

# HaRakevet

**Series 19 #1**  
**Issue No. 72 March 2006**

# הרכבת

**A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East**  
**Edited and Published by Rabbi Walter Rothschild**  
**Passauer Strasse 4, D - 10789 Berlin, Germany**  
**Tel/Fax +49 30 214 73889**  
**e.mail: Rothschild-Berlin@t-online.de**



*72:1 GE Diesel 40212, shunting at Amman Station. Livery changed from that seen in 1999.  
11 Sept 2000 Hugh Ballantyne - with many thanks.*



## EDITORIAL.

"There are railroads... whose officers are not so much pleased as they are outraged that 'outsiders' should be fascinated by their art and mystery and who attempt to preserve the details of valve motion, automatic signalling and train despatching in a manner positively Druidical. Photographs showing smoke exhaust have been known to produce symptoms bordering on those of epilepsy. A menace to the safety of state and nation has been seen by many a special officer in a camera pointed at a peddler freight setting out cars of company coal on lonely sidings in Nebraska and Oklahoma, and it is a satisfaction to the author that several of his own shots in this book were made in defiance of such preposterous Dogsberries." (Lucius Beebe in "Trains in Transition", D. Appleton-Century Co., 1941, repub. Hawthorn, NY. p. 6.)

Beebe describes a state of mind - one shared by many security guards in Israel. The Editor spent a very busy three days in Israel in December, attending a conference and doing some travelling, and was met almost everywhere with the now-famous words "Assur Letzalem!!". Two high (or low) points that need to be presented here were:-

(a). An encounter on the platform at Jerusalem Malcha station; On walking to the end of the platform to get a picture, I was confronted by a busybody lady with the accusation that I had just walked onto the station without buying a ticket. Then, although I had Sybil Ehrlich (an Israeli journalist) with me, together with a copy of 'Harakevet' showing photographs of the very same station under construction (!), two further guards were called. We were harangued, but pointed out that there is no sign anywhere that states that photography is prohibited (Israel does have plenty of signs pointing out where carrying weapons, or smoking, or parking are not allowed). We then boarded the waiting train, but the guards then came on, walkie-talkies blaring, and proceeded to take us off the train (which then departed) and bring us to the Station Master (Menahel HaTachanah). Here everything was resolved, but only because he happened to be a personal friend of Sybil, my companion. Fortunately, the days when there was only one train a day to Tel Aviv are now past, but even so we had an unexpected and unwanted hour-long wait on a darkening station.

(b). Sitting on the night-time train

to the airport, I made notes in a notebook as to where we stopped, when, and how many passengers got on. The security guard wanted to know why I was making such notes, demanded my passport, ticket and almost a letter confirming my circumcision, (Certainly they are always interested to know if one is Jewish) and nearly took the notebook.

What do we learn from this? It is not just that Israel is a nation under constant risk from suicide bombings - one can appreciate that truly suspicious behaviour might arouse attention. But then, anyone out of the ordinary is suspicious in Israel - which is strange, since it is such a complex and multicultural society. If one does not want to arouse suspicion on an Israeli train one must try (a) to be in some kind of uniform, and sprawled over the table asleep, or (b) wearing sunglasses (oddly, this makes one appear sinister in every other country - but in Israel it is people without sunglasses who are sinister), or (c), if female, chattering constantly on a Cellphone. One must never look out of the window, and it is "uncool" to show any interest in the outside world around one - one must remain in one's own darkened i-Podded existence.

Many of these guards are poorly paid by private contractors and live fairly tedious existences - so one can understand, should they approach and ask what one is doing, walking around a building or photographing a wagon. But one would think that providing evidence of one's identity, and one's interest in a subject (such as magazines or other photos), would be enough. At least one Israel tour guide now bawls out such busybodies and refuses to be intimidated. The Public Relations Officer, Benny Na'or, continues to affirm that Permits for Photography are not needed - technically, he is correct, but bitter and repeated experience by several railway enthusiasts, Israelis and others, demonstrate that this is not enough. Be warned, and be prepared to argue back, and to mention his name.

The Editor apologises for this tirade, but the situation has really become ridiculous. On the other hand, in other areas much progress has been and continues to be made. See further inside this issue! "It is a satisfaction to the author that several of his own shots in this book were made in defiance of such preposterous Dogsberries".

It should be noted that immediately after the last issue went to the printer, a whole batch of news from Aharon Gazit and others arrived, and

the new timetable commenced. Unfortunate but, that's the way it is.

And now to other matters. Whilst there is so much to write from Israel, and more every few days thanks to Aaron, Sybil, Paul and others, it looks on the other hand as though there will in future be fewer and fewer things to report from the Hedjaz lines, which are now on their last legs if not their last wheels. We bring some recent accounts of visits. It is noticeable, looking back over the coverage of the Hedjaz line in this and several other magazines, that almost all reports are 'unofficial', from tour groups or individual travellers. We do not get official press releases or any information as to the real planning or the reasons for the real daily operations. For example, Who decided, when the tracks were cut, to concentrate some locomotives and stock on the isolated former Serghaya line, where there are no workshop or even depot facilities? It is only a matter of time until a repair is needed that requires more than a hammer and a spanner, and then these services will cease. Come to that, who decided to cut the line, and how much notice (or influence) did the Railways Administration have? Such issues can be important, when one considers that the line was considered for years to be a 'Waqf', a religious foundation. Who has been paying, and continues to pay railway staff to sit in stations which see no trains for five days a week on a railway with virtually no traffic income? Who closed down the only (and not very remarkable or frequent) suburban dieselised railway service into a fast-growing and overpopulated and congested city? Who makes decisions at the Ministry of Transport? From a purely commercial point of view, it would now make sense for the Syrian Government (if it is acting as steward for the line) simply to sell all the remaining locos and stock to foreign railway preservation societies, and perhaps erect a static museum at Cadem works with the remaining hulks either sold or cosmetically restored.

A final point. This issue was slightly delayed due to computer problems. The result is that even more News from the Line has come in, due partly to the sheer amount of activity but also to this delay. There is more than would be the case had we gone to press a month ago, and this has squeezed some historical items out. The balance will be restored next time.

**Enjoy!  
The Editor.**



72:04.

Northbound train 748 at Lev Hamifratz Station, 2004

## NEWS FROM THE LINE.

### (i). LEVEL CROSSING ACCIDENT.

Another level crossing accident - this time, thank goodness, without serious casualties - occurred on 27.12.2005. First the report from Paul:- "At approximately 06.00 on 27/12/05 a bus stalled on the level crossing at the north end of Binyamina station. The crossing lights began blinking and the arms lowered. Passengers and driver jumped clear of the bus which was hit seconds later by a southbound passenger train made up of a push-pull set being propelled by the loco at rear. The interesting thing about this collision is that the sequence of events was captured by the station security camera and made for instructive (and entertaining) viewing on the evening news. The driving car of the push-pull set was somewhat damaged but the train driver was unhurt as, indeed, were all but one of the passengers (and he was only slightly hurt). It seems that the bus had a fault of some sort which its driver had not bothered to fix. The TV report then included more footage taken elsewhere showing the dangers at level crossings, in particular where such crossings are close to busy road junctions thus meaning that road drivers have to cope with two sets of stop lights (road and railway) in a very short distance. There are, of course, rules set out in the Highway Code for this sort of situation, but few drivers

know of them or much care. Certainly such situations are confusing for road users and frequently lead to the railway level crossing being occupied while a line of backed-up vehicles waits for the adjacent road junction to clear. These problems will not go away any time soon."

The following is from the 'Arutz 7' website (thanks to Matt for the tip.).

Train Collides With Bus - No Serious Injuries. 14:19 Dec 27, '05 / 26 Kislev 5766 By Ezra HaLevi. A bus was stuck on the train tracks near Zichron Ya'akov Tuesday morning, but thanks to the quick response of the driver, all the bus's passengers escaped unharmed.

The crowded bus was travelling from Haifa to Ben Gurion International Airport when it stalled on train tracks near Zichron Ya'akov at 6:30 AM. The driver tried to restart the vehicle but it would not budge. He quickly realized the danger his passengers were in and yelled for everyone to quickly get off the bus.

The passengers disembarked and waited on the side. Within moments of the last passenger leaving the bus, a speeding train came barreling down the tracks and tore the bus to pieces.

Magen David Adom ambulances flocked to the scene of the

smashed bus, expecting mass casualties. Instead they found scores of shocked travellers thanking G-d for what they are calling a "Chanukah miracle."

Three of the train's passengers suffered light scratches as a result of broken glass.

Last summer, a train wreck resulted from the impact between a speeding train and a truck that had stalled on the tracks. Eight were killed and scores injured in the accident. A number of similar accidents have taken place in recent months, resulting in new laws calling for the installing of barriers that completely block passage onto the tracks when a train is approaching."

From Aharon Gazit: "A bus of 'Netivei-Express' (a bus operator) made its regular route through Binyamina, and just after 06:00 am. started to cross the track just north of the railway station at a fully protected level crossing. The bell started to ring, flash lights applied, the arms went down, and as often happens, the bus engine shut itself down!

The bus driver managed to evacuate all the passengers and himself, so nobody was hurt, except one of the train passengers who was lightly injured by broken window glass.

As is usual in such cases, all the boards involved started accusing each other. The Mayor of Binyamina Mr. Arie Zeituni said that "The designers have checked and found that a grade separation is impossible at that point, so there will be traffic lights - the only set of their sort in the world - that will coordinate between traffic on two main roads and the double-track line".

The Council for Design and Building of the Haifa District (to whom Binyamina belongs), claimed that the subject has not yet been discussed and is not a top priority.

Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky, was very angry and in a press release of 27.12.05 he said: "The level crossing at Binyamina IS on the top priority list of the grade separations program, is already approved and fully budgeted by the government. The railways are ready to carry out the project (at a cost of \$2.17 million) immediately, but without the approval of the Council we can't do it; and it has been stuck there already for six years!!" He added that in any case the human factor is behind most of the collisions and called on the car drivers to obey safety rules.

Transport Minister Mr. Meir Shitrit, was also very angry, and said

that "Should it depend on him, he would have fired the person in the Ministry of Internal Affairs responsible for the district who is causing the delay". He added that there will be an urgent meeting with his participation to discuss the subject, in order to enable an immediate start to the works.

The event had been fully recorded by a camera installed at the level crossing, which made the work of the traffic police easier. They assume that a technical failure in the bus caused the engine shut-down, although the driver himself claims that the bus was in order; it is a 2002 model.

An interesting response came from Dr. Moshe Becker, a well known specialist for transportation safety, who said that the railways should immediately add to the existing recording cameras a function that will report to the control centre and finally to the train drivers that a car is stuck on the track. He means this only for those dangerous level crossings where vision is bad or does not exist; and in his opinion it is vital for the train drivers and passengers no less than for the car drivers, who can sometimes evacuate themselves - unlike the train driver whose situation is mostly fatal; Such an addition would cost \$10,870 for each level crossing and this is a fraction in the \$4.5 Billion budget the railways have been given.

It is interesting that most people tend to forget one simple fact: More and faster trains at a higher frequency are in service on the one hand, and the growing car ownership as well as the number of lorries and other commercial vehicles on the other hand, all mean a higher possibility of collisions, particularly with the typically impatient and disobedient Israeli drivers; and beyond all: building grade separations takes time!"

### **(ii). MORE ON LEVEL CROSSING AND GRADE SEPARATION ISSUES.**

#### **GRADE SEPARATION WORKS.**

From a press release of 10.01.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"On 12.01.2006, Israel Railways Ltd. will start - through its local subcontractors, Y. Shomroni Company and Malibu Company - the implementation of four grade separations at level crossings on the Na'an - Kiryat-Gat section (of the Tel-Aviv - Beer-Sheva line), as part of a major project which will include seven additional grade separations on the Kiryat-Gat - Beer-Sheva section; The cost of the project is \$24 Million, and completion is expected

towards the end of 2007.

The Railways' General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky said: "For Israel Railways Ltd. the closure of each level crossing - if possible - is a main target; The aim of building the grade separations at level crossings all over Israel, is primarily to increase travelling and travellers' safety; From July 2005 we have closed all the unprotected level crossings on passenger lines, and we've also come to a decision that there will be no unprotected level crossing; We've decided that there will be no level crossings on new lines. This has actually been implemented already on the lines to Ben-Gurion airport and to Rishon-Le-Zion (HaRishonim)."

From a press release of 15.01.2006 by the Transport Ministry:

"Transport Minister Mr. Meir Shitrit, has announced to-day that the Ministry has prepared a revolutionary plan for replacing most of the existing level crossings with grade separations within three years.

The plan has been prepared by the newly created Upper Steering Committee, which includes - for the first time - representatives of all the boards responsible for road and rail, namely: Israel Railways Ltd., The National Company for Roads (formerly Public Works Department of the Transport Ministry), Netivey-Ayalon (Ayalon Roads - an engineering and implementation company for roads in the Greater Tel-Aviv Area), Yefe-Nof Company (the sister company of Netivei-Ayalon, working at the Greater Haifa Area), and the local authorities along railway lines. It has mapped all the 154 existing level crossings, and found that at least 75 and up to 109 such must be replaced by grade separations; Most of the rest need a system of new traffic arrangements including signs, flashing lights etc.; some will be closed.

Mr. Linchevsky said that the cost of the whole plan is \$530 Million, and it will be carried out in two stages. In the first stage, \$260 Million will be invested in 31 existing grade separations, which have been defined by the Technion (Israeli High Technical School) as the most urgent; Simultaneously, work on 36 additional grade separations, included in the 5-Year Plan of the railways and the 5-Year plan of the National Roads Company will be carried out; the rest will be implemented in the second stage.

Among the urgent grade separations to be carried out are those at: Ad-Halom (Ashdod) interchange (road No. 4); Bnei-Darom junction (near the

main entrance to Ashdod on road No.41); Kfar-Gbirol junction (near Rehovot on road No. 410); Near Beit-Yehoshua (on road No. 553 crossing the Tel-Aviv - Haifa line south of Netanya and near IKEA); near Kfar-Neter (near Netanya crossing road No. 561); Akko-North junction (on road No. 8510); at the industrial area of Kiryat-Gat; between Binyamina and Zikhron-Yaakov (on the Tel-Aviv - Haifa line crossing road No. 4)."

### **(iii). AGRICULTURAL CROSSINGS.**

The Transport Ministry's General Manager Mr. Arie Bar has instructed the railways to create a new procedure, which includes clear criteria for opening level crossings for passage of agricultural vehicles. From now on, any farmer who wishes to open a crossing to cross a railway line must first receive permission from the railways.

