by an independent company and regulator UHDGM has begun and is expected to last several months. The remaining five locomotives are scheduled to arrive in Turkey in November and December.

The rail transport subsidiary of oil refiner Tüpraş awarded Stadler the contract to supply the locomotives in July 2019, along with an eight-year full service maintenance agreement. The EuroDuals will take Körfez Ulaştırma's fleet to 12 locomotives, alongside five Wabtec/Tülomsas PowerHaul diesels; a further three PowerHauls have been leased from the national operator.

Intended to haul 2,000 tonne trains on steep gradients, the 123 tonne 120km/h EuroDuals are rated at 2.8MW in diesel mode and 6.15MW under 25kV50 Hz electrification, with the six powered axles and the adhesion control system providing tractive force of up to 500kN. They comply with TSI standards and are equipped with ETCS onboard equipment."

B. IRAN.



• New Stadler Eurodual diesel loco for Turkey. (Photo: Railway Gazette)

(i). IRAN-BUILT METRO TRAIN DEVELOPED.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 02.06.21: "A domestically-designed metro train with 85% local content has been unveiled by President Hassan Rouhani.

Development began in June 2019, when a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Vice-Presidency for Science & Technology, Tehran Urban & Suburban Railway Co and the Innovation & Prosperity Fund. Developed in 18 months, the train is reported to have 85% local content, up from 25% to 30% for the country's previous metro trains which have been mostly supplied by Chinese companies such as CRRC Changchun, with some localisation by Wagon Pars.

Ali Yemam, the head of Tehran Urban & Suburban Railway Co, said the country had the capacity to produce up to 105 domestic vehicles by March 2022, subject to funding, predicting that there would be a need for up to 5,000 vehicles over the next 10 years.

The national development plan for 2016-21 estimated that 2,000 metro and suburban rail vehicles would be needed in Tehran, but this plan was not implemented, partly as a result of international sanctions. Tehran has a

seven-line network of urban and suburban rail services totalling 254 route-km, with expansion to nine lines and 430 km envisaged by 2025."

(ii). NEW METRO STATIONS.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 30.06.21: "Two infill Metro stations have opened in Tehran, at Modafean-e Salamat on Line 7 and Shahrak-e Azmayesh on Line 6."

(iii). POWER PROBLEMS.

But – Metros are only a solution when they can run. From 'Times of Israel' 07.07.2021: "In recent days the regular blackouts in Iran have spread chaos and confusion on the streets of the capital, Tehran and other cities, knocking out traffic lights, shutting factories, disrupting telecommunications and affecting metro systems. Repeaters — devices around cities that enhance cellphone signals — have failed, along with electronic cash registers. Some towns in Iran's north reported limited access to water because the power cuts affected the piped supply. Traffic police in the capital have said the sudden power cuts have caught officials completely by surprise.

Officials have blamed the outages on the country's stifling heat, escalating electricity demand and deepening drought that has threatened to snuff out hydroelectric generation.

Power demand has peaked in recent days at 66,000 megawatts, surpassing the country's practical generating capacity of 65,000 megawatts. Companies can actually provide people with even less electricity, closer to 55,000 megawatts..."

(iv). AGREEMENT REACHED FOR NEW IRAN - IRAQ RAILWAY.

07.07.201 (by Richard Clinnick) : "Iran and Iraq have reached an initial agreement to start work on the new \$US150M 32 km Shalamcheh–Basra railway.

The new line will link Iran with Syria and the Mediterranean, a long-held ambition of Iraq, the country's officials said at the end of May. The line will also carry freight travelling from Asia to Europe as well.

Iran's Deputy Minister of Transport, Mr Amir Mahmoud Ghaffari, visited Iraq in late June where he met with Iraq's Minister of Transport, Mr Nasser Hussein al-Shibli, to discuss the plans. The ministers also agreed to continue the acquisition of land for the project in Iraq and to prepare arrangements for equipping the workshop, mapping and borehole drilling on both sides of the border. In mid-May the Iranian deputy minister of road and urban development, Mr Khairollah Khademi, said the project would be executed by Iranian investors and that the international project would lead to a strategic change to the country in terms of transit and rail links.

15 agreements and memorandums of understanding have already been signed with Jordan and Egypt regarding energy and transport links for the new railway, according to a statement from the office of Iraq's prime minister, Mr Mustafa Al Kadhimi, at the end of May."

There was further information on this link in 'I.R.J.' 17.08.2021: "Preparations for the construction of a 32 km line connecting the Iranian and Iraqi railway systems have been completed. In a meeting between the ambassador of Iran to Iraq, Mr Iraj Masjedi, and the secretary of Council of Ministers in Iraq, Mr Hamid Naim Al-Ghazi, on August 9, it was confirmed that organisations in Iran working on the preparations had completed their work.

An agreement was reached on May 27 to connect the two country's railways via the Basra – Shalamcheh line in southern Iraq, Masjedi says. A 17km section connecting the Khorramshahr Railway to the Shalamcheh Border was completed back in 2011, but since then the 32km section has remained uncomplete. "The project will expand trade exchanges and transit transport between the two sides," he says.

Meanwhile, in Iran, Mr Rostam Ghasemi, the proposed minister of Roads and Urban Development confirmed the government is looking to raise private

funds for projects, including building rail lines, due to a limited government budget and the Ministry's limited resources.

In further meetings with various parliamentary groups on August 16, Ghasemi stressed the need to complete the Iran-China railway via Afghanistan, and lines to Turkmenistan and China."

(v). HACKING PROBLEMS.

This seems to be a growing and nasty new phenomenon for political or criminal reasons. The 'Times of Israel' reported on (Sat.) 10.07.2021: "Iran's railroad system came under cyberattack on Friday, a semi-official news agency reported, with hackers posting fake messages about alleged train delays or cancellations on display boards at stations across the country. The hackers behind the strike were apparently trying to be funny, and along with messages saying "long delayed because of cyberattack" or "cancelled," they urged passengers to call for information, listing the phone number of the office of the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

The semi-official Fars news agency reported that the hack led to "unprecedented chaos" at rail stations. No group has so far taken responsibility of the incident. Earlier in the day, Fars said trains across Iran had lost their electronic tracking system. It wasn't immediately clear if that was also part of the cyberattack. Fars later removed its report and instead quoted the spokesman of the state railway company, Sadeq Sekri, as saying "the disruption" did not cause any problem for train services.

In 2019 an error in the railway company's computer servers caused multiple delays in train services. In December that year, Iran's telecommunications ministry said the country had defused a massive cyberattack on unspecified "electronic infrastructure" but provided no specifics on the purported attack.

It was not clear if the reported attack caused any damage or disruptions in Iran's computer and internet systems, and whether it was the latest chapter in the US and Iran's cyber operations targeting the other.

Iran disconnected much of its infrastructure from the internet after the Stuxnet computer virus — widely believed to be a joint US-Israeli creation — disrupted thousands of Iranian centrifuges in the country's nuclear sites in the late 2000s...."

The following day came: "The Iranian transportation ministry said Saturday a "cyber disruption" had affected its computer systems and website, while the country's national railway company denied reports of being hit by a cyberattack. The disruption started before noon, taking down the body's website and links associated with it, the ministry said in a statement reported by state news agency IRNA. It said "technical experts" were investigating the issue and will announce when they are back up, without elaborating further. The body's website was still inaccessible around 5 p.m. local time. The railway company's announcement came a day after Fars news agency reported "unprecedented chaos" at stations with hundreds of trains delayed or cancelled. In the now-deleted report, it said the incident followed "a widespread disruption in... computer systems that is probably due to a cyberattack."

Sadeq Sekri, a spokesman for Islamic Republic of Iran Railways, told ISNA on Saturday that "there has been no disruption or cyberattack for passenger, cargo or intercity trains."

Then in 'Times of Israel' 15.08.2021 came: "Hacker group, not Israel, behind cyberattack on Iran's train system – report.

A shadowy group – not Israel – was behind a July cyberattack on Iran's railroad system that according to state media caused "unprecedented chaos" at train stations and reportedly led Tehran to attack an Israeli-owned ship a few weeks later, according to a new report.

The report, released Saturday by the Israeli-American cybersecurity company Check Point Software Technologies, named the Iranian opposition group Indra as the actor behind the attack, which it characterized as having inflicted "nation-state-level damage."