And as a result comes the following: From a press release of 19.01.2006 from Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The Supreme Court has approved today the decision of the railways to close an unprotected agricultural crossing until a proper solution is to be found; the court accepted the position of the railways legal adviser Solicitor Mrs. Rivka Dotan, according to which the railways have used their authority properly and the closure did not discriminate against anybody.

The crossing has been closed six months ago due to two accidents which happened there, and the farmer appealed to court claiming, that the railways were not authorized to close the passage as it prevents him from cultivating the lands he owns at both sides of the line; his income is in danger, and he is being discriminated against, compared with other farmers.

Mrs. Dotan did not hide her satisfaction from the judgement explaining that "The railways' decision made the right balance between the need to save human lives and the rights of way at the crossings".

The Railways' Chairman Mr. Moshe Leon said: "The railways have defined passenger and travelling safety as one of its top priorities, and I bless the Supreme Court for the judgement which gave its validity".

Note: this judgement creates a precedent which puts an end to the endless discussions with the railways regarding the closure of unprotected level crossings, and will undoubtedly save lives!

#### **(iv). LEVEL CROSSINGS SAFETY CAMPAIGN & SLOGAN.**

The grade separations continue to be a hot item: From a press release of 24.01.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Israel Railways Ltd. will start on 26.01.2006, in co-operation with the Transport Ministry's National Roads' Safety Authority, a new campaign to explain and promote safety at level crossings under the slogan: "For your own sake - Get away from the Rails".

The aim of this campaign is to increase the public's awareness for safety near and on railways, which requires special care; the campaign is part of several initiatives by the railways to improve safety of both rail passengers and roads users, and the importance this has for the railways.

The campaign is aimed at two main publics:

First, car drivers - through an advertising film to be shown on TV and through the internet, intended to increase awareness of the need for careful behavior at level crossings; secondly the children, for whom the campaign is educational and conveyed at schools, particularly at those places near railway lines, as well as through the internet, with the idea to clarify that "Rails are not a playground for children".

The campaign has an annual budget of \$1 M, and will be carried out in 3 "waves": the first wave will start on 26.01.2006; the second wave will start in mid-April 2006 towards Passover, and the third wave will start in September 2006 towards the Jewish New Year and Sukkot holidays.

Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Linchevsky said: "Safety is on our top priority and the campaign is one of the ways to achieve this main target; Amongst other things, it intends to cope with an Israeli unique phenomena of breaking the level crossing barriers' arms; there are more than 800 such events annually, where impatient car drivers see the flashing lights and yet cross the rails while risking their own as well as others lives".

The Chairman of the National Roads' Safety Authority Mr. Wladimir Rubin said: "Increasing the awareness for the dangers at level crossings is particularly important due to the significant rise in rail traffic and the higher frequency of trains passing at level crossings".

From a press release of 07.02.2006 by the Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways have signed a contract with Malibu Israel Ltd.- a well

known construction company - for building three grade separated crossings on the Kiryat-Gat - Beer-Sheva section at a cost of \$12 Million, to be completed by the end of 2007 ; these are part of a large project for seven such grade separations which include also infrastructures for the crossing roads to cost \$23.4 million; the implementation of the other four grade separations was started a month ago by the Shomroni construction company.

Meanwhile, last week, the railway level crossing at Revadim - where the tragic train/truck collision happened last year with 8 dead and 200 injured - has been demolished and replaced by a grade separation opened for road traffic."

#### **(v). BINYAMINA CROSSINGS.**

From a press release of 29.01.2006 by the Transport Ministry:

"The Transport Minister Mr. Meir Shitrit has instructed the Ministry's General Manager Mr. Arie Bar to find immediate solutions for the implementation of three grade separations at three existing level crossings along the alignment of the Tel-Aviv - Haifa line at Binyamina. Mr. Shitrit said that these three level crossings are extremely dangerous, and while people have already been killed there, every day that passes with the present situation may bring more deaths; he mentioned the case of a month previously, when a bus full of schoolchildren was stuck at one of the crossings, and it was only thanks to the fact that the bus driver managed to evacuate the children and himself that there were no casualties.

Mr. Shitrit has strongly criticized the Regional Design and Building Committee (located at Haifa) which is dragging the approval for 9 years; He said that does not intend to stand still and even called for the firing of the committee's responsible person!

10 days ago Mr. Arie Bar, accompanied by his staff, the railways' General Manager Mr. Linchevsky and the head of Binyamina's unicity Mr. Zeituni visited the railway alignment there and discussed the plans for the three planned grade separations; Mr. Bar told the press that the plans will be given to the regional committee on 07.02.2006, with the intention to expedite implementation by requesting building permits already in this stage; He added that "If the regional committee will not approve the plans on 07.02.2006, he'll order the immediate closure of the crossing near the railway station until a safe solution can be found".

The Transport Ministry did not lag much behind, and on the 08.02.2006, the following press release came:

"The Haifa District Committee for Design and Construction, approved yesterday, 07.02.2006, the immediate building of three grade separated crossings along the railway line alignment at Binyamina at a cost of \$36 Million." This after 10 years of delay during which people were killed!

There is no doubt that this has been enabled thanks to the energetic Transport Minister Mr. Meir Shitrit, who strongly criticized the committee, and even threatened to go to the Supreme Court to fire the responsible person! While cynics claim that he did it mainly because of the elections, the main point is that if human lives can be saved - it is worth it!

The Ministry's General Manager Mr. Arie Bar, who met the people of Binyamina, rejected their fear that the bridge to be built at the village centre, near the railway station will worsen their quality of life, and explained that safety comes above all, and gave the example (for which not everyone agrees) of the Ayalon highway at Tel-Aviv with a daily traffic of 600,000 vehicles near residential areas.

#### **(vi). RAILWAY MUSEUM NEWS.**

From 01/12/05 the Israel Railway Museum will be open five days a week (Sundays-Thursdays, holidays and eve of holidays excepted) between 08.30-14.00. Admission prices are now: Adult 17 Shekels, Child/Pensioner 14 Shekels. There are reduced rates and guided tours for pre-booked groups of 25 or more participants. Phone 04-8564293.

The tender from P Class No.62 and the 120-ton bogie well wagon, both recently rescued for the museum, were sand-blasted and painted in two coats of gloss black epoxy paint in February. It now remains to add numbers and other suitable identification.

#### **(vii). POSITIVE REPORTS.**

From 'Ha'aretz' Wed., November 30, 2005 — Israel Railways on right track. [Ugh! I hate these silly titles. Editor.] By Sharon Kedmi

"Revenues on the national rail network should climb beyond NIS 1 billion this year, which is 17 percent more than original estimates, Israel Railways announced Sunday, during a board meeting to approve its budget for 2006. Israel Railways expects to carry more than 30 million passengers in 2006, an

increase of 12 percent on its estimate for this year, and 33 percent more than it carried in 2004. To meet this growing demand, it plans to buy 54 new double-decker passenger cars from Bombardier, delivery of which should commence next month. It will also be buying 75 cargo carriages. [I think she means wagons. Ed.] By the end of next year, Israel Railways expects to be operating 48 stations throughout the country, and have 940 kilometers of track. During 2006, it expects to inaugurate a third track running alongside the Ayalon highway in Tel Aviv, and a second track between Tel Aviv and Kfar Saba, to increase the frequency of t r a i n s . Demand for train transport currently outstrips supply, according to the state-owned rail company. Some trips are standing room only, which has won Israel Railways much criticism for its failure to prepare for its own success.

Most of the added traffic will be on new lines, including to Dimona and Ashkelon, assuming the new equipment arrives and is installed on time. Next year, Israel Railways expects to carry 5.7 million passengers between Tel Aviv and Haifa, 4 million between Tel Aviv and Ashdod, 3.3 million between Tel Aviv and Nahariya, and 3 million between Tel Aviv and Be'er Sheva. It also expects to move 8 million tons of cargo during 2006, up 12 percent from 2005 and 18 percent more than in 2004. Last week, the national infrastructure committee approved additional new tracks; the Ofakim-Be'er Sheva line and the Ashkelon-Be'er Sheva branch. Israel Railways will also be building a new rail terminal at the Jubilee Port at Ashdod, at a cost of NIS 130 million, as decided in a meeting yesterday between Israel Railways and the Israel Ports company. The two bodies also agreed to cooperate more, particularly in developing freight centres and building more train stations at sea ports."

#### **(viii). INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT CONFERENCE.**

From a press release of 12.12.2005 by Transport Ministry:

"Transport Minister Mr. Meir Shitrit, will participate tomorrow in the conference of the transport ministers of the Mediterranean countries, where he will ask from the EU to finance transport projects common to Israel and the Palestinian Authority; in the first stage the projects will cost in excess of Euro 300 Million.

In addition to Mr. Shitrit, participants at the conference, which is the first of its kind, will be the ministers of

Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Turkey, and the Palestinian Authority. It is organized and financed by the EU, and will take place in the city of Marrakesh.

Leading the projects to be introduced by Mr. Shitrit is the revival of the Hedjaz line along the Yezreel Valley up to Irbid in Jordan; he will also speak about reviving the line from Afula in the valley, to Jenin in the West Bank (Samaria); (The main changes in the plan to be introduced by Mr. Shitrit, compared with those introduced by the Railways, is that he speaks about a double-track line between Haifa and Irbid, while the current plan speaks of a single track on almost the whole alignment. A.G.). This project has been defined by the EU as top priority among all other projects offered by Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority.

Mr. Shitrit said that he believes in the power of the economy as a drive for peace, this being to the mutual interest of all the sides involved. He added: "Transportation infrastructures are critical for economy growth and I hope that with the EU assistance we'll be able to start with the first project; the railway line, which will create a direct rail link between Jordan and the port of Haifa and back, replacing hundreds of lorries moving monthly on this axis, thus making the transportation more efficient, and increasing safety on roads".

According to the agreement signed several months ago between Israel, the EU, and the Palestinian Authority, the EU will award 2.5 Million to create a common transport ministry, which will initiate and plan common projects; the EU is committed to check financing of large projects to be agreed by both sides and their viability.

Additionally, Mr. Shitrit wants EU and international finance for a rail link between the city of Gaza and the port of Ashdod; This is actually an extension of the Ashkelon - Beer-Sheva line (through Sderot, Netivot, and Ofakim) now under construction; according to Mr. Shitrit, the project could be started soon, since the plans exist and can be implemented immediately."

Well, the conference took place, and a report on 19.12.2005 read: "Israel Asks EU to Fund Haifa-Jenin-Jordan Railway. The Transport Ministry has asked the European Union for 30 million Euro (\$6.5 million) to finance a double-track railway between Haifa, Jenin and Jordan. The railway is planned as a cooperative effort with Jordan and the Palestinian Authority (PA).

Transport Minister Meir Sheetrit made the request at a conference in Morocco last week. Israel also is asking the EU to finance a railway from Gaza City to the port in Ashdod!

#### **(ix). DIMONA SERVICES REIN- STATED.**

As already reported, the line between Beer-Sheva and Dimona was on Saturday night 17.12.05 for passenger traffic, hand in hand with opening of the new station there; the official ceremonies with the participation of Prime Minister Mr. Sharon, Transport Minister Mr. Shitrit, The Railways' Chairman of Directorate Mr. Moshe Leon, the General Manager Mr. Linchevsky, and many other respected guests, will be in about two weeks, the exact date to be informed later.

These ceremonies will coincide with the ceremonies of Dimona which was founded 70 years ago. The population of Dimona are excited, particularly the Mayor Mr. Meir Cohen, and the Station Master Mr. Masud Harar, who said that their city could not expect a better gift!

The passenger service revival could also be termed a Silver Jubilee, as the earlier services ceased 25 years ago - another reason for celebration!

There will initially be five trains daily on each direction between Dimona and Beer-Sheva Universita, where passengers to and from Tel-Aviv will have to change trains; it will take currently 95 minutes to Tel-Aviv, covering the 144 km in an average speed of almost 91 km/h; after completion of the line upgrading (between Beer-Sheva and Naan), the time will be cut to 60 minutes, raising the average speed to 144 km/h.

#### **(x). DIMONA LINE SNIPPETS.**

(From Aharon Gazit.)

From a press release of 15.12.2005 by Israel Railways Ltd.: "Until 31.12.2005 tickets on the newly opened Beer-Sheva - Dimona line were being sold at an introductory price of \$2.17 instead of \$4.34 - the usual price; The purpose is to encourage passengers to use the line."

Now, after the line is in operation for almost a week, it is worth describing the change it brought to the people of Dimona; The following spoke with Mr. Ronen Tal, a correspondent of the Israeli most popular newspaper 'Yediot Aharonot' ('Latest News') and are quoted with his permission.

Mrs. Brigitte Sarig (44) who lives now in Tel-Aviv, left Dimona at the age

of 18 as a soldier, but still feels herself a citizen of Dimona; her husband even put a sign on their apartment's door: "The Embassy of Dimona in Tel-Aviv"

She and her husband arrived at Dimona for the memorial day of her father and felt that this was for her a special event; "My father always wanted the revival of rail service, and it is a pity that he did not manage to see it" she said.

She added that she will keep her first ticket for the grandsons, and that the rail service gives the people of Dimona the feeling that they are nearer to the centre .

Mr. Zion Koralker (70) arrived at Dimona 30 years ago directly from Bombay which is - according to his opinion - the world's railways capital city, and had wondered at the absence of rail link; He is now satisfied and even enjoys a retired person tariff.

Especially excited was the first IC3 dmu driver Mr. Moshe Biton, who remembers traveling by train as a child with his parents and is now proud to be the first one to revive the service. Some general background:

Dimona was founded in 1955 as a developing settlement (although from the beginning the government spoke about a town) in the middle of nowhere, the Negev desert in the south of Israel; stories from that time tell that the newly-arrived immigrants, mainly from Morocco and Tunisia, were taken on lorries directly from the port of Haifa (Ashdod was not yet in existence) without even being told where they were going; it was the order of the then-Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion who repeatedly said that "The future of Israel is in the Negev".

Despite many difficulties and even despair from living in an almost isolated area and far from culture, the place grew slowly but steadily and in 1965 the rail link was opened; in the 30 years to come, however, there was stagnation, and though the rail link was not the main issue - unlike unemployment - it gave some bad feeling; It is a positive feeling now to see heavy investments in the South, particularly in rail infrastructures, and the vision of Ben-Gurion being realized at last.

A woman called Simona, who was a child in 1955, was lucky enough that a song carrying her name soon became a hit and is even now heard in radio programmes featuring songs of the 50's; Its title is: "Simona of Dimona".

So, on 27.12.2005, the official date of opening, Dimona has three reasons for celebration: 50 years of exist-

ence, 40 years since the opening the line, and after 25 years a passenger service revival!