During the July 9 attack, the hackers posted fake messages about alleged train delays and cancellations on display boards at stations across Iran. They also urged passengers to call for more information, listing the phone number of the office of the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

On the following day, the Iranian transportation ministry said a “cyber disruption” had affected its computer systems, taking down its website and links associated with it.

In its report, Check Point said those assaults were carried out using a version of a hacking tool deployed in previous attacks on Iranian interests in Syria that Indra — which is named for a Hindu war god — had claimed responsibility for in 2019 and 2020.

According to one report, Iran may have believed Israel was behind the cyberattacks, and chose to retaliate by launching a drone attack against the Israeli-owned oil tanker MT Mercer Street on July 29, killing two crew-members and sparking an international uproar.

Check Point said the case highlighted the danger of “a non-state sponsored entity... creating the same kind of havoc” as a state actor with far more resources. Israel and Iran have been engaged in a years-long shadow war, with Israel allegedly directing most of its efforts — including multiple suspected cyberattacks — at sabotaging the Islamic Republic’s nuclear program.”

(vi). **NEW LINES OPENED.**

From 'I.R.J.' 02.08.2021: "A 271 km line between Yazd and Eghlid opened in Iran on July 29, reducing journey times from Shiraz in the south of the country to the northwest by around four hours. The railway is expected to carry 5.7 million tonnes of freight serving mines and industrial sites along the line, especially in Fars province, which is able to benefit from connecting to the route.

On the same day, Mr Mohammad Eslami, Minister of Roads and Urban Development, announced the opening of the final section of a new line between Tabriz and Miyaneh and the new Khavaran station. Last year, the section from Bostanabad to Miyaneh was opened. Eslami says the new line considerably reduces the distance by rail between Tehran, Tabriz, and the borders with Turkey and Azerbaijan reducing journey times between Tabriz and the capital Tehran by around 5.5 hours. “This is a big step and a different attraction for the railway in the northeastern region of the country,” he says.

The minister also confirmed the opening of the 106km Zanjan line on July 29 as well as the 82km line from Bağh to Zarrinshahr which serves Iran’s largest mining and steel complexes.

Eslami also confirmed that the provinces of Kurdistan, Ardabil and Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari will be connected to the Iranian rail network. Following significant progress, he expects these projects to be inaugurated in the coming months.”

• *Diesel Locos in Iran*



C. UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.
DUBAI.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 07.06.2021: "UAE: The 9km extension of Dubai’s automated metro network from Al Furjan to the Expo 2020 fairground was opened for revenue service on June 1, in preparation for the delayed start of the world fair being hosted by the emirate.

The six-month global innovation fair is expected to be the largest such event ever staged in the Arab world, attracting around 24 million visitors. The event had been due to start on October 20 2020, but was postponed by a year in the light of the coronavirus pandemic. It is now scheduled to run from October 1 2021 to March 31 2022.

Around 29% of all visitors are expected to travel to and from the event by metro, with Expo 2020 station predicted to handle about 35,000 passengers on weekdays, increasing to 47 000 per day at weekends. According to the Roads & Traffic Authority, the Route 2020 extension has a design capacity of 23,000 passengers/h per direction. Built at a cost of 11bn dirhams by the Alstom-led ExpoLink consortium, which includes Acciona and Gülermak, the 15km Route 2020 extension had been formally inaugurated by the emirate’s ruler and UAE Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum on July 8 2020. Revenue services began running on the initial 6 km as far as Al Furjan on January 1, with the Route 2020 line being worked as a shuttle from the junction at Jabal Ali. With the opening of the second section on June 1, Red Line services have started running through from Rashidiya to Expo 2020, giving a direct connection from the airport to the fairground, while the final section of the original route between Jabal Ali and UAE Exchange has become the branch. The end-to-end journey time between Rashidiya and Expo 2020 is 74 min.”

D. JORDAN.

EXPANSION OF THE RAILWAYS?

Since the Aqaba line has been mothballed and the old HR main line is reduced to the odd tourist train it is hard to see how anything could NOT be classed as “expansion” but a news item on 13.06.21 stated: “Prime Minister Bisher and Minister of Defence Al Khasawneh said: “The government will launch major projects, mainly in railways, and several firms have expressed interest in the projects. The 'Jordan News Agency', Petra, reported: During a visit to the King Hussein Bin Talal Development Zone in Mafraq, meeting with several zone investors and officials, Khasawneh stressed that the government will remove obstacles and facilitate investment.

Projects include a railway link between Aqaba and Madouneh, part of a logistics that also includes the Zone, a strategic hub between four neighbouring countries. In this regard, he said that the government will finalise necessary measures to embark on this vital project and connect it with the broader infrastructure, including the zone that His Majesty King Abdullah has recently visited.

Khasawneh referred to several bureaucratic obstacles, highlighting the importance of enhancing competitiveness, especially that many regional countries have privileges related to lower power costs and bigger markets due to large investment volumes.

With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic Jordan faced an additional burden that increased the already high unemployment rates, affecting economic sectors that either continue working at the minimal level or closed to maintain a stable epidemiological situation, the premier said. He also pledged the government’s commitment to partnership with the private sector to move ahead with an economic recovery programme for the post-pandemic period, improve the economic conditions and achieve the envisioned economic reforms.....

CEO of Al Daman for Development Zones Company, Luay Sarairah, noted that the Zone, 21 sq kms in area, is located at highways connecting Jordan with Syria, Iraq & Saudi Arabia. The zone has a 1,300 workers, 70 % cent of whom are from Mafraq, with the total number expected to reach 1,700 after the completion of projects already under construction.”

E. SAUDI ARABIA.

(i). **NEOM.**

Recent reports on the 'Neom Project' to build a vast new city complex about the size of Belgium in the north-west corner of the Kingdom include videos on 'The Line', a straight line of over 100km of urban development which will have a transportation system underground, comprising separate tunnels for a metro, for fast long-distance trains and for freight. Bechtel were appointed to design

this and the Bechtel site states: "Advanced transport system for futuristic NEOM city project August 12, 2020. The advanced transport system to be developed has had the contract awarded to US-based Bechtel for executive project management. The NEOM team selected Bechtel to oversee and create resource-efficient utilities and a highly advanced transport system. The project will include simultaneous construction in multiple locations of the region. NEOM's infrastructure will be utilizing AI, robotics and human machines. The NEOM Mega City continues to gather pace even with the economic slowdown and the lingering world pandemic of Covid-19. CEO Nadhmi Al Nasr of NEOM commented: "We are delighted to have a major industry leader like Bechtel on board to work with us to realize our ambitions."

All of which seems like a very uninformative attempt to cover that not much is happening yet and that there are many critical voices who cast doubt on the pragmatic reality of this new development and whether it will attract investment and population. We shall continue to observe.

(ii). APPOINTMENT.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 23.06.21: "Saudi Public Transport Co CEO & Managing Director Khalid Alhogail was elected president of UITP (the International Association for Public Transport) for 2021-23 at the general assembly on June 18. He is also the Chairman of the Saudi Emirates Integrated Transport Co joint venture between SAPTCO and Emirates Transport, Chairman of the SAPTCO-RATP Dev joint venture and a board member of the RATP Dev-SAPTCO joint venture Capital Metro Co."

In 'I.R.J.' is added: "The UITP elected Mr Khalid Alhogail as president for a two-year term during its general assembly held on June 18. Alhogail is the CEO and managing director of the Saudi Public Transport Company (Sapctco), a position he has held since 2006. Alhogail is also chairman of the Saudi Emirates Integrated Transport Company (Seitco) joint venture between Sapctco and Emirates Transport, and the Sapctco-RATP Dev joint venture Public Transport Company (PTC) and a board member of the RATP Dev-Sapcto joint venture Capital Metro Company (Camco).

In addition, Alhogail has previously served as chairman of the Saudi National Union for Joint Stock Companies, representing 186 CEOs of listed companies, for 10 years, and been closely involved with several major transport projects in the Middle East and North Africa. Alhogail has been an active member of UITP's executive and policy boards for the past five years and served as UITP vice-president before his appointment. Alhogail succeeds Mr Pere Calvet, director general of Catalonia Government Railway (FGC), who held the presidential position for two terms from 2017 to 2021.

"It is my great honour to be elected as the new UITP president," Alhogail says. "I am proud of the long-standing involvement I have with the association, and I look forward to engaging with the international membership to advance the association's vision in the years to come. Public transport needs strong support as we look towards a post-pandemic world, and I hope to work alongside many of you in the times ahead."