I personally traveled on this line back in April 1968, and the surprise was that, unlike other lines of that time where passengers were almost thrown from one side to another due to deteriorated track and rolling stock conditions, although it was jointed track here, it was actually not felt as such at the then maximum speed of 100 km/h!

#### **(xi). EILAT LINE PROPOSALS.**

A translation of an article dated 27.12.05 in the Israeli most popular newspaper "Yediot Aharonot" ("Latest News"), and with their permission - by Ahron Gazit.

According to present plans, in 2011 a typical Israeli family wishing to spend a weekend in Eilat will be able to choose between three possibilities: Using the 2009 family van, by air, or by bus. However, it looks now that the most attractive way will be by rail. The journey by car takes 4½ hours, by bus at least 4 hours; it takes indeed only 50 minutes to fly, but at least 90 minutes must be added for getting to and from the airport and the price is high. By rail it will take 3 hours (from Tel-Aviv); Netanyahu even promised 2.½ hours, and while a current return bus ticket price is \$24, the train will cost about \$33 in 2011.

Until now this has seemed like science fiction. Back in 1951 the first Israeli Prime Minister Mr. David Ben-Gurion, who supported the line, promised to build it within three years (he just could not explain which era he meant); In 1974 the then Prime Minister Mrs. Golda Meir promised to build it as a lesson of the October 1973 war; Three years ago the then Finance Minister Mr. Netanyahu and Transport Minister Mr. Shitrit gave a statement that the line would soon be under way, and actually all the design factors have already been approved in principle.

So, what has changed?

This year, the government has decided to promote the project of building the 175 km missing link between Nahal Tzin (a phosphate ores station) and Eilat at an estimated cost of \$1.3 Billion, as a result of a very comprehensive report prepared by the US consulting company Merkator Transport Group, according to which the line can be profitable in some conditions. The line must be built for mixed traffic; in one mode only it won't be profitable. Additionally, and this might prove to be the biggest obstacle - it must work 7 days weekly, 24 hours a day around the

clock. This may cause a crisis, since Shabbat (Saturday) is an official rest day and no trains are running, while ports are working only partially.

Another precondition is that the ports tariffs must be drastically reduced at both Haifa and Ashdod, and at the same time their output must rise significantly in order that the line could be used as a land bridge, thus being competitive with and an alternative to the Suez Canal.

The report also proposes that for container traffic the railways will have to adopt the US double-stack container cars in order to cope with the quantities to be hauled; this may require major changes in the infrastructures, not experienced by the railways so far.

Some more details about the line:

There will be at least six stations, at Hatzeva, Sapir, Faran, Ya'alon, Yotvata, etc.

The location for the station at Eilat itself is not yet finalised (as is the case with the line alignment); the line will be served by passenger trains attaining 200 km/h. with high quality cafeteria cars as well as playing zones for children.

The main question is: How the line is to be financed? According to a model built by the consulting company Kinrot-Yam, a consortium of private investors will be created. They will arrange purchase of and operating the rolling stock, while the government will finance the infrastructure. Since the investment in infrastructure can reach 80% of the project's cost and it can be returned partially only, unlike the investment in rolling stock which can be fully covered, the investors will have to pay partial fees for using the infrastructure; These fees will rise as a function of the rising use by trains; this in turn will reduce the subsidy paid by the government for building the line, while the State will reduce the risk of the private investors, making the private investments more attractive.

One of the companies interested to compete in the project is the Chinese infrastructure company CRCC, which is already participating in the Tel-Aviv LRV/METRO tender.

The objections come from several directions:

First, most claim that the whole area to be served by the line is thinly populated while the costs at the ports of Ashdod and Eilat are twice the passage fees at the Suez Channel; another claim is that the minimum freight to be hauled in order to be profitable is 3 million tons annually - twice that cur-

rently passing through the ports of Haifa and Ashdod together, and nobody knows from where it will come.

The supporters, who include Transport Minister Mr. Shitrit, Israel Railway Ltd. Chairman Mr. Moshe Leon, and members of Eilat municipality, claim that the line is of national importance. It will reduce road congestion by switching all cargoes heavier than 40 tons from road to rail (here the road haulers will probably show a tough struggle), will bring an economic boom to the south, bring millions of tourists to Eilat - which already caters for 42% of the tourism in Israel, and will enable the people of Eilat to reach easily the centre of Israel. As Mr. Shitrit added: "We have to look forwards at least 30 years; the benefits and fruits of projects of that kind can be seen only in long term, but we have to start now!" We'll have to wait and see!

#### **(xii). KFAR SABA - HERZLIYYA LINK.**

Five established leading companies specializing in large projects are participating in the P.F.I. Road No. 531 project, to be carried out at a cost of more than \$543 Million; it includes the rail link between Kfar-Sava Sokolov station (to be opened in April 2006), Raanana, Herzliyya, and the Tel-Aviv - Haifa line. This will run in the median of the road, as it already runs between Kfar-Sava-Nordau station (already in operation) and Sokolov station. The main advantage for the railways is the fact that the same basic infrastructure work is being carried out by one company. This includes railway tunnels and bridges. It will be ready some time in 2007.

#### **(xiii). ASHKELON - BEER SHEVA LINE CONSTRUCTION BEGINS.**

From a press release of 27.11.2005 by the Israel Railways Ltd.:

To-day, 27.11.05, the works on the first section of the 70 km line Ashkelon - Beer-Sheva have started - on the 11 km section between Ashkelon and Yad-Mordekhai. Towards the end of 2005, the statutory procedures for the section between Yad-Mordekhai and Ofakim will be completed. The National Infrastructures Committee approved last week the section Ofakim - Beer-Sheva as a double-track line. The line, which will be built at a cost of \$260 Million, has been declared as a national project.

#### **(xiv). BRANCH TO RAMALLAH?**

[I am not sure whether to include this under 'Israel' or 'Other Middle East

Countries'! Ed.]

An interesting idea of building a railway line to the Palestinian city of Ramalla (north of Jerusalem), starting somewhere from the Lod-Jerusalem line, has been raised by the Minister of Environment Mr. Shalom Simkhon (who has meanwhile resigned). Although nobody knows how realistic this idea is - it has been nevertheless been approved by the Roads Committee of the Civil Administration - it managed to create some political storm. Mr. Simkhon, however, explained that since the A1 link to Jerusalem is passing somehow in Palestinian territory, only something in return will enable boring the tunnels planned there.

#### **(xv). PROGRESS ON RISHON LE ZION WEST LINE.**

From a press release of 29.11.2005 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

The Netivei Ayalon Co. (Ayalon Roads) has started the works of completing the Holon Interchange by moving the present road lane south-westwards in order to create space for the double-track line to Rishon-Le-Zion West (and later on to Ashdod) now under construction, and planned to pass there (in the median of Ayalon Road No. 20).

The works are carried out by Shafir Engineering, who won the tender, and who are also responsible for many other rail projects, including - for example - the Modi'in Central station, currently under construction.

The works are part of the project planned by Ayalon Roads and Israel Railways along 1.5 km between Armor interchange and southward up to Road No. 4, and will include a new railway bridge west of the existing one, a new road bridge (west of the new railway bridge), a new road, supporting walls for the track ramps, new acoustic walls as well upgrading the existing walls, new and rebuilt infrastructures, supporting walls between the tracks and the roads, and earthworks towards track laying by the railways.

The project, to cost of \$32 million, will be carried out in several stages, which will involve temporary complex traffic arrangements, during which an under-road pedestrian passage for commuters to use the futuristic railway station, as well as an under-road passage for the planned LRV line to Holon will be built.

#### **(xvi). TEL AVIV HASHALOM UPGRADE.**

From a press release of 30.11.2005 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"\$2.6 Million will be invested in upgrading the Tel-Aviv Hashalom station. The works, which will start on 01.12.2005, and take 12 months, include: a second (eastern) platform with an escalator at the station's northern side, an additional entrance/exit at its southern side, a transparent armoured glass ceiling with elements of stainless steel and - as a part of a comprehensive policy to install air-conditioning systems at all the stations - an advanced air conditioning system."

#### **(xvii). GALILEE BRANCH LINES?**

From a press release of 30.11.2005 by the Transport Ministry:

"The Transport Minister Mr. Meir Shitrit, instructed to-day the Ministry's General Manager Mr. Arie Bar to check the possibility of linking the cities of Nazareth and Migdal-Ha-Emek in the Lower Galilee with the Hedjaz line (Valley of Jezreel line) soon to be revived.

Briefing the press, he said that "there is a great importance to bring the periphery closer to the centre, and linking cities like the two mentioned above with the network will significantly cut travelling times and enable many of their people to reach the centre both for business and for work".

Works on the Jezreel Valley line are to start soon and to be completed in 2008; the line, 80 km long, will include a 6 km double-track section between Haifa and the nearby town of Neshet and 56 km from there to Beit-Shean, giving a total length of 62 km to be covered in 46 minutes (at an average speed of almost 81 km/h; much faster than the original Hedjaz trains which never exceeded 30 km/h.), and will have new stations at Neshet, Kfar-Yehoshua, Kfar-Barukh, Afula, and Beit-Shean. The alignment has been planned together with the Jordanian government, by whom it is defined as a national project; they intend to create a rail link from Beit-Shean to Irbid, and to use the line to and from the port of Haifa. The \$216 Million line will not be electrified.

Meanwhile, the people of Kibutz Yagur, who live nearby to the alignment and are protesting against the project, have been seen carrying signs saying: "Yes for the train - Not at Yagur!"

#### **(xviii). MODI'IN LINE REPORT.**

The line between Ben-Gurion airport and Modi'in will be opened only towards the end of 2007, one year later than planned, however, this forecast is more optimistic than the previous one which spoke about a much later date, due to the ancient graves found on the



alignment near Lod, and which caused the need to bore two tunnels of 100 m. each.

The Railways Directorate recently approved a proposal to publish tenders for laying tracks and upper structures; this will be the first time in the railways' history that such works are privatized; the reason is that the railways' own teams can't cope alone with the huge work to be carried out in the coming years; they believe that the new step will help to keep works to schedule.

On 24.12.2005 Aharon wrote:- "The deputy mayor of Modi'in, who is also the Municipality's Transportation Department Manager Mr. Meir Harlap, has recently met with Israel Railway General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky (himself a citizen of Modi'in), to discuss the issue of train services to the city. Mr. Linchevsky has confirmed that the actual date will be not earlier than the end of 2007, this being caused by the uncovering of graves on the alignment; he said that the problem regarding the contractor Linom which is boring the two tunnels near the graves has been resolved thanks to his intervention, preventing an even greater delay. It has been agreed that a curve is to be built on the line, to connect it directly with the A1 link (not far from Modi'in Outskirts station), thus avoiding the need to change trains at Ben-Gurion airport station (though it was also offered to build a station at the point of deviation between the line to Modi'in and A1) which would have made the service to Jerusalem useless. Mr. Harlap said that "It is a great achievement; I've a direct channel with Mr. Linchevsky who promised me to do the best he can to bring the train to Modi'in as early as possible".

In the last week of December Israel Railways started the works of completing the last bridge section on the line between Ben-Gurion Airport and Lod, itself part of the lines between the airport, and Modi'in and Jerusalem. The 1.1 km long bridge - so far the longest one in Israel - will be built at a cost of \$25 million, and is one out of ten bridges of the line to Modi'in of a total length of 3.6 km; the airport to Lod section will be opened during 2006. The bridges are built by different and most modern systems, avoiding disruption to traffic (on Highway No. 1 and Road No. 40 above which the line passes), and to agricultural lands.

From a press release of

02.02.2006 by the Jerusalem Municipality:

"In a festive ceremony which took place at the chamber of the mayor of Jerusalem, Mr. Uri Lupolyansky, an agreement was signed between Israel Railways Ltd. and the urban company Moriya, according to which the company will implement the managing of the eastern part of the fast rail link A1 to Tel-Aviv, which includes a bridge, a tunnel, and the new Jerusalem railway station, at an overall cost of \$106.4 million.

Works of building the station will start within few months, and are expected to complete in 2010, when the line is expected to be opened. The bridge, to be built 90 m above the Cedars Valley, will be 1200 m long. The railway tunnel with a length of 2400 m, will start near Sakharov Gardens junction (an entrance road), and will end at a point between Binyanei-Hauma (Nation's Buildings) and the Central Bus Station. The railway station's tracks and platforms will be 80 m below Jaffa Street level, to which the connection will be by elevators and escalators.

Mr. Lupolyansky said: "The fast rail link will bring Jerusalem nearer to centre of Israel and will assist and encourage positive immigration as well as tourism to the city"; he added that A1 combined with the LRV, will be a public transport model for other cities in Israel.

Moriya's General Manager Mr. Yekhiel Lavi said: "The cooperation with Israel Railways Ltd. is a strategic move for the company, opening new channels of activities in favour of building the city and for its citizens. Moriya is preparing itself to start carrying out the works of building the railway station within few months".

The participants in the ceremony were, in addition to the mayor Mr. Lupolyansky, Moriya's General Manager Mr. Yekhiel Lavi, the Chairman of Israel Railways Ltd. Directorship Mr. Moshe Leon, Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky, the Municipality's General Manager Mr. Eitan Meir, and senior persons of the Transport Ministry.

#### **(xix). AKKO STATION UPGRADING.**

Works to upgrade the station of Akko are advancing at full tempo. They include: additional elevators for disabled; extending and widening the platforms, and upgrading the tracks. This meant closing the line between Kiryat-Motzkin and Nahariya between 19.01.2006 at 23:15 and 22.01.2006

at 04:00.

#### **(xx). TWO INCIDENTS.**

It is probable that many sectors are jealous of the Railways' 5-Year budget and \$4.5 Billion investment plan, so almost every day there is an article in the popular papers as well as on the internet, trying to find anything that is wrong with the service. Last week (written 11.12.05. Ed.), a driver of a train passed a red signal at Hof-HaCarmel station while a train was coming from the opposite direction at the same time; the Indusi automatic train stopping system was applied and the train was stopped.

Of course the papers reported on "a near disaster"; but as Mr. Linchevsky said: "Although such an event can't be ignored, and as a result the driver was suspended until the inquiry committee - specially created for this event - will complete its work, there could not be any disaster, since the line is a double-tracked one; trains were therefore running on separate tracks and the Indusi system immediately stopped the train".

Veteran drivers said that the problem was not with the driver but with the short platform, which causes the drivers to stop the front of the train ahead of the signals for the benefit of the passengers, thus preventing them from seeing the signals properly!

Another case happened to-day, 11.12.05, when a passenger on a train from Nahariya to Ben-Gurion airport fell out of the train just after leaving the HaHagana station at Tel-Aviv, and was killed. The newspapers immediately accused the railways of the passenger's death. However, in a press release the Railways' administration has clarified that it was the passenger himself who opened the door for an unknown reason (this is now being investigated), thus falling out and getting killed. (It should be mentioned that the services to the airport consist partially of the oldest rolling stock, without automatic doors which can't be opened when the trains exceed 5 km/h, and that may be the reason that he could open the door and fell).

#### **(xxi). ADVERTISING CONTRACT.**

From a press release of 01.12.2005 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways have chosen "Musafim Dpt. Ltd." as a concessionaire for operating the advertising media; the

**Continued on page 10**

(xxii).

#### **RAMTA PROGRESS.**

From a press release of 12.12.2005 by IAI-RAMTA:

"IAI-RAMTA plant, has to-day handed over to Israel Railways the first double-deck train entirely assembled there within the agreement for co-operation between Bombardier Transportation and RAMTA. The order for production and assembling 54 double-deck cars [including power cars/ driving trailers. A.G.] was signed last year and implementation will be completed by August 2006 with the delivery of the last train to Israel Railways.

As already reported, Bombardier is one of the three participants in the Israel Railways tender for supply of 86 single-deck push/pull cars [including power cars/driving trailers as with the double-deck trains. A.G.]; according to the co-operation with RAMTA, the latter will manufacture and assemble the main systems of the cars, including internal design, final assembly and delivery to Israel Railways, all to be carried out at the new hangar which opened on 21.09.2005, occupying 8000 sq.m. for assembling the double-deck trains as well as other futuristic rail projects.

RAMTA, which belongs to the Civil Aircraft Group of the Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI), started assembling railway vehicles in 1993; 87 IC3 cars have been assembled and delivered to Israel Railways; additionally, works have been carried out on 92 double-deck coaches delivered to Israel Railways between 1999 and 2004. RAMTA has gained a lot of experience and succeeded in keeping its reputation for uncompromised quality, being able to cope with fierce competition both from Eastern and Western Europe."

The new tender, if won by Bombardier, will create a lot of new jobs in the southern part of Israel currently suffering from unemployment, as well as technology transfer of new technologies in rail transportation currently not existing here." BUT:-

(xxiii).

#### **SIEMENS WINS THE BID.**

From the 'Jerusalem Post' 10.01.06:- "Israel Railways to spend \$900M. on new cars. By Daniel Kennemer. Deal paves way for rail development plans and improved service."

"Israel Railways has agreed to purchase €900 Million worth of single-level rail cars from Siemens over the next 10 years, outbidding French railcar producer Alstom and Montreal-based Bombardier in a tender, Israel Railways said Wednesday. 'Against the backdrop of Israel Railways' surge of development, the agreement signed is of immense importance for the well-being of railway users," said Israel Railways CEO Ofer Linczewski. "The significant growth in the amount of passenger trains available to us will help reduce crowding inside the trains, increase frequency [of service], and improve the level of punctuality."

Initially, Israel Railways will purchase 86 passenger cars – more than a quarter of which are equipped for passengers with disabilities – for NIS 700M., doubling the system's current passenger rolling stock and allowing Israel Railways to retire some of its older equipment. Israel Railways will then have an option to purchase up to 585 additional cars for more than NIS 4 Billion, bringing the total value of the deal to NIS 4.95B. Siemens may also provide maintenance equipment for the fleet, either alone or as part of a joint venture. The first batch of new cars will begin carrying passengers in August 2007. Additionally, the cars purchased from Siemens will be able to run on electric lines with electric locomotives, allowing the national inter-urban rail operator to pursue its goal of electrifying rail lines. All current locomotives are powered by diesel carried on each train. The electrified system will allow the locomotives to be fed energy through relay towers, reducing both noise and air pollution, and allowing the train to accelerate and slow down faster.

The current five-year rail development plan includes an initial electrification phase covering 250 kilometers of rail lines in the center of the country – including the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem express line set to open in 2010 – valued at NIS 1.6 Bn., presently in tender.

"In order to meet the government's goal of opening new lines and providing service to some 60 million passengers annually, to the end of the five-year plan, additional funds of about NIS 2.5M. are needed, towards purchasing many more trains in the coming years," said Moshe Leon, chairman of Israel Railways' board of directors."

#### **From a press release of 11.01.2005 by Israel Railways Ltd.:**

"Today the railways have agreed with Siemens Transportation on a huge contract worth □ 900 M. for the supply of single-deck push/pull trains. Siemens has been chosen by the Tenders Committee as the winner, thus beating Alstom and Bombardier, who also reached the final stage; The contract is for 10 years, and the winner's representatives will be invited to Israel very soon, in order to complete the contract and to sign it.

Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky [note the different spellings of this name. Ed.] said that, due to the high demand for passenger services, the first order of 86 carriages - of which 24 are equipped with facilities for disabled - will be realized immediately at a cost of \$152 million; This will enable an increase in the single-deck fleet by 100%, as well as the phasing out of service of some of the old coaches (40 years old and more) still in service. The new coaches will enter service from August 2007 onwards.

---

#### **Continued from page 9**

contract is for 4 years.

The concept behind the tender was to concentrate all the advertising channels in the hands of a single concessionaire who will be responsible for operating all the means of advertising media including at stations, along the tracks, station halls, platforms, bridges, rolling stock, etc. The concessionaire will enjoy a variety of possibilities for intensive activity before 30 million consumers who are expected to use rail during 2006; this number may double itself within four years.

Due to the income potential and the high exposure foreseen for the railways' media, the tender drew a lot of attention among Israeli advertisers and sales promoters; Four of the biggest companies participated. Israel Railways General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky said: "It is an important step for managing the railways as a business-oriented body which realizes its commercial potential, increases sources of revenues and maximizes its profits. The railways are undergoing a momentum of development and acting initiatives to realizing the forthcoming opportunities; the incomes will help us to improve the service quality given to the passengers, as well as increasing the variety of services".

The Railways have now several options. The most important one would be to increase the number of carriages ordered by up to an additional 585 carriages, at a cost of \$869 million for realizing all the options.

Furthermore, the railways now enjoy a variety of other possibilities, like: converting the cars already purchased for electric traction, or purchasing carriages purpose-built for electric traction. The deal also includes, for the first time, an option for maintaining the fleet by Siemens or by a joint venture with them.

Mr. Linchevsky added: 'With the background of the railways' development momentum, the agreement which is to be signed soon has an enormous importance for the passengers' welfare; the substantial growth in the number of trains which we'll be able to provide will contribute to a reduction in overcrowding, an increase in frequency, and improved punctuality'.

The Chairman of the Railways Directorship Mr. Moshe Leon said: "Undoubtedly, the decision to choose these advanced trains, manufactured by a worldwide leading consortium, will significantly contribute to improving the service level and its quality; However, in order to be able to achieve the government's targets of opening new lines and carrying 60 million passengers annually towards the end of the 5 Year Plan (New Deal), additional budgets in excess of \$543 million are needed for purchasing many more trains in the coming years". He added: "For the first time, we've made a deal enabling us to operate electric trains within few years (when the first trains purpose built for electric traction arrive. A.G.), thus achieving higher speeds and better environmental impact regarding both emissions and noise; the deal is another meaningful milestone in the railways' development and their constantly growing activities".

(Note: it will be interesting and curious to see where the cars will be assembled; it now seems that Ramta was too fast in signing a contract with Bombardier at the early stage of the tender; now they may face a problem: Siemens has no commitment to Ramta after all! A.G.)

#### **(xxiv). CARRIAGE REPAIRS.**

At the end of January three Alstom push-pull coaches (325, 330 and 341) were shipped to Valencia in Spain for repairs following the collision near Ahuzam on 8/7/05 [see 70:04:(11b)].

#### **(xxv). PLANS FOR 2006.**

From a press release of

28.11.2005 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

The Railways' Directorate, headed by Mr. Moshe Leon, approved yesterday the budget for 2006; the income will exceed \$217 Million, 17% more than the updated income estimation for 2005.

The following forecast figures for 2006 have been given: 50 (54) new double-deck cars (to be assembled at IAI-RAMTA Beer-Sheva), 1 IC3 dmu (the last 2nd-hand set from Sweden), and 75 freight cars (mainly flats for containers). Towards the end of 2006, the railways will operate 48 stations and 940 track km.

The 3rd track on the Ayalon line (Tel-Aviv) and the completed double-tracking of the Tel-Aviv - Kfar-Sava line, as well as Sokolov station at Kfar-Sava and Kiryat-Arie at Petakh-Tikva will be opened.

The passenger traffic forecast is for more than 30 Million, 12% more than the updated estimation for 2005, and 33% more than 2004 traffic. The main rise will come from relatively newly opened lines (Ashkelon and Jerusalem opened in the 1st Quarter of 2005, and Dimona to be opened on 17.12.2005), as well as increasing service frequencies and other improvements.

The passenger traffic forecast per lines is as following:

Tel-Aviv - Haifa line: 5.7 Million.

Tel-Aviv - Ashdod line: 4 Million.

Tel-Aviv - Nahariya line: 3.3 Million.

Tel-Ber - Sheva line: 3 Million.

The freight traffic forecast is for more than 8 million tons, 12% more than the updated estimate for 2005, and 18% more than the 2004 traffic.

Mr. Moshe Leon added: "The railways continue with the national task of developing the network and bringing the periphery closer to the country's centre; in the 2006 work plan, the emphasis is on increasing the services offered to the passengers as well as coping with traffic rise by substantial additions of rolling stock".

#### **(xxvi). NOVEMBER 2005 STATISTICS.**

From a press release of 06.12.2005 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"2,413,312 passengers were carried by rail during November 2005, 10.2% more than in November 2004. From the beginning of 2005, 24,460,166 used rail services, 18.5% more than in the same period of 2004. The rise in passenger traffic as per line was as following:

Tel-Aviv - Ashkelon line: 396,225 = +15%.

Tel-Aviv - Netanya line: 249,226 = +14%

The line to Ben-Gurion airport: 82,593 = +12%.

Tel-Aviv - Haifa line: 508,897 = +9%.

Tel-Aviv - Rishonim line: 71,670 = +9%.

Tel-Aviv - Nahariya line: 275,895 = +7%.

Tel-Aviv - Beer-Sheva line: 262,403 = +6%.

Ashkelon - Haifa line: 117,655 = +6%.

Haifa - Nahariya line: 179,255 = +3%.

The General Manager Mr. Linchevsky said: "The railways are quickly becoming the main means of mass transit; we're acting to find a solution to the high demands, both by substantial addition of rolling stock due to arrive during 2006, and by developing the track infrastructure, opening new stations and double-tracking busy lines; these steps will significantly improve passenger services and their welfares as well as increase train frequencies".

#### **(xxvii). 2005 AND DECEMBER STATISTICS.**

DURING 2005 26.8 MILLION PASSENGERS TRAVELLED ON ISRAEL RAILWAYS – AN INCREASE OF 17% COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR

Moshe Leon, chairman of the board of Israel Railways, said, "This significant growth in passenger numbers shows the great importance rail users attach to Israel Railways, including improvements in safety. In parallel, IR is continuing development of the national network and the opening of new lines that will connect the periphery to the centre, while serving 60 million passengers a year at the end of the five-year plan."

Ofer Linczewski, IR director-general, said, "The growth in 2005 is proof that the public is voting with its feet and sees the railway as a central means of transport that is reliable and progressive. During 2006 we shall satisfy the high demand with both increases in rolling stock and infrastructure development. These steps will contribute to a significant improvement in passenger service, increased frequency and improved comfort."

From a press release of 16.01.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

26,809,436 passengers - 30% of which were soldiers - were carried by the railways during 2005, 17% more

than in 2005.

The annual rise in passenger traffic as per lines was as follows:

Tel-Aviv - Ashkelon line:  
4,168,752 passengers = +18%.

Tel-Aviv - Netanya line:  
2,599,301 passengers = +17%.

Haifa - Nahariya line:  
2,048,980 passengers = +11%.

Tel-Aviv - Haifa line: 5,526,111  
passengers = +9%.

Tel-Aviv - Nahariya: 3,142,558  
passengers = +8%.

Ashkelon - Haifa line:  
1,374,506 passengers = 5%.

Tel-Aviv - Beer-Sheva line:  
2,975,853 passengers = +1% (*this line suffered a lot from the 2 collisions between trains and lorries, during which, more than 10 died and 200 injured; A.G.*).

The Tel - Aviv-HaRishonim line  
carried 776,083.

The line to Ben-Gurion airport  
carried 1,104,176.

(These latter two lines are new,  
therefore no comparisons can be made  
with 2004.)

[No figures were given for the Jerusa-  
lem line – they are probably too em-  
barrassed, things Sybil.]

During December 2005 alone,  
2,351,144 passengers were carried,  
3.1% more than in December 2004.

The average number of daily  
passengers reached 95,247; 7% more  
than in 2004.

The rise in passenger traffic as per lines  
was as following:

Tel-Aviv - Ashkelon line:  
383,421 = +8%.

Tel-Aviv - Netanya line: 239,420  
= +7%.

Tel-Aviv - Haifa line: 484,923 =  
+2%.

The Chairman of Israel Railways Ltd.  
Directorship Mr. Moshe Leon said: "On  
the background of the significant rise  
in passenger traffic, there is a great  
importance in improving the welfare of  
rail users, and the added value they  
receive from the railways, including the  
improvement of safety; simultaneously,  
the railways will keep on the momen-  
tum of activities, developing the na-  
tional network and opening new lines  
which will connect the periphery with  
the centre, while providing services for  
60 million passengers annually, until the  
end of the 5 year plan (New Deal)".

The Israel Railways Ltd. General  
Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky said: "The  
rise in demand for rail services during  
2005 is proof that the public "votes"  
with his feet and recognizes rail as the  
main, reliable, and advanced means

of transport; During 2006, we'll act to  
respond to the high demands, both by  
substantial addition of rolling stock, and  
by developing the tracks infrastructure;  
these steps will bring a significant im-  
provement to the service for passen-  
gers, as well as increasing train fre-  
quencies and raising passengers' wel-  
fare".

Updated data regarding 2005  
haulage:

Passenger/km:  
For the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter: 382,684,997  
For the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter:  
402,172,659

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter:  
415,869,564

For the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter: 389,623,564  
Total for 2005: 1,590,350,784  
passenger/km.