"Having worked with [Alhogail] in our executive and policy boards, I have no doubt that he will put a spotlight on our mission and work closely with our global members to further advance public transport," says UITP secretary general, Mr Mohamed Mezghani. "I look forward to exploring our professional relationship in the years to come. UITP congratulates and thanks Mr Alhogail for joining our team."

F. EGYPT.

(i) LOCO MODERNISATION.

From 'I.R.J.' 20.06.2021: "Nikolaev Locomotive Repair Plant (NTRZ), Ukraine, has announced it will repair and modernise 55 Adtranz series locomotives for Egyptian National Railways (ENR), with an option to modernise up to 145 more. The modernisation work will take place in both Ukraine and Egypt, with NTRZ set to create a service centre in Egypt.

"We will carry out a deep modernisation of locomotives with the installation of new diesel engines, new power and auxiliary equipment, and new microprocessor control systems, which will significantly improve economic indicators of locomotive operation and reduce maintenance costs," says NTRZ

director, Mr Sergei Roy. NTRZ said the locomotives are younger than those from the post-Soviet area that it would normally refurbish, with the Egyptian units produced between 1996 and 2010."

(ii).CAIRO METRO TRAINS BUILT AT DERBY.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 29.6.2021: "The first of 70 four-car Innovia 300



driverless monorail trainsets for two lines which are under construction in Cairo has been rolled out at Alstom's Derby plant in the UK.

In August 2019 Egypt's National Authority for Tunnels and a consortium of Bombardier Transportation (now Alstom), Orascom Construction and Arab Contractors signed a US\$4.5Bn contract to design, build, operate and maintain a 54 km monorail line connecting the New Administrative City with East Cairo and a 42 km line connecting 6th of October City with Giza.

Alstom's US\$2.85Bn share includes the supply of rolling stock and E&M systems including Cityflo 650 signalling, communications, an operations control centre, platform screen doors, a fare collection system, power supplies and depot equipment.

The two lines are expected to open in 2023, with the consortium then providing 30 years of operation and maintenance services.

The British government has provided a £1.7Bn export finance guarantee, the largest amount of financing that UK Export Finance has ever provided for an overseas infrastructure project. The vehicles are being produced at Derby under the plant's first rolling stock export order since the supply of EMUs to the Gautrain project in South Africa was completed in 2008.

"Thanks to great teamwork and dedication, we have shipped the first Innovia monorail unit earlier than expected", said Andrew DeLeone, President, Alstom Africa, Middle East & Central Asia, on June 25."

(iii). CRANE INFORMATION.

From Chris Capewell, a crane enthusiast – following to the crane pictured in last issue dealing with a major accident which gives an insight into trade with these important machines:

"75T telescopic BDCs Nos. 96713 and 96715 CS: Both cranes were moved from Wigan to Burton for Nemesis Rail by West Coast Railways. 96715 has been purchased by Nemesis Rail and will be kept operational for continued use alongside our 76 ton crane 96708. 96713 has been purchased by a third party as with 96710 and will be returned to service at Nemesis and made available for use overseas.



96710 was returned to service at Nemesis Rail earlier this year prior to road movement to Southampton for shipping to Egypt. This crane is now in service there."

(iv). SIGNALLING UPGRADE SECTION COMPLETED.

From 'R.G.I.' 25.07.21: "Alstom has installed and commissioned a Smartlock 400GP electronic interlocking, Iconis SCADA and an 11kV substation at Quseia to cover a 15km section of the 240km Beni Suef – Asyut line along the Nile to the south of Cairo.

This is the ninth section of the route to be covered, taking the total extent to 131 km and including nine stations, 40 level crossings and 186 point machines."

(v). SIEMENS HIGH-SPEED LINE CONTRACT.

From 'R.G.I.' 31.08.2021: "Egypt's prime minister Mr Mostafa Madbouly has met with the president and CEO of Siemens, Mr Roland Busch, to sign a contract to build a high-speed line across the northern part of the country, as preliminary works on the line are underway.

The meeting was also attended by Egypt's minister of transport, Mr Kamel Al-Wazir, the CEO of Siemens Mobility, Mr Michael Peter, the chairman of Arab Contractors, Mr Sayed Farouk, and Orascom Construction CEO, Mr Osama Bishai.

Egypt's National Authority for Tunnels signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Siemens Mobility, Orascom Construction and The Arab Contractors in January to design, build, equip and commission Egypt's first high-speed line.

The contract, the first signed under the MoU, is worth \$US 4.5Bn, of which Siemens' share is worth \$US 3Bn, and covers the initial 660km out of the 1,800km planned network. Additionally, it was agreed to discuss and finalise the agreements on two other high-speed lines including infrastructure and trains, and maintenance in the coming months.

The 460km phase one will connect the developing cities of El-Alamein on the Mediterranean Sea to Ain Sokhna on the Red Sea, via the New Administrative Capital. A 200km phase two will extend the line from El Alamein to Marsa Matrouh. The line, which will have a design speed of 250km/h, will carry both freight and passenger services, with express services operating at 200km/h, regional trains running at 160km/h and freight trains at 120km/h. The line will have 20 stations.

Siemens will deliver its Velaro high-speed trains, Desiro high-capacity regional trains, and Vectron freight locomotives for the project, as well as a signalling system based on the latest computer-based interlocking technology and ETCS Level 2, along with a power supply system. Siemens will also provide and integrate the communications, safety and security systems. Orascom Construction and The Arab Contractors will install the tracks, while the NAT will build the bridges and facilitate the sub construction.

The consortium will directly create more than 15,000 jobs in Egypt, with an additional 3800 jobs at Egyptian suppliers and indirectly through the wider Egyptian economy.

The Egyptian government plans to developed a 1800km high-speed network. The two additional lines will connect the Greater Cairo region from 6th October City along the Nile River with Aswan, and Luxor via Hurghada to Safaga.

"This high-speed train will strengthen the infrastructure of the areas it passes through and help achieve urbansprawl, in addition to linking the New Administrative Capital and new cities to the railway network for transporting passengers and goods," Al-Wazir says. "The project will also help promote tourism through a fast, modern, and safe means of transportation characterised by the highest levels of efficiency and safety to meet the needs and expectations of all Egyptians across the country which is considered a major leap in the field of rail transport."

The fully electrified system will reduce primary energy usage and overall air pollution by cutting carbon emissions by 70%, in comparison to the current

emissions from car and bus transport. The connection will transport more than 30 million passengers per year."

G. ETIHAD RAILWAYS.

(i). CHINESE TUNNELS.

From 'I.R.J.' 23.7.2021: "China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) has completed excavation of the longest tunnel for section D of stage 2 of the Etihad Rail project.

The China Railway Construction Corporation (CRCC) and National Projects and Construction (NPC) joint venture (JV) was awarded a contract to build fifteen tunnels totalling 16km through the Hajar Mountains for the 145km Package D, which will connect the Fujairah and Khorfakkan ports with the rail network at the Dubai-Sharjah border. The joint venture is also building 35 bridges and 32 underpasses.

The 1.8km T1 tunnel was built through difficult geological conditions, with softer blasts required to ensure stability. CCECC says the tunnel is the longest rail tunnel in the Middle East. [This is hardly true! Ed.]

Tracklaying for two packages of Phase 2 of the Etihad Rail project is underway."

(ii). NEW FREIGHT CONTRACTS.

(a) From 'R.G.I.' 09.08.21: "Etihad Rail has signed an agreement to provide rail freight services for Western Bainoona Group, carrying 4.5 mtpa of construction materials on 643 trains/year from sites in Fujairah to logistics hubs in Industrial City of Abu Dhabi and Dubai Industrial City. It is one of Etihad Rail's largest commercial partnerships for Stage Two of the UAE's National Rail Project, which is currently under construction."

(b). And: From 'R.G.I.' 26.08.2021: "Etihad Rail has signed an agreement for the future transport of steel produced by Al Ghurair Iron & Steel from Industrial City of Abu Dhabi to Khalifa Port and Jebel Ali for export."

H. OMAN METRO PLANS.

In 'Metro Report Intl.' 04.08.2021 was: "The Oman National Spatial Strategy will include proposals for a Masqat [Muscat] metro connecting the Ruwi and Muttrah districts to the international airport and Seeb, according to local media reports."