#### (xxviii). JANUARY 2006

##### STATISTICS.

From a press release of  
12.02.2006 by the Israel Railways Ltd.:  
2006 was a good start in terms of pas-  
senger traffic: 2,597,084 passengers  
travelled in January 2006, a new  
monthly all-time record; it is 18.5%  
higher than in January 2005; Com-  
pared with the last monthly record of  
May 2005, the figures are higher by  
135,000 passengers; also the daily  
average number of journeys reached  
98,242 - 14.3% higher than in 2005.  
The rise in passenger traffic as per lines  
was as following:

Tel-Aviv - Jerusalem line:  
117,741 = +110%!

Tel-Aviv - Ashkelon line:  
451,370 = +29%.

Tel-Aviv - Netanya line: 277,653  
= +26%.

Tel-Aviv - Harishonim line:  
79,066 = +20%.

The line to Ben-Gurion airport:  
82,719 = +17%.

Tel-Aviv - Haifa line: 529,216 =  
+16%.

Tel-Aviv - Kfar-Sava line:  
201,374 = +16%.

Ashkelon - Nahariya line:  
117,162 = +8%.

Tel-Aviv - Nahariya line:  
275,358 = +8%.

Haifa - Nahariya line: 187,598  
= +7%.

Tel-Aviv-Beer - Sheva line:  
274,070 = +6%.

Note: the figures of the line to  
Jerusalem may mislead, since most of  
the passengers are using only the Tel-  
Aviv - Beit-Shemesh section; As for the  
January 2006 passenger traffic in gen-  
eral, it is really significant, because  
there are no special holidays falling in  
this month, so there is no doubt of the  
positive tendency!

#### (xxix) FEBRUARY 2006

##### STATISTICS.

From a press release of  
15.03.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

2,163,770 passengers have been car-  
ried during February 2006, 8.4% more  
than in February 2005; from the be-  
ginning of 2006, the railways carried  
4,760,853 passengers, 13.7% more  
than in the same period of 2005.

The average number of journeys per  
train was 343, 6.9% more than in Feb-  
ruary 2005.

The rise in passenger traffic as per lines  
was as following:

Tel-Aviv-Beit-Shemesh-Jerusalem line:  
99,933 = +102%.

Tel-Aviv-Ashkelon line: 361,898 =  
+17%.

The Ben-Gurion airport line: 71,486 =  
+17%.

Tel-Aviv-Netanya line: 225,989 =  
+13%.

Tel-Aviv-Harishonim line: 62,805 =  
+6%.

Tel-Aviv-Haifa line: 445,350 = +6%.

The railways' General Manager Mr.  
Ofer Linchevsky said: "The railways are  
gaining acceleration as the main mass  
transportation mean; we're acting on  
coping with the high demands, both by  
significant addition of rolling stock ex-  
pected to arrive during 2006, and by  
developing the rail  
infrastructure; the forecast for 2006, is  
more than 30 million passengers".

Note: the line between Beit-Shemesh  
and Jerusalem was opened on only  
18.04.06; this explains the sharp rise  
in traffic.

#### (xxx). COMPARATIVE MARKET

##### SHARE.

A recent survey ordered by  
Egged Buses Company (the biggest bus  
operator in Israel) revealed that public  
transport usage is as following: 35.8%  
are carried by Egged, 22.4% by Dan  
Buses Company (the second biggest  
operator), 18.7% by minibuses compa-  
nies (7 to 10 seater), 12.7% by Israel  
Railways, and 10.7% by other bus com-  
panies.

#### (xxxi). FREIGHT HAULAGE

##### STATISTICS FOR 2005.

From a press release of 19.01.2006

"Israel Railways Ltd. data on  
freight haulage.

During 2004, 7.9 Million tons were car-  
ried; in 2005 traffic was down to 7.5  
Million tons.

The target for 2006 is 8.583 Million  
tons.

The commercial freight hauls, per ma-  
terials and their share in 2005 were as  
following:

Containers: 31%.  
 Phosphate ores; 28%.  
 Potash: 16%.  
 Sulphur: 8%.  
 Grains: 8%.  
 Sand/Garbage: 3%.  
 Hired cars: 6%. (I think this means privately-owned wagons, not hire automobiles! Ed.)

Railways own materials haulage in tons, per material and share:  
 Engineering equipment: 1,262 tons : almost 1%.  
 Ballast: 152,596 tons: 63%.  
 Rails: 10,738 tons: 5%.  
 Track panels: 41,007 tons : 17%.  
 Pointwork: 4,150 tons: 2%.  
 Track accessories: 2,521 tons: 1%.  
 Miscellaneous: 25,462 tons: 11%.

**(xxxii). MORE FREIGHT TRAFFIC FIGURES.**

From a press release of 31.1.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"During 2005, the railways carried almost 7.5 million tons of cargo worth \$31.35 million, 8% more than in 2004, despite the fact that the line to Dimona was temporarily closed due to works towards revival of passenger services on 27.12.2005.

Among the materials hauled are:  
 4.35 M. tons of ores (28% phosphates, 16% potash, 8% sulphur, and 6% hired cars), 2.5 Million tons of containers (31%), 620,000 tons of grains (8%), 215,000 tons of sand and garbage (3%) and 35,000 tons of fuels.

The contracts signed in 2005 created haulage of more than 80,000 tons of fertilized soil from the port of Kishon (Haifa) for the Ports Company and for Yefe-Nof company (a roads design and building company at the Greater Haifa Area), improving the railways' income by \$2.9 million.

The railways' General Manager Mr. Linchevsky said: "The railways have reached significant achievements in cargo haulage during 2005, by newly signed deals; the challenges we face in 2006, are: increasing the incomes from cargo by 15%, as well as extending the variety of services given to customers".

There were 635 freight wagons in service; the target for the end of 2006, is 675 freight wagons.

Freight Haulage as per materials:  
 Ores: 4,352,213 tons counting for 58%.  
 Containers: 2,259,934 tons: 30%.  
 Grains: 626,268 tons: 8.5%.  
 Sand & garbage: 213,315 tons: 3%.

Fuels: 34,481 tons: 0.5%.  
 Total: 7,486,211 tons.  
 Ton/km:  
 Ores: 612,526,426 ton/km: 53.5%.  
 Containers: 428,834,190 ton/km: 37%.  
 Grains: 44,903,826 ton/km: 4%.

Sand & garbage: 53,895,642 ton/km: 4.5%.  
 Fuels: 6,879,786 ton/km: 1%.  
 Total: 1,147,040,090 ton/km.

**(xxxiii). MANAGEMENT RESTRUCTURING.**

From a press release of 22.12.2005 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

The Railways Directorate headed by the Chairman Mr. Moshe Leon, is completing at present a reform in the organizational structure of the railways, following the main effort which was invested during the last two years in developing the network and the start of implementing 30 huge infrastructure projects.

Mr. Moshe Leon explained: "The reform will express the growth of rail services and the growing demand from them with the emphasis on service and safety for the passenger; furthermore, the reform will be felt in the business results and the added value the passengers receive from the railways".

The General Manager Mr. Linchevsky said: "Several principles are guiding the reform's implementation: these include resolving the rapidly growing demands from the public for rail services, operational efficiency, upgrading the added value provided to the passengers by rail services; refreshing and reducing the age of the company's managing directorship backbone".

Among the changes to be carried out within the reform are: Appointing a new Passenger Department Manager who will also be responsible for public enquiries, marketing and sales, media and internet; Three new Directorships will be created, which will deal with the main complex railways' projects: an Electrification Directorship, an A1 (fast link to Jerusalem) Directorship; and an Eilat line, as well as strategic design, Directorship; there will be also a Deputy General Manager for Safety; these changes are made following recommendations by the consulting company "Kav Project".

**(xxxiv). PUBLIC SATISFACTION SURVEY.**

Another interesting survey regarding the public's satisfaction from the various public services and pre-

pared by Dr. Eran Vigoda-Gadot from Ben-Gurion University of Beer-Sheva, and Dr. Samuel Mizrakhi of Haifa University, reveals that the highest satisfaction is with railway services, which received the grade of 3.6 out of 5; worse than 3.96 in 2004 - probably due to the two accidents with lorries and the daily delays - but still better than the bus services who received only 3.3.

These facts encouraged Mr. Linchevsky, who - in an interview to the most popular newspaper - 'Yediot Aharonot' (latest news) - given in December, said that "Punctuality, currently at 79% will reach 90% in April 2006, with the arrival of additional new rolling stock and completion of double-tracking the line to Kfar-Sava and the 3rd track on the Ayalon railway".

He added that "There is no doubt that the present punctuality is not as it should be, and that railway punctuality is measured in minutes, but it is still superior to buses, and the fact that there is an annual growth of 15% to 20% in passenger traffic proves that the public prefers rail; however we must improve services, and we'll do it".

Another piece of good news: "We'll very soon publish a tender for 86 single-deck push/pull coaches (actually the second and final part of the present big tender), specially dedicated IC3 dmus will be held on stand-by for the Kfar-Sava line should there be a special need; also on this line, there will be a separation between trains from Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv and Tel-Aviv - Kfar-Sava, unlike the current situation whereby the same trains continue in each direction, causing often chain delays.

**(xxxv). NEW TIMETABLE.**

From a press release of 13.12.2005 by Israel Railways Ltd.:  
 A new winter timetable was introduced on Saturday night, 17.12.2005, in which upgraded and improved services were to be given on several lines in favour of the passengers.

Included in the new timetable is the revival of passenger services between Beer-Sheva and Dimona, on which ten trains will operate daily, five each direction; The first train will depart from Dimona at 06:11 a.m. while the last train will arrive at the city at 20:04 p.m.; on Fridays, 6 trains will operate - three each direction, while on Saturday nights, two trains will operate, 1 each direction. Israel Railways General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky said: "The main importance in revival of passenger services after 25 years, is in bringing the periphery nearer to the

centre. We've invested almost \$4 million in upgrading the station of Dimona; additionally, a lot of unprotected level crossings have been cancelled, replaced by four grade separations in forms of bridges and two fully protected level crossings.

Our traffic forecast for this line is: 150,000 passengers in 2006, and 900,000 in 2015".

The new timetable will also bring the following changes available thanks to the completion of double-tracking the Ashdod - Ashkelon and Ganot - Ben-Gurion airport sections. On the Ashkelon line, the number of trains will be increased significantly; at peak periods it will be served by 2 trains an hour each direction, bringing the daily total to 50 trains as against 28 trains operating currently- an increase of 78.5%!

Mr. Linchevsky added: "The new timetable includes a number of improvements by providing an answer to the growing demand, punctuality level, and the level of service the passenger gets. It can be felt distinctively in additional trains on loaded lines, increasing the number of trains at peak periods, and improving punctuality level, particularly on the recently double-tracked lines".

**(xxxvi). OLD MAIN LINE**

**REVIVAL?**

The first mall is to be built on the toll Highway No. 6 near the Jewish settlements of Kokhav-Yair, Tzur-Nathan, and the Arabic town of Tira. It will cost \$7.6 million, will have an area of 15,000 sq. m. and include: business, services, entertainment, clinics, etc. It will be the first Jewish-Arab cooperation on this road.

Our important point is that a railway station is to be built to serve the area, which means that the revival of part of the Eastern line (the abandoned Hadera-East - Kfar-Sava section of the historical Haifa - Lod line) in terms of a first section of 6 km between Kfar-Sava and the new station is soon to become a reality!

**(xxxvii). DIFFERENTIAL TICKET**

**PRICES & OFF-PEAK FARE REDUCTIONS.**

From a press release of 11.01.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Starting from 16.01.2006, the railways will introduce a differential tariff for rush hours and low traffic hours on the Tel-Aviv - Netanya line.

The 50% reduced fares will be applied to single tickets to be used between 09:00 and 15:00 between the stations of Tel-Aviv, Herzliyya, Beit-

Yehoshua, and Netanya (excluding travel between the University, Savidor, Hashalom, and Hahagana stations of Tel-Aviv); Pensioners will enjoy a 75% fare reduction. This service is experimental, aimed at checking the travelling habits of passengers; it will last for six months, and if successful, will be introduced on other lines too.

The reduced fare tickets can be bought at all station ticket offices during operating hours, and at all TVM 24 hours a day; Excluded are members of the security forces, who will be able to receive these tickets automatically at TVM machines only between 08:55 am and 14:55 pm.

Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky said: "Regulating the passengers traffic between the rush hours and the low traffic hours will improve significantly the passenger services and encourage the use of rail as public transport mode; while passengers travelling at low traffic hours will enjoy 50% reduced fares, those travelling at rush hours will enjoy much less congested trains".

**Sybil's version :-**

Sybil noted:- From Monday 16.01.06 off-peak fares (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.) were to be reduced by 50% on the Tel Aviv - Netanya line (stations TA, Herzliya, Beit Yehoshua, Netanya). This is for a six-month trial period to see whether it will have any impact on travelling habits. Also, a few weeks previously and with no advance notice, the fare from Beit Shemesh to Jerusalem has been reduced to NIS 5 (in each direction), no restrictions on time. That line is so poorly used, as you know, that they will do anything (short of moving the Jerusalem station, haha) to encourage people to use it!

**(xxxviii). "FOREIGN" WAGONS**

**ON I.R.**

The Editor noted around twelve bogie ballast wagons still with Romanian CFR markings and numbers - parked at Netanya, unfortunately in the dark.... Chen Melling informs us that:-

"Both the CFR-registered wagons and those formerly with SNCF were used by French contractor TSO on their recent contracts in Israel, including (but not necessarily limited to) the laying of track on the Bet Shemesh - Jerusalem section (the SNCF flats) and ballast cleaning on the Be'er Sheva-Dimona section (and maybe others as well) with the CFR ballast hoppers supporting a big Matisa ballast-cleaning machine. IR does have ex-FS ballast hoppers (an article on their arrival was published in

Harakevet) and a private firm has recently imported 60 ex ICF container flats (previously registered with SNCF) to be used on the garbage/sand carrying franchise.

The TSO (ex CFR) ballast hoppers received numbers in the IR's Resh 53 OXX series (Resh is the first letter in REVED, Hebrew for Ballast). The highest I've seen was 020, and presumably they were numbered sequentially, without relation to their (still apparent) UIC numbers. The TSO (ex SNCF) flats for the Jerusalem Line track laying did not receive IR numbers. The 60 ex ICF (Intercontainer-Interfrigo) container flats for Amit (the garbage/sand train franchisee) received IR numbers in the Shin 63 OXX series, from 01 to 60, according to their unloading order and without relation to their former UIC numbers, also still evident. Attached is a conversion table. Note that this data was gathered while the IR numbers were still only applied in chalk, as done in the Kishon Port, and before painting, so they might have changed since.