There was more detail in 'I.R.J.' 29.07.21: "First Metro line planned for Oman's capital Muscat.

By Richard Clinnick. "Gulf state plans major transport investment programme.

A metro line in Oman's capital Muscat is planned to run from Ruwi and Muttrah in the east via the city centre to the airport and Seeb in the west. It is being planned as part of a range of infrastructure projects drawn up under the Oman National Spatial Strategy (ONSS), which is described as a blueprint for the country's cities over the next two decades.

There are also plans for a passenger rail service to be introduced connecting Seeb with Sohar. Currently there is no railway in the country, but under the previously-announced National Railway Project plans are in place for a 2,135km system linking the Oman/United Arab Emirates border to Muscat and on to the central and southern parts of the country at Port of Ad Duqm and Salalah, and the Yemen border.

The ONSS looks at allocating financial and regulatory incentives to certain sites that have specific economic functions with the aim of attracting investment and promoting growth. The plans include urban regeneration projects in areas that would be served by the planned metro. Premises will be built around the metro stations including shops and offices. As part of the ONSS it has been confirmed that a National Transport Model will be created and that an extensive survey designed to gather necessary data for that will be conducted from mid-October until mid-December."

I. AFGHANISTAN.

(i) SOME TRAINS STILL RUNNING AFTER TALIBAN TAKEOVER:
From 'R.G.I.' 26.08.2021: "Newly-appointed head of the Ministry of Public Works Rumi Bakht-ur-Rehman Sharafat held an initial meeting with ministry staff and the Afghanistan Railway Authority on August 21 following the Taliban's takeover of the country.

The acting minister said the Taliban leadership was committed to the rehabilitation of the transport infrastructure, technical staff were still required and salaries would be paid. Pictures shared on social media show various road construction works underway. AfRA officials provided the minister with details of work which they said needs to be done for the benefit of the country.

Meanwhile, Turkmenistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on August 18 that it was in regular contact with the new regime regarding border issues, and trains were continuing to operate through the Aqina and Towraghondi border crossings to freight terminals inside Afghanistan.

Rail freight over the Friendship Bridge from Uzbekistan to Hairatan and Mazar-i-Sharif is understood to be suspended.



Regular services have not yet begun on line between Iran and Rozanak in Herat province which was officially opened last December."

(ii). And this from 'R.G.I.' 606.09.21:

"The first freight train from Uzbekistan to Hairatan in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover of the country ran on September 1, after a 17-day hiatus. Turkmenistan's government reports that both its rail border crossings are open, and on August 30 technical and commissioning work resumed on the Aqina – Andkhoy railway in Afghanistan, which was ceremonially inaugurated on January 14, and is expected to be completed soon."



134:08.

(i). ANOTHER PALESTINE TROUBLE.

From 'Rail Group News' 11.06.2021: "Originally scheduled for June 14, Union Pacific has announced it will close car shop earlier. In April of this year, RT&S reported that Union Pacific was planning to lay off 57 workers at and close its Palestine car shop on June 14. The shop is being closed as part of the railroad's Precision Scheduled Railroading (PSR) programme. RT&S has learned that the railroad notified shop employees on June 3 that their end of shift on the June 14 would be their last day. However, on June 8, officials told the shop employees that June 10 would be there last day.

While the city of Palestine, along with Anderson County, are battling UP's decision to close the shop in court, Congressman Lance Gooden (R-Texas) wrote a letter to Lance Fritz, Union Pacific's chairman asking him to rethink the need to close the Palestine facility. Gooden said "Neither CEO Fritz, nor anyone else from Union Pacific has even acknowledged the receipt of my letter." "

And then on 17.06.2021 in 'Rail Group News':

"The Palestine Herald-Press reports there is more drama surrounding the proposed closure of Union Pacific's Palestine car shop.

So far this year, RT&S has reported on Union Pacific's plans to close their car shop in Palestine, Texas, eliminating the 57 jobs at the facility. We originally reported the pending closure on April 16. Last week, we reported on UP's

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

plans to close the shop a few days early. Today, we learned that Judge Michael Davis, who presides over the Cherokee County District Court, has decided to rule on the questions around closure on a later date. The city of Palestine and Anderson County point out that Union Pacific has been out of compliance with a 1955 judgement between

the local government and UP that requires UP to provide Palestine with monthly payroll reports and employment numbers, which the railroad has not done since December 2020. Judge Davis ruled that a hearing will be held on Thursday, July 8 to determine whether UP has yet provided the information since December 2020. Until this hearing has been completed, the court ruled that UP could not eliminate any jobs. No other aspects of the lawsuit received a ruling. Union Pacific balked at the July 8 date because of other commitments on that date, but the judge told the parties they needed to agree on a date for the hearing to be scheduled."

THIS ONE GOES ON AND ON.....

From 'I.R.J.' 9.7.21: "Union Pacific and the courts continue to spar over Palestine car repair shop. This spring and summer, RT&S has been reporting on the ongoing saga of Union Pacific's decision to close its car repair shop in Palestine, Texas. Those reports have good background information on what's been going on. The latest development is a decision by Judge Michael Davis of the 369th Judicial District Court on July 8 to require UP to keep the shop open and honour a 1955 agreement with the city of Palestine. There will likely be more developments in this case, and we'll keep an eye on them."

[Ed. notes: Naturally we are including this on a tongue-in-cheek basis - but honestly, there is so much bad news with the word 'Palestine' in it, it is almost a relief to focus on a dispute in a different continent....]

(ii). COLLECTORS' CORNER.

This was the name of the very successful business British Railways built up selling off old, surplus and no-longer-required items of railwayana – from signs and tickets and posters to bits of locomotive. In the April issue of 'Heritage Railways' p.32 appeared an article on the origins of 'Collectors Corner' in which is included the information that the Stores Controller of British Railways was Major W. W. (William) Kirby "who won the George Medal in Palestine in 1947" and that around 1968 "he then instructed Robert Lawrence, the region's General Manager - who was the Major's batman during their Army service - to tell station and area managers ..." that all unwanted items were to be sent to Alperston. A little later comes "Major Kirby issued instructions to Robert Lawrence to find alternative accommodation. The directive was once again surprising due to the General Manager being the Major's superior, but the GM had of course been the Major's batman .. and times didn't change in the Sixties."

I wondered what these men were doing in Palestine in 1947 and since they both became quite senior on BR it seemed quite feasible that they had been in the Royal Engineers - however I was not able to trace much using the names. At this time ARTHUR Kirby was the General Manager of Palestine Railways.

Online I found a William Wills Kirby 256557 who was a Temporary Captain in the Royal Engineers in 1946 - this would fit. But no idea of what he did and where to win the award. Nor Lawrence's details. The George Medal was instituted in 1940 for bravery NOT in the face of the Enemy, so it could refer to all sorts of incidents. Defusing a roadside mine, for instance, nothing to do with railways at all. (Later he became a Major and much later was a member of the Stanier 8F Locomotive Society; it seems 'Bill' got his award for bravery in France, not Palestine.)

At https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_recipients_of_the_George_Medal,_1940s I found an entry for W. W. Kirby's medals, but in the list of GM recipients he is not listed! An announcement of the George Medal was made in the London Gazette of 15th. March 1946. (At the end there are several 'Others' listed and these include some from Palestine:

- Yehuda Issaharoff. Royal Air Force. For Services in Palestine. 1943
- Robert Duff Grigor Ross. Lieutenant, The King's Own Scottish Borderers. For Services in Palestine. 1948.
- Edward Alfred Smith. Sergeant, Palestine Police Force. For gallantry following the bombing of the King David Hotel, Jerusalem, on 22 July 1946, where he rescued three British soldiers buried in the rubble by digging a tunnel. He worked at great personal risk for six hours in intense heat. 1946.)

Enquiries led to a response from Chris Elliott: "In April 1956 I was called up for my two years' National Service and because of my travel agency background I was posted to the Royal Engineers. As all recruits to the RE's I had to undergo military training and Royal Engineer trade training; that training included all of the RE's army responsibilities such as Bailey Bridging, mine disposal, booby traps, explosives, the post office and transport i.e. Railways, Inland Water Transport and Movement Control. So all RE personnel had basic training in these activities.

I was sent to Longmoor in August 1956 to await a Movement Control Course due to start in late September. Major Bill Kirby GM was then the Officer Commanding of 53 Squadron which handled trade training for these transport tasks, railways and Movement Control. I underwent training as a junior NCO and was appointed an instructor at the Movement Control School. Bill Kirby remained head of 53 Squadron for the rest of my time there, that is until April 1958.

Fast forward a few years to when I learned that our Major Kirby had taken charge of Collectors Corner at Euston Station. I went and met him there. In subsequent years he told me that he was in Palestine in about 1947. He then

subsequently became Locomotive Superintendent at the RE's Railways Squadron at Villach in southern Austria in the British Occupation Zone. I also then learned that he was awarded the George Medal as a result of his action in defusing and dismantling some explosives in a railway tunnel somewhere near Boulogne and Calais."

A 2008 newspaper reference online mentions a Bill Kirby of Rickmansworth who had some railway relics.

Then Jeff Ryan came up with 'the goods' – an Obituary he wrote and which was published in 'Black Eight' issue 129 (Spring 2012) p.101f. "MAJOR BILL KIRBY GM. A former Officer Commanding of 53 Railway Squadron RE, Bill Kirby joined the Society following the 1986 Dedication of LMS 8233 as the Royal Engineers Memorial Locomotive. He remained a loyal member until his passing in February 2011. Bill and I met occasionally in the intervening years. Looking back, the most significant occasion occurred in 1987 following the invitation for our engine to participate in the Royal Engineers Bicentenary Event (RE200) at Long Marston. When difficulties were encountered in running 8233 on the main line a joint visit to the Paddington office of BR steam supremo David Ward saw the ban relaxed - an event that was to assume even greater significance in the early 1990's.

Aware that Bill had been awarded a George Medal, it was natural to enquire of Chris Elliott if he knew the background. Bill never talked of the incident but Chris recalled being advised many years earlier that it had been awarded for the dismantling of explosives on a train left by the German Navy in a tunnel north of Bulogne sur Mer. The real story, revealed in the Recommendation for the Award of the George Medal held at the National Archives (WO/373/69) is somewhat different. It reads:

"10 Railway Mobile Workshop RE. Lieutenant (Temporary Captain) 256557 KIRBY, William Wills. At approximately 1715 hours on 27 February 1945 a severe bombing incident occurred in a residential area of Calais. Captain KIRBY immediately proceeded to the scene and discovered that considerable damage had been done and that many civilians were trapped in their houses. He immediately organized his unit and took them and his transport to the scene. He organized rescue work, the result of which was the extraction of a considerable number of people. He himself showed considerable bravery and without regard for his own safety tunneled under two houses into a third house where he had been told a woman was trapped. The houses above him were burning. He had to shore up the tunnel as he went and eventually found the woman; she was trapped under an iron bed with a very great weight of debris on top of her. He found it was impossible to get her out without removing the bed and consequently got an oxy-acetylene cutting apparatus and with assistance from an NCO cut the bedstead away from the woman and brought her out to safety. She was alive but had suffered a broken leg.

Captain KIRBY continued with further rescue work, without a break, until 0330 hours the following morning. This officer is recommended for the George Medal...." which following approval was then announced in the London Gazette 15 March 1946. He was married to Marjorie.

So – thanks to e-mail and internet we now have the story which in fact is less related to Palestine than originally thought, though 53 Sdn. was indeed based there in 1947/8.

(iii). STUTTGART MEMORIAL

Continuing the series on Holocaust railway memorials, the Editor recently visited that at the old Nordbahnhof Goods Yard in Stuttgart. This is best reached by 'Stadtbahn' U12 to Milchhof or Mittnachtstrasse stops and then a brief walk of around 150m. Officially it is "Stuttgart Innerer Nordbahnhof, Otto-Umfrid Strasse 1, 70191". It is the brainchild of the group 'Zeichen der Erinnerung e.V.' founded 2005 and comprises the stub ends and buffer stops of five tracks, enclosed by an end wall on which are exhibits of the deportation trains from here and by a 70m side wall inscribed with the names of the ca. 2,500 Jewish deportees (I counted 26 'Rothschilds') – and ca. 250 Sinti – from Württemberg, Hohenzollern and Baden.

Deportation trains from here ran from December 1941 to November 1944 to Riga, Izbica near Lublin, Auschwitz and Theresienstadt.

See photo next page



Thus, the only surviving historic turntable in the country today is at Jaffa. [N.B. inside the former Beit HaOsef museum]. There are also at least four modern locomotive-turntables in operation – two 60cm gauge ones at Ein Shemer and two standard-gauge turntables built by Israel Railways in recent years in major freight terminals."

(v). A SNIPPET FROM THE 1890's.

In 'Lok Magazin' 06/2021 pp.62ff is an article on the museum railway 'Chemin de fer de la Baie de la Somme' which operates a complex network of standard, mixed and metre gauge lines near Noyelles. (Various websites well worth inspecting). What caught the Editor's eye was a description of the metre-gauge 2-6-0T 'No.2' which "with Allan gear was built by Cail in 1891 for the 'Compagnie Universelle du Canal Inter-océanique de Panama' – which however went bankrupt and so the loco ended up on the 'Ferrocarriles de Puerto-Rico' (FCPR) instead", was later preserved in the USA and returned to working order by 2003. (The line's website describes this as Cail 2296/1889.)

It is understood that the first three Baldwin 2-6-0's which went to the Jaffa – Jerusalem railway also had a

(iv). TURNTABLES.

The Israel Railway Enthusiast Club made an outing to Tzemach in June, organised by Steve Sattler, and there was some correspondence on the old turntable pit which has been excavated there. To this, Chen Melling wrote:

"In fact, no turntable is known to have existed in Beersheva. The known main-line locomotive turntables in Mandate-period Palestine were: Haifa (1 Narrow- + 1 Standard-gauge); Jaffa; Jerusalem; Samach; Nablus. (The Jaffa and Jerusalem ones were both replaced as well as relocated during the mandate)

Additionally, there were at least two wagon turntables in Haifa Harbour and numerous Decauville turntables in various industrial and agricultural locations. There was also a wagon turntable in Ottoman-period Jaffa station. What remains in Samach is not the actual turntable, rather its pit, whereas the turntable is long gone.



connection with an order by this company, though it is unclear at what point the order was cancelled or changed for these locos left the Baldwin works painted and named for the J-J. The museum line also operates some contemporary bogie carriages which look extremely similar to those operated from Jaffa to Jerusalem, albeit apparently built in 1920 by Manage in Belgium.

(vi). POLLUTION COSTS.

From 'Times of Israel' 28.06.21: "The Environmental Protection Ministry said it has calculated for the first time the annual external cost of pollution in the country, putting the figure at NIS 31 Billion (\$9.5 Bn). External costs render the negative impact on public health and the environment as a monetary value, in order to quantify for decision-makers the loss of social well-being from pollutant emissions and various environmental hazards. Costs are derived from negative impacts on health, agriculture, conservation, measures used to counter pollution's effects, and more.

Of the total, greenhouse gas emissions cost the country some NIS 11.3 Bn (\$3.4 Bn) each year, according to the ministry report published Sunday

that detailed how and where Israel's economy is affected by pollution. "The report presents a frightening picture, and, for the first time, there is a price tag in shekels on the polluting emissions," Environmental Protection Minister Tamar Zandberg said in a statement. The ministry report said that the main source of emissions in terms of the financial cost on the country's economy is transportation at 38 percent. This is followed by power plants at 30%, and industrial plants at 16%...."

(vii). WAGONS-LITS FOR EGYPT.

From the Newsletter No. 11 of the 'Amis de Wagons-Lits'. Regarding the transfer of CIWL cars from their UK manufacturers to the continent: "One question unanswered is which port they were moved to before loading on to ferries. Our research has led us to several books, amongst which is Kevin Hoggett's book 'Rails Across The Sea' and found photos of carriages at both Immingham and Harwich, we also found out that the few cars destined for Egypt were shipped from Southampton..."

(viii). WESTERBORK MEMORIAL WAGONS.

Standing here at this memorial to the deportations from the Netherlands are:

DB 30 80 945 3 543-9, G10 type, formerly DR 52 326 Kassel.

DB 30 80 945 2 194-2, G10 type, formerly DR 32 599 Kassel.

Also under restoration, which includes new sides and roofs:

DR 27 50 222 7 177-7 Oppeln - this and the other purchased from the Bw Stassfurt society.