	<u>Date of Build</u>	<u>UIC- Number.</u>	<u>IR Number (Shin)</u>
1975	33 87 454 1 317-3	63 001	
1976	33 87 454 1 848-7	63 002	
1975	33 87 454 1 343-9	63 003	
1975	33 87 454 1 221-7	63 004	
1975	33 87 454 1 328-0	63 005	
1975	33 87 454 1 178-9	63 006	
1976	33 87 454 1 639-0	63 007	
1976	33 87 454 1 642-4	63 008	
1975	33 87 454 1 338-9	63 009	
1976	33 87 454 1 762-0	63 010	
1975	33 87 454 1 118-5	63 011	
1975	33 87 454 1 079-9	63 012	
1976	33 87 454 1 637-4	63 013	
1976	33 87 454 1 691-1	63 014	
1975	33 87 454 1 276-1	63 015	
1976	33 87 454 1 801-6	63 016	
1975	33 87 454 1 232-4	63 017	
1975	33 87 454 1 280-3	63 018	
1976	33 87 454 1 627-5	63 019	
1976	33 87 454 1 800-8	63 020	
1976	33 87 454 1 594-7	63 021	
1975	33 87 454 1 307-4	63 022	
1975	33 87 454 1 177-1	63 023	
1976	33 87 454 1 763-8	63 024	
1975	33 87 454 1 189-6	63 025	
1975	33 87 454 1 210-0	63 026	
1975	33 87 454 1 340-5	63 027	
1976	33 87 454 1 809-9	63 028	
1975	33 87 454 1 127-6	63 029	
1975	33 87 454 1 847-9	63 030	
1975	33 87 454 1 278-7	63 031	
1976	33 87 454 1 685-3	63 032	
1976	33 87 454 1 779-4	63 033	
1975	33 87 454 1 309-0	63 034	
1975	33 87 454 1 114-4	63 035	
1975	33 87 454 1 120-1	63 036	

1976	33 87 454 1 645-7	63 037
1976	33 87 454 1 698-6	63 038
1975	33 87 454 1 320-7	63 039
1975	33 87 454 1 216-7	63 040
1975	33 87 454 1 199-5	63 041
1975	33 87 454 1 316-5	63 042
1975	33 87 454 1 268-8	63 043
1975	33 87 454 1 323-1	63 044
1975	33 87 454 1 173-0	63 045
1976	33 87 454 1 829-7	63 046
1975	33 87 454 1 287-8	63 047
1976	33 87 454 1 822-2	63 048
1976	33 87 454 1 652-3	63 049
1975	33 87 454 1 262-1	63 050
1976	33 87 454 1 798-4	63 051
1976	33 87 454 1 777-8	63 052
1975	33 87 454 1 091-4	63 053
1975	33 87 454 1 292-8	63 054
1976	33 87 454 1 827-1	63 055
1976	33 87 454 1 799-2	63 056
1975	33 87 454 1 187-0	63 057
1975	33 87 454 1 238-1	63 058
1975	33 87 454 1 092-2	63 059
1976	33 87 454 1 684-6	63 060"

In this connection should be noted a "Request for Information" for the Purchase of "at least ten Second Hand / refurbished / overhauled open top bogie hopper Ballast Wagons for Israel Railways Ltd., responses to be made by 30.03.2006.

**(xxxix). GANEI AVIV STATION PLANS**

From a press release of 14.02.2006 by the Transport Ministry:

"Within a year, a new station will be opened north-west to Lod to be called Ganei-Aviv (Spring Gardens). This will serve thousands of inhabitants of the neighbouring quarter (carrying the same name), the nearby industrial area, and the nearby settlements. The station, to cost \$4.25 million, will include a passenger terminal, 2 platforms, elevators, escalators for disabled, public transport halts, and park-and-ride facilities of 2100 m2.

The station, sited on the Tel-Aviv - Lod line - one of the most heavily used - will enable those who use it - estimated at 300,000 annually - to reach Haifa and Nahariya in the north, Jerusalem in the east, Ashdod and Ashkelon in the southwest, and Beer-Sheva and Dimona in the south. In the ceremony to mark the start of works to-day, 17.02.2006, the energetic Transport Minister Mr. Meir Shitrit told the press that his ministry intends to increase investments in railways from the \$4.26 Billion given to the 5-year plan 2004 to 2009, to \$6.38 Billion until 2012!"

Note from Aharon: Besides the good intention to build this station at last after many delays, which is good

news for the area's population, this is also part of the government's programme to invest in the long-neglected city of Lod. The additional \$2.12 Billion budgeted is thanks to a firm demand by the energetic yet very focussed Israel Railways General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky who said: "If there is a certain forecast for a growing traffic beyond 2009, which means more trains and infrastructures, the figures of the 5-Year Plan are quickly becoming unrealistic, so the decisions for these years (2010 to 2012) must be made now"! We can be sure that Mr. Linchevsky who comes from the Finance Ministry, is an expert in budgets, and the Transport Minister fully supports him!

**(xli). WORK ON SDEROT LINE COMMENCES.**

From a press release of 15.02.2006 by the Transport Ministry: "Transport Minister Mr. Meir Shitrit announced that Israel Railways Ltd. have started to-day the works of building the 70 km. double-track railway line between Ashkelon and Beer-Sheva - through Sderot, Netivot, and Ofakim - at a cost of \$300 Million.

The fully grade-separated line will enable Tel-Aviv to be reached from Sderot within 52 minutes, from Netivot in 60 minutes, and from Ofakim in 69 minutes; It is estimated that 10 further minutes will be saved when the Rishon-Le-Zion West - Pleshet Junction section is opened, avoiding the long journey through Yavne, Rehovot, and Lod.

The first section between Ashkelon and Sderot is forecast for opening in 2008, while the whole line will be opened at the beginning of 2010. This is one of the several rail projects aimed to bring the periphery nearer to centre.

**(xlii). INTERNET EVERYWHERE!!**

From a press release of 15.02.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

Israel Railways Ltd. are joining the leading western railways! Starting tomorrow 16.02.2006, wireless internet services will be provided to the passengers at the stations and on platforms.

In the initial stage, the access points will be installed at Tel-Aviv Savidor (central) station, to be followed by other big stations, and at a later stage to other stations. The service will be provided by the Israeli firm Ansol Network Solutions Ltd. who won the tender. The railways are now preparing to deploy the infrastructure to enable passengers with laptops or PDA to enjoy free access to the internet.

The possibility of providing these

services on trains too is now under examination.

These services are an additional element within the activities taken by the railways to increase the services "basket" given to the passengers, which so far include: The very popular railway magazine "Israeli News" (the name may mislead; it is in Hebrew and tells nothing about railways!), on-train catering services, stores at stations, automatic drinks and vending machines, etc.

The Chairman of the Railways' Directorship Mr. Moshe Leon said: "The new service puts the railways in line with western leading railways; due to the sharp rise in passenger traffic now reaching 27 million annually (2005), we're committed to listening to the passengers' demands and thus to provide a variety of services giving responses to a variety of demands".

The Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky said: "The wireless internet is a meaningful step towards improving the service level and quality; It will enable the passengers, who like it, to utilize the time for work or pleasure through the internet while waiting for the train at the station, and in future, on trains too".

**(xliii). YEROKHAM EXTENSION?**

One month before the elections, the Prime Minister-in-Chief Mr. Ehud Olmert, has decided to invest in the village of Yerukham, located south of Dimona in the middle of nowhere in the Negev desert, and forgotten for many years.

Recently the retired General Amram Mitzna, who was in the past the Mayor of Haifa, has been appointed the Mayor of Yerukham, and already when Mr. Olmert was still Industry and Trade Minister, and spoke about 11 projects to change the village entirely; one of the projects was building a rail link from Dimona to the village.

This line is actually included in the master plan, but only as a long term priority; sometimes elections, plus an energetic Mayor, can change reality!

**(xliiii). THE RAILWAYS FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE MEDIA.**

From a press release of 16.02.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

The railways today appealed to the Jerusalem District Court with a legal claim of \$745,000 against the TV Channel 2 and its correspondent Oren Aharoni, in response to a programme broadcast on Friday 10.02.2006.

In the legal claim the TV Channel 2 company is accused of introduc-

ing distorted, false, unbalanced, and deliberate claims while disgracing the railways and its employees; it is a culmination of negative reporting against the railways which have been damaged by this.

Additionally, the claim speaks about relying on a testimony of an ex-employee, who had been fired due to many problems of discipline and using drugs; Even the Police have defined him as an unreliable person!

[Aharon adds:- "I have not seen the programme (an additional programme is supposed to be broadcast to-day), but people who saw it told me that the head of the Railway Workers Union, Mr. Okish, who also participated, said proudly that he is actually telling the General Manager what to do! I've spoken with Mr. Linchevsky about this programme, and he told me that Mr. Okish said this two years ago, but the correspondent - who probably needs ratings above all - did not even bother himself to check it! What the correspondent and Channel 2 have perhaps forgotten is the fact that Mr. Linchevsky is also a lawyer!"]

#### **(xliv). FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

Two interesting events were to take place soon:

Between 28.02.2006 and 01.03.2006, there will be a forum of the managers of all public transport operators in Israel, including the railways, at one of the Dead Sea's hotels.

On 07.03.2006 the "Israel Railways Ltd. Meeting" will take place at the Tel-Aviv exhibitions area.

#### **(xlv). NEW DOUBLE-DECKERS WITH DISABLED FACILITIES.**

From a press release of 23.02.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Israel Railways Ltd received today, 24.02.2006, from Bombardier of Goerlitz, 7 new double-deck coaches fitted for the disabled, out of 29 coaches of this type ordered; All will be in service during 2006. The 7 coaches will provide a total of 700 seats; they are fully equipped for the disabled including special toilets. Additionally, there is in the lower level a multi-functional area for the disabled in their wheelchairs; If not being used by the disabled, regular folding seats can be used. There is also a slope to the lower level where the spacious toilets for the disabled are located.

The new coaches, built to UIC standards, will be assembled at IAI-RAMTA plant at Beer-Sheva and will enter service during March 2006, while the rest will enter service during the next

6 months. Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky, told the press that "The railways consider the disabled passenger as an important part of our public, and are working constantly to provide them service according to their unique needs".

He added: "We're happy that we've succeeded in receiving the shipment earlier than planned, and to be equipped already at the beginning of 2006 with such high level coaches suited for this kind of public; It will enable us to carry 7,000 more passengers daily, improve service levels, and increase the income by \$6.4 million annually."

From Evyatar Reiter: 16 new double-deck coaches arrived recently at Ashdod port as follows. 23/2/06: Unloaded from the 'Regine' were 507, 566, 570, 578.

24/2/06: Also unloaded from the 'Regine' were 562, 563, 565, 573.

1/3/06: Unloaded from the 'Jumbo Challenger-Willemstad' were 561, 564, 567, 569, 571, 574, 575, 576. The coaches were then taken by rail to Ramta at Beersheba for fitting out where necessary.

Paul notes: Even before the arrival of these double-deckers IR had drastically reduced its reliance on old loco-hauled coaches. By the end of February only one set of old coaches was still working a regular daily diagram, with an extra set being needed on Sundays. The redundant sets had been gathered together for storage at Haifa East station. However, the station was now clogged with long lines of old coaches, impeding traffic movements at certain times of the day. Congestion has only been relieved by the expedient of temporarily shunting sets of these coaches to nearby sidings at the marshalling yard/ loco depot and at the Golani sidings between East and Central stations.

#### **(xlvi). PLANT SALVAGE WORKS ON RAKEVET HA'EMEK.**

From a press release of 22.02.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The Railways, together with The Nature and Parks Authority have transferred today 1,500 geophytes from the alignment of the historical Hedjaz line in order to save them, prior to the line's rebuilding works which are to start soon." (Geophytes are plants with large bulbous bases for storing water, and then leaves on the surface.)

#### **(xlvii). RAIL AND BUS COMBINED TICKETS.**

From a press release of

27.02.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

The railways, together with the Egged Buses Company will introduce to the public on 01.03.2006, a combined train-bus monthly free ticket giving a 20% reduction as compared with separate monthly free tickets of the 2 transport modes; It will be valid during each day in the month in which it is sold; It is personal, carrying the passenger's name and non-transferable, and will be sold at railway stations.

The ticket enables unlimited travel on the railway line, as well as unlimited bus services in the city mentioned on the ticket; The lines and cities are as following:

Tel-Aviv - Haifa line + bus services in Haifa - \$162 (\$40 reduction).

Tel-Aviv - Ashdod line + bus services in Ashdod - \$95 (\$23.7 reduction).

Tel-Aviv - Herzliya line + bus services in Herzliya - \$60 (\$15 reduction).

Beit-Shemesh - Jerusalem line + bus services in Jerusalem - \$59 (\$14.7 reduction).

Beer-Sheva - Dimona line + bus services in Dimona - \$59 (\$14.7 reduction).

Israel Railways Ltd. General Manager Mr. Ofer Linchevsky said: "For us the importance of the cooperation between the railways and the non-railways public transport is in improving the overall travelling by public transport, as well as reducing the overall traveling cost, thus making it easier for the users both in terms of finance and comfort".

The Chairman of Egged Secretariat Mr. Erich Feldman said: "The aim of cooperation between Egged and Israel Railways Ltd. is to encourage the railway passengers to use the urban public transport in the most efficient, cheapest, and most comfortable way; It comes in addition to Egged's intercity services; It is to the benefit of the users, and improves the service significantly".

Note: It should be mentioned that this agreement is a really historical milestone in the history of Israeli public transport; The two operators were not only competitors, but also bitter rivals, and there is no doubt that Mr. Linchevsky - whose former job was the Financial Manager of Egged - has a great part in it; after all, he knows both sides well!

#### **(xlviii). AGREEMENT WITH ARCHITECTS.**

The railways, the Transport Ministry, and the Organization of the Independent Engineers and Architects, have signed today on a treaty, according to which the Railways Directorate recognizes the link between good design and



management, and proper fees to be paid to the design office.

The reason for this treaty is the appeal of the organization to the court, in which they requested the railways to expose information regarding tenders made with design offices, which - according to the organization - were suspected to have been done not on the basis of design quality.

Both sides expressed satisfaction from the treaty, calling it: "Opening a new page in the relations between both sides".

#### **(xlix). TRANSPORT CONFERENCE: HUB SCHEME, SPECIAL GROUPS**

From a press release of 28.02.2006 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"In a conference defined as the Forum of the General Managers of the Public Transport Operators, taking place today and tomorrow in a hotel on the Dead Sea, the Transport Ministry's General Manager Mr. Arie Bar said, that his ambition is to operate in every city combined transport centres, to which the passengers will arrive by intercity trains; there they will enjoy a variety of urban transport means - LRV, buses, taxis - all to be used by a single combined smart card.