DR 27 50 222 5 679-4 Oppeln

(ix). ANOTHER ISRAEL TRAM – IN KASSEL.

In the 'DIG Magazin' 1/2021 p.38 is an article by Markus Hartmann of the Deutsch-Israel Gesellschaft - on the initiative in Kassel, Germany, to decorate a tram to mark 1700 Years of Jewish Life in Germany (a theme which has been promoted throughout Germany for 2021). (Translation by Editor).

"When the first photos of the 'Shalomchen-Bahn' decorated tram in Cologne were published in summer 2020 I, as the head of the Kassel branch, had the idea: We need something like this too!

However, an idea is only useful when it is carried out. The past months have therefore been occupied with the search for sponsors in order to support the plan in a concrete manner. After many mails and calls we managed to raise €12,000 in donations and could so finance a tram for six months. The advertising agency Stroers gave us a 15% discount and the Kasseler Verkehrs-Gesellschaft AG also donated a further six months' worth of carrying this livery. We are therefore in a position to see this tram working over a period of fourteen months. Many useful ideas were also brought to the executive of the Kassel branch and so a new concept was developed, rather than a simple copy of the Köln vehicle.

A major aim was to provide a positive image of Israel and Judaism - especially for those citizens who tend to have a rather critical view of these themes. Many citizens do not even know that many Jews lived amongst us even back in Roman times and that their history comprises much more than the horrific period of the Holocaust. On the first third of the tram we focus on the theme of 1700 Years of Jewish life in Germany and mention the names of several notable Jewish people who came from Germany, such as Moses Mendelssohn, Heinrich Heine, Anne Frank, Albert Einstein and others. We also here listed some of the substantial donors and sponsors....

In the central section we focussed on the Jewish life in Kassel, which is documented from the year 1262. After much work and expense we were able to prepare six pictures of prominent Jewish fellow citizens and the rights to print them. Brief information to these is given on our home page www.digkassel.de. On another section we also showed some elements of Jewish history in the city from 1262.

On the rear section we provided some information on our own activities. In addition on one space is the message 'Aren't we all a bit Jewish?' with a wink at the manner in which Yiddish terms have become integrated into so much of daily life and slang."

(x). FACEBOOK PAGE.

Steve Sattler has opened a Facebook page for "The trains and Tram Society of Israel".

One can join if one wishes. The group arranges (Covid permitting) talks and group excursions in Israel.

(xi). FEED-WATER HEATER EXPERIMENTS IN EGYPT.

In 'Backtrack' Sept. 2021 pp.469-471 is an article by Miles Macnair on the work of Frederick Henry Trevithick who was appointed as Chief Mechanical Engineer of the Egyptian State Railways in 1883, "...his first few years being devoted to rationalising and modernising the chaotic condition of the locomotive stock. Having achieved this objective, he turned his attention to incorporating improvements of his own invention in areas of feed-water heating and superheating. The level nature of the track and the invariable weather conditions in Egypt meant that each modification could then be tested directly against unmodified locomotives of the same class... Ernest Ahrons... had worked with Trevithick in Egypt for six years in the 1890's [and] wrote a series of articles for the 'Locomotive Magazine' between June 1913 and January 1914 which went into great detail about these historically important experiments...." which began with a lengthy horizontal extension to the chimney of an 1865-built 0-6-0 that raised the feed-water temperature to 270°F which "proved conclusively that there was a great gain in the haulage power of the locomotive" but had the disadvantage of "serious emission of moisture from the chimney" which left the carriages and wagons drenched with condensed steam. Later experiments between 1907 and his retirement in 1912 were "meticulously recorded" and mainly involved adaptations to standard inside-cylinder 4-4-0 locos to re-use the energy in waste gases via the smoke-box; one version showed a 23% saving in coal consumption but led to corrosion after a while, sulphates in the feed-water being deposited on the tubes. Another 0-6-0 showed a 13% saving in coal over fifteen months. Around 1911 trials were also run with French-built de Glehn compound 4-4-2's in 1905 and some inside-cylinder 4-6-0's built by North British. "The trials were conducted with identical train loads of 336 tons between Cairo and Alexandria at an average timetable speed of 43mph."

(xii). A SPECIAL LEVEL CROSSING.

Lutz Unterseher of Berlin-Spandau writes various memoirs and this is taken from one, entitled 'The Level Crossing', concerning his first visit to Israel in 1963. (Translation by Editor).

"Shavei Tzion was at that time not linked directly to the national bus network and so I climbed down from a bus on the Akko – Nahariyya road around a kilometre from the village in order to walk the rest of the way along a narrow asphalted road. After a few hundred metres I came to a sign with the inscription:

Warning Railway Crossing ahead 250 yards

Around a further 100 or so yards there followed another:

Warning Railway Crossing ahead 150 yards

Then another estimated hundred or so yards brought me to the last sign, with the text:

Railway Crossing ahead 50 yards

You have been warned!

What was I to think? Bizarre, mad, these Jews! I must here point out that until this point I had had hardly any contact with Jews in my home town of Frankfurt.... This level crossing did indeed exist and it was unprotected by any barriers, hence the warning. I crossed it and then suddenly I realised – I had just crossed the famous railway line that in the Mandate period linked Beirut with Cairo.... The signs were clearly of English origin, hence the use of the term 'yards' and they demonstrated genuine English spleen. So – the Jews were after NOT to blame for everything!"

From 'DIE WARTE'. (Part 1).

INTRODUCTION.

These are Reports taken from *Die Süddeutsche Warte* (1845-1877), then *Die Warte des Tempels* (appeared until 1911 in Stuttgart, from 1912 in Jerusalem as *Jerusalem Warte*) – of the Tempelgesellschaft which formed seven “German Colonies” in Palestine from 1868 and which published the only substantial regular reports on life in Palestine which did not (until 1912) come under Turkish censorship.

These were edited by Prof. Alex Carmel of Haifa, who extracted from the original newspapers in the Templer Archiv in Stuttgart those items he considered of more general interest. 2 vols. Published by Armin Vaas Verlag, Ulm. Vol. 1 covers 1853 – 1882; ISBN 3-88 360-001-6 published 1978; Vol. 2 covers 1883-1914, published 1983. Here are excerpts mainly to do with transport infrastructure and the political background.

There is much available online on the Templer Gesellschaft of pietists from Württemberg – here are just a few notes from Vol. 1 pp.8f. The total number of German settlers from 1868 onwards by 1914 was about 2,200 – compared to some 85,000 Jews who came in this period, mostly after 1875.

Though numerically insignificant, their influence was out of all proportion to their number. They were in almost every respect the pioneers in the modernisation of Palestine. They organised the regular traffic with horse-drawn wagons and laid the first roads for these between Jaffa and Jerusalem, from Haifa to Akko, Nazareth and Tiberias; They erected hotels according to European standard and in the aspects of medicine, farming, construction methods, handicrafts, communal organisation, industry and much more they also set the tone. Their seven colonies were examples of careful planning, order and organisation.

In the Introduction: It was the French invasion under Napoleon in 1799, brief though it was and unsuccessful, that established a new era. In 1831 Mohammed Ali, the governor of Egypt, invaded Syria and advanced up to Anatolia in anger at not being adequately rewarded by the Sultan for his assistance in the Greek War of Independence... He introduced new and better administrative procedures and so made the country safer. Nicolayson established an Anglican mission in 1833 and this stimulated other churches also to get involved and widen their works. The Turks also began to reform their administration and von Moltke, a young Prussian officer, helped reform the military. In 1839 the Sultan felt strong enough to throw the Egyptians out again but he did not follow Moltke's advice and lost the battle of Nusaybin, also the fleet went over to the Egyptians and the Sultan died....., the end of the Ottomans seemed indeed close. However the British, Austrians and Russians decided to help the Ottomans; a British fleet bombarded Akko and caused severe damage (the city never really fully recovered) and the Egyptians/French were driven out. The successful Powers could not however agree on a combined policy for Palestine for the Christians (let alone for the Jews), and from 1840 Palestine was once more in Turkish hands (with a new Sultan, Abdul-Medjid, aged 17) for almost 80 years.

In 1841 a joint British-Prussian Protestant Bishopric was established – the Turks were forced to accept this and it also stimulated other Churches to increase their activities and so there was an increasing number of missionary activities and societies financed from abroad. [*compare with NGOs now*] “And so the almost forgotten, deeply-declined Palestine at the edge of the Turkish Empire suddenly became again the centre of international religious and political concerns.”