Mr. Bar further said that "The proceeds for the economy from investments in public transport is the highest among investments in transport infrastructure". He further mentioned that the railways development will change the economical character of Israel, due to the fact that in future, each city will enjoy rail links with the business metropolitan centre!"

Within three years all grade separations will be ready, thus these dangers and accidents will then become part of the past.

The Transport Ministry wants to promote the introduction of hybrid buses (like the 'Phileas') or trolleybuses enjoying segregated lanes, in all the cities where LRV is not practical; Mr. Bar also called the recently restructured bus operators to invest and market their services in the same way that the cellular companies are doing, thus changing the habits of users in the competitive market.

The conference, which is the fourth of its kind, is focusing on unique populations: the Arabic, the Jewish Ultra-Orthodox, and the Students; all these populations provide high potential for public transport, and their special needs as leading users in public transport must be fulfilled in order to encourage them to increase their use

of public transport. At the conference, the participants include representatives of the mentioned populations like Dr. Hasam Hamaisi of Haifa university, representatives from the Bedouin town Rahat, of the Jewish Ultra-Orthodox community, and of the students.

On the second day of the conference, 01.03.2006, the following press release came from the Transport Ministry:

"The Ministry promotes an initiative for a revolutionary plan to reduce tariffs for students on public transport. The Ministry's General Manager Mr. Arie Bar, said that from 15.03.2006 on, students will enjoy half price tariffs on all urban and regional Egged buses services in Jerusalem and Haifa; it will be called the "Semester Free" and will be valid for 6 months till 31.08.2006; The price will be \$126, half the price of a regular ticket, and will be available through credit cards in six monthly payments; the Ministry further intends to introduce in the next school year, starting on September 2006, a yearly free ticket for all the public transport lines of the two cities mentioned, and if successful, to introduce it in other cities; The aim is to encourage students - 220,000 - whose share of the population is 3%, but who form 14% of public transport users, to continue to prefer this (including the railways) to the private car.

#### **(i). PUNCTUALITY AIMS**

We all remember the many passenger complaints regarding the poor punctuality, delays, and even sudden cancellations of trains; At the beginning of December 2005, with the railways at one of their lowest levels of punctuality, the General Manager Mr. Linchevsky dared to release the statement:

"Punctuality will rise from the present 79% to 90% in April 2006, while already during December 2005, with the opening of the 3rd. track on the Ayalon line it will reach 85%".

Many doubted how such a plan could be implemented in a short time without a significant increase of the rolling stock fleet! But, last week, Mr. Linchevsky "paid his bill" even before April 2006 by announcing that in February 2006, punctuality had reached 92.5%!

His explanation is: The introduction of the new winter timetable on 17.12.2005, which included rescheduling at critical points, dividing the longer lines (to avoid the dependence of many stations on services from some distance away), and personnel changes in the the management and employees of the passenger department.

#### **(ii). GRADE SEPARATION WORKS.**

From a press release of 05.03.2006 by the Transport Ministry:

"Transport Minister Mr. Shitrit and the Ministry's General Manager Mr. Bar said today in a special conference held for the managers of the grade separation projects, that works are being expedited in order to complete them within three years; the Higher Steering Committee is following up the implementation, while all works are being done so as to achieve environmentally-friendly results on each grade separation, as well as safety.

Finally they predicted that in 2010 there will be 1600 km of lines compared to 800 km in 2000, while 67 million passenger will be carried in 2010, compared with 12.7 million in 2000.

#### **HaRakevet welcomes your contributions:**

Photos which can be in the form of electronically scanned j.pegs (at 600 dpi) or plain old fashioned prints (but not ink-jet which do not re-scan very well). We will return all original photographs if so requested.

Articles relevant to the subject, reminiscences etc which we prefer as text files on IBM 3½" disc, or CD.

Submit via e mail to: [HaRakevet@cpsairedale.co.uk](mailto:HaRakevet@cpsairedale.co.uk)

Or mail to the editor in Berlin, address on front cover.

HaRakevet is typeset and electronically printed in Leeds, UK by CPS-Airedale, 39 Winding Way, Leeds LS17 7 RG 0113 226 7497

# ISRAEL RAILWAYS TENDERS:

**(i). Tender No. HN/KB/27/05: Grade separations on the Akko - Nahariya line section.** Works include: building 2 road bridges and 1 pedestrian steel bridge, roads paving, supporting walls, drainage, lighting, and infrastructures. Implementation time: 12 months. Latest bidding date: 29.12.2005.

**(ii). Tender No. TK/KB/03/05: Works of upgrading the lighting facilities at the terminals of Dimona and Tzefa.** Works include: dismantling of lighting elements and replacing them by new elements, and changes on electrical control boards. Implementation time: 6 months. Latest bidding date: 20.12.2005.

**(iii). Tender No. MC/KB/10/05: Upgrading new inspection channels at Kishon Works, Haifa.**

Works include: dismantling of existing concrete floors and channels, building 2 new concrete channels and floors, installing frames, drainage and electricity works, supply and installation of distribution boards, lighting and power systems, supply and installation of compressed air pipes, and earthworks. Works are to be carried out in an existing active building, and no disruption to regular works is permitted. Implementation time: 5 months. Latest bidding date: 03.01.2006.

**(iv). Tender No. TK/KB/01/06: Upgrading lighting systems at the Port of Ashdod Classification Yard.** Works include: replacing an existing diesel-generator, adding lighting posts with crowns, changes in the main electrical board, rebuilding existing lighting posts, and dismantling of existing lighting elements and replacing them by new elements.

The works consist of 2 different parts:

§ 43: improving lighting of the tracks.

§ 08: option - electrical works and generator.

Implementation times: For works: 6 months. For the option: 5 months. Latest bidding date: 12.01.2006.

**(v). Tender No. MC/MT/02/05: Inspection services for the design, manufacturing, and acceptance tests of 75 flat cars for container haulage.** The contract is till the end of services, meaning till all the 75 cars will be handed over from the manufacturer Isam Khury Metal Works Co. to Israel Railways Ltd. Latest bidding date: 15.01.2006.

**(vi). Tender No. HN/KB/02/06: Building under-track passages and a bridge on the**

rebuilt Beit-Shemesh - Jerusalem line.

Works include the following structures:  
Structure 01 - an under-track passage at km 77.5.

Structure 02 - an under-track passage at km 78.2.

Structure 03 - a bridge over Refaim wadi.

Structure 04 - Scenery rebuilding at Refaim wadi; km 76 to 77.

Implementation time: 6 months. Latest bidding date: 23.01.2006.

**(vii). Tender MC/KB/01/06: Infrastructure works for a lathe at Haifa Kishon works.** Works include: earthworks, concrete, sealing, sanitary, painting, frames, electricity, dismantling and assembly. Implementation time: 3 months. Latest bidding date: 31.01.2006.

**(viii). Tender HN/KB/03/06: Infrastructure works for building the Beer-Sheva - Netivot, at the section between Ofakim and Netivot (section C).**

Works include:

Structure 01 - track infrastructure works.

Structure 02 - construction works for culverts, earth and acoustic walls.

Structure 03 - a railway bridge A-6 over Patish wadi.

Structure 04 - a railway bridge A-7 over Gar wadi.

Structure 05 - an overhead agricultural passage OAG-7.

Structure 06 - an overhead agricultural passage OAG-8.

Structure 07 - an overhead agricultural passage OAG-9.

Structure 08 - an overhead agricultural passage OAG-11.

Structure 09 - an overhead agricultural passage OAG-12.

Structure 10 - 2 security buildings near the railway bridges.

Structure 11 - option: distributing and laying mono-block type concrete sleepers and rails along the alignment.

Implementation time: 18 months. Latest bidding date: 13.02.2006.

**(ix). Tender No. BZ/MT/02/06: Measuring services (inspection and quality control) on the Valley (Hedjaz) line.** The contract is for 5 years with options for extending it according to the railways' administration decision. Latest bidding date: 16.02.2006.

**(x). Tender No. BN/KB/01/06: Framework contract for fences.**

The agreement is for the supply, installation, repair and maintenance of fences along the lines south of Tel-Aviv South station from time to time according to need. The contract is for 12 months; the railways reserve themselves the right to extend it by up to an additional 36 month, as well as to change the working areas.

**(xi). Request for Information** - by 30.03.2006 - for "existing technologies

for safety improvement of level crossings, approved and installed in mainline railways, which enable the following:-

- automatic detection of obstacles in the critical crossing area of road and track between the barriers.

- automatic stop of trains approaching level crossings in case of detected obstacles."

**(xii). Tender No. BN/KB/06/06: Building a tile roof on top of track and communication departments buildings of Haifa East station.** Works include: demolishing and dismantling, cast concrete, sanitation, stone works, frame and carpenter, and industrialized elements. Implementation time: 4 months. Latest bidding date: 22.03.2006.

**(xiii). Tender MC/KB/03/06: Building a refuelling system at Ashdod classification yard.**

Works include: earthworks and area preparing, manufacturing and installing a 50 kiloliter capacity fuel tank as per API 650, concrete works of platforms and bases, constructions and metal sheet works for pumping complex and unloading road refueling tankers, building a base for fuel tanks, a refueling position for rail vehicles, a control position for a fuel stock control and management system, building a moveable structure, electricity and communication, pipeline works and equipment installation. Implementation time: 6 months. Latest bidding date: 30.03.2006.

**(xiv). Tender No. MC/KB/02/06: Building a pumping complex and a water reservoir for firefighting at the Dimona station.** Works include: earthworks, concrete and civil engineering, manufacturing and installation of a 300 cu.m. capacity firefighting water reservoir, pumps and their housing, instruments and control, electricity, pipelines, welding, painting, plating, and installations. Implementation time: 6 months.

Latest bidding date: 03.04.2006.

**(xv). Tender No. HN/KB/06/06: Upgrading, tracks extension, and adding tracks at Mamshit station** (south of Dimona).

Works include: infrastructure, building culverts, signalization and communication works. Implementation time: 15 months. Latest bidding date: 04.04.2006.

**(xvi). Tender No. HN/KB/04/06: Treating oxidation pools at Ofakim.** Works include: demolishing the oxidation (sewage) pools and treating the surrounding soil.

Implementation time: 24 months. Latest bidding date: 09.04.2006. (Note: these works are an integral part of clearing the area for the Ashkelon - Shderot - Netivot - Ofakim - Beer-Sheva line now under construction.)

# LIGHT RAIL NEWS.

## (A). TEL AVIV.

(i). The dream of the LRV/Metro in Tel-Aviv may become a reality. The Finance Ministry's Accountant General Mr. Yaron Zalikhia said that the competing groups were to forward their offers on 27.02.06. Provided that they are committed to this date; selecting the winning concessionaire will be done in mid-2006 and design works as well as financial closures may last until mid-2007; works on the 22 km.-long Red Line from Petach-Tikva to Bat-Yam will take 6 years, while it is possible that parts of the line may be opened earlier than 2013, when the whole line will be completed. Mr. Zalikhia added that, within two months, one of the biggest projects in which investors from the private sectors are partners, will at last be underway!

(ii). **Interview.** This article is based on an interview the Chairman of NTA (the project management) Mr. Benny Waknin gave to Israel's most popular newspaper 'Yediot Aharonot' (Latest News) on 14.02.2006, and with the latter's permission:

34 years after the late Prime Minister Mrs. Golda Meir promised to build a Metro in Tel-Aviv, it seems that the unbelievable is going to happen; On the 27.02.2006, 3 armored trucks will enter to the parking area of Ashtröm building in Tel-Aviv, where NTA's offices are located, each bringing dozens of boxes containing thousands of documents and calculations prepared over the last 3 years, and the final offers of the 3 competing bidders.

In terms of infrastructure projects, this is the most expensive one ever made in Israel - \$2.13 Billion; This time everybody hopes that after the politicians have been photographed cutting the ribbon, the construction will really start!

The energetic Transport Minister Mr. Meir Shitrit, announced immediately that this time there will be no delays in the tender!

The main surprise is that the first line to be built - known as the Red Line - will be 11 km in tunnel (out of 22 km overall length) instead of 9 km in tunnel as originally planned; The tunnel will start on Jabotinsky Road at the western entrance to Petach-Tikva, and will end near Jaffa at an area called Manshiye (at this area, the line actually uses the alignment of the historical Jaffa-Jerusalem line in its Jaffa - Tel-Aviv section!); the other halves to Petach-Tikva and Jaffa-Bat-Yam will be on the surface.

A branch of the Red Line - also underground - will reach Kiryat-Aryeh, where the depot will be built, and where a suburban station of Israel Railways is under construction; This line may encourage the building of thousands of apartments in the area, while another branch line will reach the Pardes-Katz neighborhood of Bnei-Brak; at this area, called Tzipori, about 30,000 apartments will be built.

The tariff has already been fixed at 4.70 Shekels (exactly \$1.00 at the current rate) each direction, cheaper than by bus today.

As with the Jerusalem LRV, it has been decided that there will be no competition between the various transport modes, and therefore, all the bus lines will feed the Metro/LRV lines.

The line is planned for 10,000 passengers to be carried hourly from end to end at a speed of 50 km/h; there will be 80 cars creating 40 trains. It will cost \$125 million to build 1 km of underground section (including all the equipment), compared with only \$25 million for a surface section.

Another interesting piece of data from NTA: an investment of \$100 million in rail infrastructure employs between 3,000 to 4,000 people even after it has been built!

The terms of winning the tender are as these of Jerusalem (both managements are always exchanging information) and will enable a start of preparations for construction, by giving the winner up to 10% of the reward within 2 years if he keeps everything as planned, and 20% till the end of construction.

Mr. Waknin is optimistic regarding the ability of the winning bidder to finance the project; the financial closure is to be done within 9 months, while once the bidder has been chosen, the planning will be start-financed by the Finance Ministry. This will shorten the construction schedules. He also added that in case the winner fails to keep to schedule, and asks for a too high State guarantee, NTA has the ability to manage the project itself. including detailed tenders and keeping to schedule!

As of today, the first train is expected to run in 2012.

Regarding the claim that the apartments adjacent to the alignment will lose their value, NTA's people say that in the whole world the value goes up thanks to the LRV, but they are ready for appeals to court.

Mr. Waknin further explained that the reason for building the branch to Kiryat-Aryeh, already in the first stages, is that there is the needed space for the depot, unlike the cramped city of Givatayim; However, the neighboring cities of Givatayim, Ramat-Gan, and Bnei-Brak require a separate line - not a branch line - and one day such a line will reach there too.

(iii). **Jaffa Station.** Connected with the Metro/LRV project, the Tel-Aviv Municipality's company Ezra & Bizaron will soon publish a tender for infrastructure and development works at the "Manshiye station"; this is the historical Jaffa railway station built in 1892, and used

until 1948 (though some insist that it was used a little bit later but not regularly); then it later became part of the army museum and was eventually neglected.