Following the Crimean War, when Britain beat back Russia, which was threatening Turkey and destroyed its Black Sea Fleet and Sebastopol, settled by the 1856 Paris Peace Conference, a new law *Hatti Hümayun* of February 1856 confirmed and extended the rights of non-Moslems in the Turkish Empire.

From Vol. 1. 1853 – 1882.

(Notes: Where indicated, the name of the writer of a piece is given in italics. Often the German spelling of a place name has been retained.)

26.1.1854. “The Crimean War has been presented by Turkey as a war against the Muscovite unbelievers and has led to greater hatred of Moslems against Christians. But at the same time it is known that Britain and France stand on the side of the Sultan....”

Jerusalem, 30.12.1853. “Smallpox has been widespread here for some months, one says that 1,500 people have already died in the town from it, certainly over 1,000..... “Many Arabs have now come from across the Jordan to Nablus, and both Moslems and Christians fear them; friends often do not dare to go to the market for days on end; the roads are very unsafe....”

29.6.1854. Jews are in great hunger and need as funding from Russian brethren has been cut off. Montefiore and Rabbi Adler have started a fund for their support. Mission amongst the Jews – school, hospital etc. church services. Christian groups are forming settlements at Nablus, Nazareth, etc. The whole Sharon Plain is empty and sad, it could take so many new settlers. All the gardens are surrounded by cactus hedges 8-10 feet high...

6.9.1855. “From Jerusalem on 6th August the Prussian correspondent received a report whereby Sir Moses Montefiore has been here for some fourteen days now... He has brought substantial sums of money for alleviating the condition of the Jewish population of Palestine, including a sum of 12,000 pounds sterling which an American has given for the hospital which is to be built here. Sir Moses wishes to found institutions of lasting assistance in the land of his ancestors and hopes to encourage his fellow believers to form colonies..... “Sir Moses Montefiore is erecting here a girls’ school, and is renting a building for 6,000 piastres p.a. for this. Outside the city, on the road to Bethlehem, he has bought land for 300 pounds sterling and will build here a hospital, a synagogue and a windmill...”

Jerusalem 6.1.1856. “I was for three days on a business trip to Hebron... Dr. Heinig is quarantine doctor (a German), the only European who lives here amongst the Turks and the Jews. A large cotton mill provides only a small amount of cloth and the glass factories are in a poor state... a pitiful waste of the almost man-size cypresses which they burn here, and so they have almost totally felled the only forest of this kind in the country...”

8.5.1856. On 4th April a Moslem riot against the Christians, 6 killed, 6 badly injured. English and French agents and the Greek church broken into and plundered. Also all houses of the Christian Quarter. “The Austrian Post has closed its office here and the Trieste ships no longer call at Jaffa, so we must send this post via Marseilles until some new order is created.”

The Austrian Hospice is being built.. “Real cultivation of this country must wait until European hands do it.”

15.10.1857. Jerusalem 2nd September 1857.

“We add to our correspondent’s report, from reliable sources, that English capitalists, including the above-mentioned Sir Moses (a relative of the House of Rothschild) has prepared a plan for a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem and through the English government has presented these to the Pforte. (The Sublime Porte – Turkish Government). They have purchased the materials from the railway laid at Balaclava during the Crimean War from the British government in order to use them in Jaffa. Until now however they have not succeeded in overcoming the Pforte’s known distate for allowing land to be acquired by Europeans. It is still holding back any concession for this railway, as it does for so many other projected railways in Turkey....”

29.10.1857. Jerusalem, 7th Sept. 1857.

“Dear Brothers!

....“The latest ‘News from the Orient’ seem to us to have been taken from unreliable sources; for they speak far too firmly in the *Warte* of 13th August... It is a fact that one has spoken for some years here concerning the construction of railways; One should go from Egypt through the desert via Hebron, Jerusalem, Nablus etc. to Damascus and Beirut, another from Jaffa to Hebron; the third from Jaffa to Jerusalem, which all shows that so far this is all just talk.

“A railway between here and Jaffa would really be barely economical at the current time and according to the current reckoning of the wiser spirits there would be problems to find a company that would be prepared simply to carry out the pleasant idea of building a railway between Jaffa and Jerusalem and then operating it regularly. Outside the pilgrim season it could make do with but one journey per week, and how would that pay its way?....” (*Johann Ludwig Schneller*)

Jerusalem 25.3.1858. “We departed Jaffa on the morning of the 18th. at 10am on horseback, as the road demanded, and reached Ramleh at 2pm, where we found accommodation in the house of the Prussian Consul and overnighed. From Ramleh we started at 7am on the 19th. and found ourselves at 4pm before the city of Jerusalem. The way from Jaffa is until 2 hours before Ramleh bearable, from here onwards however one can only call it a continuous stone quarry as far as Jerusalem...”

From a private letter of Hoffmann. 29.4.1858.

“...We stayed in Jaffa for four days, partly because there were rumours of two sheikhs having a conflict on the way to Jerusalem, so we waited for the arrival of the French steamship so as to be able to proceed in a larger group... “Ramleh... currently has 2,000 Mohammedans and 800-1,000 Christians. It is full of derelict houses and must once have been a large city...”

6.5.1858. Report of an inspection visit to Palestine. “The obstacle that prevents the restoration of Palestine from a desert and a wilderness into a better condition, is therefore the same as that which holds back the entire Turkish Empire from renewal and progress, namely Islam and its damaging effects on the human spirit....”

Report on Lawlessness in the entire Turkish Empire, massacre of English and French consuls in Dschidda, attacks on individuals in Gaza and Jerusalem, lack of religious freedom, Moslem intolerance.

12.5.1859. The Jezreel Valley is filled with Beduin tents; they attack and destroy the villages.

... The Pasha has taken Lifta from the Sheikh of Abu Gosh and given it to an Effendi in Jerusalem to administer. “It has been decided to build forts, houses for soldiers along the entire road from Jaffa to Jerusalem at quarter-hour and half-hour distances, so that one can always see from one to the other. Of these fortresses, as the people call them, four have already been built here; along the entire route some 15 or 16 are complete in quarter-hour distance from each other. They are two storeys, with in the lower floor room for 5-6 horses and in the upper storey room for their riders. This police protection will therefore be provided by the (irregular) *Baschi-Bozuck* soldiers..... The buildings are painted pitch black so that even their very appearance commands respect.” Greeks, Russians and Armenians are buying up land west of the city...

7.7.1864 Much building is going in inside and outside Jerusalem; The Johann Ludwig Schneller Orphanage was established 1860 by a Basel Pilgermission (pilgrim mission) for the survivors of the massacre of Christians in Lebanon.

10.11.1864. Report in the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*: “A third project, one already mentioned previously many times, but this time apparently more serious, is the construction of a road (for omnibuses) from Jaffa to Jerusalem. The new design has a German as the originator but the company to carry it out must be sought in England. The costs are estimated at one and a half million francs, which would be raised by issuance of 3,000 shares at 500francs.

The road would probably go through the Wadi Suleiman, where it will have a length of some fourteen hours. The preparations are already under way.”

16.3.1865. Plans for a Railway Network in the Holy Land by Dr. Zimpel.

“In H. L. Brönners Publishing House in Frankfurt/M 1865 a little book with a lithographed map from Dr. Zimpel has been published, that recommends a railway network for Palestine, especially a railway line from Jaffa to Jerusalem; for this latter Dr. Zimpel possesses a firman [authority] from the Turkish Sultan.....

“We cannot go into detail about Herr Dr. Zimpel’ plans; however, from the way he presents the scheme we get the impression that he is a man who knows what he is doing and everyone who reads his little booklet will do so with pleasure and profit. The four-year limit which Herr Zimpel has for the carrying out of the works of the railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem seem however to be far too short, since first a harbour has to be created at Jaffa, in order to make the railway profitable; at the same time the railway would need to be built first to enable the stones for the harbour to be transported. Herr Zimpel calculates the cost of railway and harbour as ca. 8 million taler or 14 million gulden. He has no doubt that he can raise this money; but we ourselves do have doubts, because even should it so be that the harbour of Jaffa and the railway to Jerusalem could become one day the most profitable enterprise in the world, the fact is that those who have the money do not believe in a future for Jerusalem.

“Should Herr Dr. Zimpel manage to gain for his enterprise such a powerful supporter as Herr von Lesseps managed for the construction of his canal from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, then the sums mentioned would appear trivial.

“In order to reach this Herr Dr. Zimpel must take to his feet once more and set off to make a personal round of the powerful and the wealthy potentates of Europe; We are curious to read reports he may make of his good and bad experiences during this sort of crusade.”

23.23.1865. “It is already known that at Jaffa there is now a Turkish Telegraph Station... After the French, Austrians and Russians the English are now the fourth to establish a steamship line..... The Turkish government has let a mole be built so that one can reach the ships to be boarded more comfortably and likewise can disembark from them. However a storm has inflicted damage on the not-so-solid Turkish works. The government has also erected a small lighthouse, built on the ruins of the former house of Simon the Tanner, formerly the place where the Apostle Peter visited....”

1.6.1865. 27th. April. Jerusalem. “Dr. Zimpel has now distanced himself from carrying out his plan to build a railway and now the much more natural plan for a road, for which a German is also the initiator, is to be built.”

3.8.1865. “The precursor of the railway is here. Suddenly it was learned that the telegraph was to be continued further from Jaffa to here and look, before one could look the wire already stretched to Ramleh and soon thereafter alongside the Jaffa Road through the Wadi Ali to Abu Ghosh. In one day it came over the Gihon ridge to the Holy City. Here it runs between the Russian suburb along the north side of the city (between the Cotton Caves and the Jeremiah Grotto) then bends to the northeast corner of the city, past St. Stephen’s Gate and then along the north side of the *Haram* into the so-called *Serail*, i.e. the official residence of the pasha, and from here into an adjacent house where the Telegraph Office is situated. All the officials here are Turks. The construction of the telegraph has been carried out at the expense of the Turkish State.”

“Because of the cholera that has broken out in Alexandria travellers from there have to spend five days in quarantine before entering the Holy Land but in Beyrout, as the facilities in Jaffa are lacking the necessary personnel.....” “In Gaza there is tension once again....”

From a letter May 1865: Government indifference has led to farmers in the Jordan Valley not bothering to work their fields as they are always subject to robbery and the Turkish soldiers never protect them. But new taxes are imposed on tobacco, horseshoes.... "So much seems to be certain, that justice and law, which should be the basis of any government, are not respected but that in this respect it gets ever worse. Those Moslems with understanding can see that the situation in which Turkey currently finds itself cannot last much longer, it must collapse. The Kurdish irregular troops (brought in by the Turkish authorities) that now occupy parts of the Beduin land are sucking the fellahin [peasants] dry. When they have eaten roasted chickens, they advise the fellahin to sow the bones so that when they come again there will be chickens here once more!..."

21 Sept. 1865. Cholera.

"Cholera has claimed according to medical reports 800 lives in Nablus, 1,500-2,000 in Jaffa, 80-100 in Ramleh, also in Beirut and Damascus and other places up to the area round Jerusalem.... "The Arab population here believes that the plague which has affected the land will not strike Jerusalem for the simple reason that it is called *Al-Kuds*, the Holy City...."

Americans have come to establish two colonies, one at Auje north-east of Jaffa, the other in Jerusalem – "for they believe the time has come when the Jews will return to the Land and they should find the land well cultivated."

7.12.1865. Cholera spreads in Jerusalem. In mid-October the number of cases grew and inhabitants fled to Jaffa, Hebron and Nablus. "Almost all shops were closed and the streets filled with the wailing of women."

4.1.1866. From Dr. Titus Tobler (Swiss archaeologist) – report in *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*. "... A railway from the Mediterranean to Jerusalem is still no more than a chimera. The building of a good road is hindered at the moment by the government, out of fear of the Franks (i.e. Western Churches) who might win more influence.... One might well ask: Can one not travel, at least in the dry season, in a light wagon also without a proper road from Jaffa to Er-Ramle and El-Kubab? Yes, one can, if one wishes to. Or at least to the beginning of the mountains, where the pilgrim will find a coffee house [i.e. Bab el Wad]; as far as here 12 hours are required, of which 7 have been travel by carriage.

"...In Jerusalem, truly, in the last eight years much has been achieved by the love of the Christians and their enthusiasm and also by the fascination of the Jews for the land of their ancestors."

9.8.1866. Letter from 13th. June: "How can I describe this land? It is getting not better but ever worse... the locusts have returned, in the south even more than last year... The Turkish Government has ordered almost all the military from here to Constantinople, thus leaving the Beduin the freedom to rob at will.there is cholera in Tiberias..."

4.10.1866. The Railway to Jerusalem. From the *Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* in Berlin comes the news – without any source being given – but taken from French religious newspapers, the following:

"In Paris there are efforts currently under way to establish a Society for the Colonisation of the Orient. The programme of this Society has already been published. The first task will be to obtain from the Sultan the permission to have a railway built from Jaffa to Jerusalem and that the land to either side of the line may be legally sold to Christians and Jews.

The now-deceased Sir Culling Eardley in England had the same plan; it seems however that Baron Rothschild, with whom he had been in consultations, has let the matter drop.

Dr. Zimpel, a German, published a few years ago a programme in the same direction but – as already reported in this publication – had to give up the idea since he could not raise the necessary amount of money (estimated at 14 million gulden) from the financiers in England and Germany.

We have heard nothing for a while of the American Colony which was announced for this autumn; we fear it may also have failed on practical grounds. Whether this French Society will be any more successful – which would only be the case

if the Emperor Napoleon himself took the project under his wings – cannot be stated with any certainty on the basis of merely a printed programme."

[Footnote: This seems to refer to the project of Henry Dunant - *Projet de Société internationale universelle pour la rénovation de l'Orient* (Paris 1866)]

6.12.1866. Great poverty due to misgovernment, high taxes, locusts, high interest rates and debts. "The pasha and the military have been away from Jerusalem 2 months to collect taxes from the Beduins and the villages. The Beduins retreat but their storehouses are ransacked, and cisterns filled with grain are confiscated. The military and civil service here have not been paid for several months, which is also bad for the civil population. Turkish paper money is now only half value.

Due to the great poverty of the fellahin and the breakdown of relations between the Beduin and the government the roads have become unsafe and several robber bands are active between here and Jaffa and also between Nablus and Nazareth; nobody dares to go to the Galilee and one can only get to Jaffa safely by day."

17.1.1867. Private letter of 12.12 1866. "Regarding the conditions in this land you have been already comprehensively informed. The conditions become ever more unbearable and the hatred against the Turkish government grows from year to year, not just among the Christians but also among the Mohammedans..."

3.10.1867. Letter of 6 August: "In dealings with the Turkish Government one requires much patience, greatest care and constant distrust."

Nazareth, 7 September 1867. "With the water, well you know how the Arabs are. If there is a spring there whose water is good, then they come, dance in it like swine and spit in it and so forth and such water cannot be healthy. With physical labour and heavy work in the heat such plain water without a bit of wine or some other drink is not strengthening, but brings fever etc. Irregular eating also makes one ill, especially when it is hot food with which one must drink much water...."

"I believe one must truly have the official protection of some government so that one is not simply delivered into the hands of the arbitrary and despotic attitude of the Turkish and Arab landlords and officials, who will do all they can to make sure that a German colony would be ruined before it began."

....."The Arabs are people who destroy the soil and they do not like to see it being properly cultivated..."

"I do not know which government would be most interested in this matter, although I believe one should approach the German ones first. If the Prussian Government had the will, it could best do this, as it has much influence with the Turks and also the Prussian Consuls are the most respectable of those here..... Herr Konsul Weber also says the Turkish government would have much less mistrust of a German colony than a British or French one."

"The Turkish government has advanced into the Belja (east of Jordan) and has plundered and expelled the Beduin there – (the Adwan tribe) – in Salt the old fortifications have been rebuilt and men and animals forced into compulsory labour for this purpose. In Jerusalem food prices have risen as the fellahin fear to travel and bring foodstuffs over the Jordan lest they and their animals also be so conscripted for forced labour. The Turkish government now plans to build a road with watchtowers from Jerusalem to Damascus and a bridge over the Jordan. That would be good, if it is actually done. For Europeans this entire area was effectively closed and only now and then had wealthy English and Frenchmen dared, at great cost, to travel it. One has to pay at least 10 pounds to the Adwan and even then the traveller would still be pestered for baksheesh and half robbed...."

To be continued



Netivot station
aerial view