The area around the station is planned to be the next business and entertainment of Tel-Aviv; it has an area of 20000 sq.m with 16 buildings to be preserved, occupying 5600 sq.m including the station building; The scheme will cost about \$1 million, and the station will enjoy a renaissance as an LRV station!

## (iv). Offers Submitted.

From a press release of 27.02.2006 by NTA (project management):

"Today came at last the long-awaited historical moment: the three bidders - MTS, Speedan, and Metro-Dan, have handed over their offers to the project at NTA's office in Tel-Aviv; Each offer arrived in 90 boxes; the cost for each group totalled \$5 million.

The energetic Transport Minister Mr. Meir Shitrit said in the ceremony that he intends, together with NTA and the people of the Finance Minister's Accountant General, to accelerate the design of the 2nd line planned - called the Green Line, which is intended to be a continuation to the 1st line (Red Line).

The Finance Ministry's Accountant General Dr. Yaron Zalikhia said that, despite the obstacles which many factors to put on the way, the State has succeeded, thanks to proper management of the tender, to receive 3 offers based on the best infrastructure companies currently active in Israel and worldwide; He is confident that the success is a result of managing the tender according to business norms.

The Chairman of NTA Mr. Benny Waknin said that he will act to cut schedules for checking the offers, in order to enable the Tenders Committee to complete its work within 3 months, after which the winner will be able to start financial closure, hand in hand with the engineering process.

The NTA's General Manager Mr. Yishai Dotan, said that NTA's teams will start accelerated design work this week in order to enable the implementation of the Green Line, to be followed by the design of the Yellow Line intended to link Tel-Aviv with the cities in the nearby north.

According to the updated forecast, the concessionaire will start building the Red Line in mid-2007, while completion is seen 6 years later, at the beginning of 2003."

## B. JERUSALEM.

### (i). Construction Permits.

From a press release of 07.12.2005 by the project management:

The Citypass group, the LRV concessionaire, has to-day forwarded to the municipality the requests for receiving building permission to lay the tracks at four sites of the first LRV line; the intention is to lay 7.8 km of tracks out of 13.9 km, the entire length of the line, as well as building the depot which will also be the control centre.

C.E.O. of Citypass Mr. Jacob (Kuki) Edri said that if the procedure for checking

the plans for building and paving will be as planned, track laying as well as LRV car production (at Alstom) may start already in March 2006. He thanked the HaPoalim and Leumi banks for their trust in the project, as well as their readiness to give the group a loan of \$430 Million. He added that the members of Citypass (Harel Investments, Polar Investments, Ashtrom, Connex, and Alstom) have already invested more than \$13 Million in the project.

The Municipality's General Manager, Mr. Eitan Meir, said that checking the permissions for the LRV line building will take several weeks and will be carried out by teams from the Municipality, specially trained for this purpose.

He added: "This is an historic moment; our municipality is the first one in Israel which has to cope with building an LRV system in an urban complex, particularly in an historical city which is also one of the world's most important cities. All departments are ready to check the complex plans and carry out inspection on works; we'll assist the concessionaire, but will not compromise on less than the highest quality!"

It should be mentioned that, prior to forwarding the request for building permission, the plans had been discussed at JPTA (Jerusalem Public Transport Authority), a new management recently created for building and operating the new traffic system in Jerusalem.

The Transport Ministry's Deputy General Manager and JPTA Chairman Mr. Alex Langer, said that Citypass specialists have worked hard on the design in order to keep to schedule. He further explained that the mentioned that the 7.8 km refer to three axes: from Mount Herzl to Kiryat Moshe in the west, on Road No. 1 from the French Hill to HaZankhanim street (near the old city wall), and at Pisgat Ze'ev from Moshe Dayan Ave to the Ramallah road, in addition to the mentioned depot. He added that he trusts the municipality to give the proper priority and provide the requested permissions as soon as possible, in order to enable works to start in March 2006.

Finally, the Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan Manager Mr. Dudi Amsalem told the press that meanwhile, and parallel to the activity taking place towards track laying, the public sector works of enlarging the Pisgat Ze'ev bridge, building the Calatrava cable suspension bridge at the city's western entrance, as well as completing the "Blue Line" - a dedicated high capacity bus lane which together with the LRV will form the core of the new traffic system - continue at full tempo; he added that the requests for building permissions themselves prove the seriousness of Citypass's intentions.

#### (ii). Finance Agreements.

From a press release of 26.01.2006 by the project management:

The Israeli banks Leumi and Hapoalim will transfer this week, as the first loan, \$60 M (equally divided between the two banks) to the concessionaire City-Pass in order to start building the first line of 13.9 km. Mr. Jacob (Kuki) Edry the CEO of the group informed the press. The money transfer has been enabled after the agreement to provide a bank umbrella of \$430M for the project's 30 years BOT concession; the last agreement between the banks and the concessionaire came after intensive efforts in which the Finance Ministry's Accountant General Dr. Yaron Zalikha was also involved, and after the city's municipality approved four allowances to start the construction. City-Pass shareholders invested \$11 M prior to the financial closure, in preparing the requests for allowances.

The Prime Minister-in-Chief and Finance Minister Mr. Ehud Olmert, who started the project when he was the mayor, has expressed satisfaction with the financial closure and start of works, and added: "It is very important that Israel's first mass transit project in its capital city Jerusalem is under way, in cooperation between the public and private sector".

According to the long negotiated agreement, the concessionaire will enjoy □ 290 M short term loans, and □ 70 M long term loans; additionally, \$305 Million will be returned from the government for the building costs, once the line starts operation.

72: 07.

## NOTES AND COMMENTS.

### (a). LUDD JUNIOR:

"This name cropped up in 61:10. Uri Yinon has now informed me of a reference to Ludd Junior which I had previously overlooked and that appears to go some way at least to clearing up the query. In the 'Official Gazette of the Government of Palestine' for 15/10/1922 is a notice from the PR Acting General Manager Campigli: "Ludd Junior Station will be closed for traffic on and after 1st. November 1922". It should be noted that Ludd Junior (strange name) does not appear in the first PR public timetable of November 1920, the only contemporary timetable presently known. However, I have a post-WWI map of Lydda which could show Ludd Junior station at Km 18 on the Jaffa line. This station, on the east side of the Jaffa line as it nears the junction with the line to Rosh HaAyin and Haifa, is indicated by a small black oblong and the letters "sta." (short for station). This might infer that Ludd Junior was more substantial than a mere lineside halt, possibly with a wooden hut or something similar." (P.C.)

### (b). Re 45:18. KFAR YEHOSHUA.

A correction. In this piece I stated unequivocally that no loco shed was ever built at Kfar Yehoshua / Tel esh Shemmam. I was wrong. Since writing that, more archival evidence, including a photo, has come to light which definitely shows such an engine shed. It was put up as an emergency measure about 1942-43 but seems to have seen very little or even no use at Kfar Yehoshua, since the emergency was of short duration. It was dismantled in 1947 and taken to Petach Tiqva station for further use as a citrus shed. An article on the subject, including the photo and a contemporary station layout plan, appears in Locomotives International No.75. Moral: be very careful of all your facts before publishing. (P.C.)

### (c). OFFICIAL OPENING DATE OF HAIFA (EAST) STATION CONFIRMED.

In 68:6:(a) and elsewhere I raised doubts about the official opening date of this station. Yair Safran of the Haifa Historical Society got bitten by the bug and conducted a thorough search. He has come up with evidence that definitely pinpoints the date as 15th October 1905 which was the Sultan's birthday - so now we can all sleep easy of a night. Yair found an Arabic language report in a Beirut newspaper of the following day (16/10/05). According to this, representatives of the Sultan and other VIPs arrived for the ceremony by sea from Beirut but Meissner Pasha came by train from Damascus (and one hopes the great man did not have to schlepp his luggage himself across the still existing gaps in the line in the Yarmuk gorge). The same paper also reported that, following the official ceremony, people crammed aboard a locomotive decorated with Ottoman flags and placards in praise of the Sultan which carried them off in "the direction of Damascus among cries and cheers from the mouths of those present in praise of our Lord the High Caliph".

In addition Yair found another report in an earlier edition of that newspaper, dated 17<sup>th</sup> July 1905, which described in detail the stone monument at Haifa (East) and stated that it was made in Turkey, and this would probably explain the very realistic carved 2-4-0 loco. However, there is still doubt about when it was erected. It is dated 1319, which sounds precise enough, but apparently it all depends on which calendar was being used!! If it was the Hejera calendar then the year would have been that beginning May 1901. If it was the Mali calendar then it would begin in March 1903. Unfortunately the stone mason did not record which calendar he used. Yair enquired of an expert in such esoteric matters and they are inclined, for a couple of reasons, to believe that the Mali year starting March 1903 was meant. Yair adds that the iron fence around the monument carries an inscription showing it to have been made by the foundry of Ma'amal Jardak & Daouk (?spelling) of Beirut. (P.C.)

### (d). Re 69:11 and 70:08:(i). WAGONS LITS COACHES.

Chen Melling has found a Hebrew language book ponderously entitled "Binyamina - Pearl of the Shomron" [!!] - The Village Named after the Famous Philanthrop (1922-1953). This has a couple of photos show-

ing a train wrecked by Jewish saboteurs in 1947-48 near the quarry just north of Binyamina station. These feature a Wagon-Lits car which had been severely damaged, with one end completely stove in. (P.C.)

### **(e). THE DECAUVILLE AT BINYAMINA QUARRY.**

Also from Binyamina - Pearl of the Shomron etc etc, is an early photo of a side tip wagon being pushed by one Yizhak Hananiah on a Decauville line in the Binyamina quarry. Some sentences in the text explain why this Decauville was previously unknown to us, though dates of events are missing. The quarry was begun by PICA "at the same time the Pardess Hannah settlement was founded" (early 1920s?). After a period in private hands the quarry was taken over by a workers' co-operative which improved working methods, including the laying of a 60cm gauge railway operated by hand. Productivity reached a new height during WW2 under the management of Even ve Sid ("a daughter company of Solal Boneh") when the Palestine Government became the main customer and "installed a special branch [i.e. siding] from the main line running alongside the quarry". This meant that the stone could be loaded directly into PR wagons and did away with the need for a Decauville line in the quarry.

### **(f). Re: 71:06:(b). BELED ESH SHEIKH.**

This station continues to provide problems. Plan E/47/2 in the IRM Archives shows the layout dated at 1/6/1926. This plan is titled, somewhat confusingly, 'ACRE - JUNCTION STATION'. The western arm of the triangle was still in use at this date for trains to and from Akko/Acre, but the eastern arm of the triangle is not shown, this having already been removed. The original station building on the south side of the HR main line to Afula is drawn in dotted lines as "Ruins". The adjacent "Platelayers Quarters" (still standing derelict today) is also marked. So far, so good. However, also shown on the north side of the HR main line at the actual junction of the Akko branch and a few hundred metres west of the original ruined station building on the south side, is a "Station Hut" with a "Living Hut" alongside. (Unfortunately, line kilometrage is not recorded on the layout so I cannot be more precise with distances.) It seems obvious from all this that the original building had been replaced by the "Station Hut", probably just after WW1, though I cannot even hazard a guess as to why the original building was just a ruin by 1926. (It would no doubt simply have fallen out of use after replacement by the "Station Hut", but that does not explain its ruined condition in 1926 and I would have expected it to have been left in situ or put to an alternative use rather than being dismantled or allowed to fall down. Could it possibly have been wooden and not stone built?) It is likely, too, that this removal of the station from the original site led to variations in the kilometrage given for Beled esh Sheikh and help explain the use of such terms

as 'Km.4' and 'Zur Halt' in later PR timetables. Nevertheless, more research is needed before we can be sure of the facts and get a better idea of events here. Even so, this will not explain why Bellad-esh Chekh (sic) was shown at K.2+00 in that Syria-Ottoman Railway document presented in 70:15. (P.C.)

### **(g). SEJED STATION.**

In 51:11 Ron Shafir presented his findings about this station. In 52:5:(h) I took issue with him over a photo purportedly showing this station. Since then another rare photo has turned up that shows the station building from a wider angle and in which the station name can be made out. As a result I can now say that I was wrong and that Ron was correct in his conclusions in 51:11 (the other queries remain). This also means that Sybil Ehrich was correct in her observations concerning Deir A-ban and El Sejed stations in 53:11:l. (P.C.)

### **(h). MORE ON THE PALESTINE (TEXAS) RAILROAD!**

From Klaus Matzka, 24/01/06, from the 'Trains' newsline (and see 17:11):- PALESTINE, Texas - After word came in December that the Texas State Railroad would no longer offer originating runs from Palestine because of budget constraints, city leaders are looking at the potential effect that partially losing one of its most marketable symbols may have . . . and are not pleased, according to a story in the Tyler (Texas) Morning Telegraph.

"The Texas State Railroad is really central to our identity," Palestine Mayor Carolyn Salter said. "The loss of runs out of Palestine will impact our community disproportionately to the cuts that have been made in other state parks."

The mayor expects to see an adverse impact on the city's hotel-motel tax, which is the sole source of funding for the city's Convention and Visitors Bureau, as well as sales tax and the tourism industry. Palestine is a former Missouri Pacific division-point town, and still has a Union Pacific yard.

According to a recent study, the impact of the Texas State Railroad State Park on sales in the two counties it serves, Anderson and Cherokee, based on out-of-county visitors, is about \$3.9 million. Last year, the TSR hauled more than 56,000 ticketed passengers. It is estimated that last year there were slightly more riders who originated from Palestine than Rusk. However, the year before, those figures were reversed.

Fears are also mounting that this is just the beginning of problems the railroad may face, that the personnel cuts and elimination of trips from Palestine will mean lower ridership, which could eventually lead to the demise of the train. The railroad's season ended Dec. 18 and begins again March 4. Texas State Railroad operates steam and diesel trains from new depots just outside the communities of Palestine and Rusk, in East Texas about 100 miles southeast of Dallas.

The linear state park, 26 miles in length, traverses the piney woods and rolling hardwood creek bottoms.

The line dates from the late 1800's, when the Texas Prison System opened the East Texas Penitentiary in Rusk. The land was rich in iron ore and covered with immense stands of timber. A foundry was constructed on prison grounds in 1884 to convert the ore into cast iron. Using charcoal made from the native lumber and prisoners as the labor force, administrators believed that this process would be economically feasible. By 1896 prison officials realized that transporting timber and iron ore by horse and wagon was impractical, and construction of a railroad began on five miles of track, built in a south-westerly direction from the institution. In 1906 the track was extended an additional five miles to the small community of Maydelle. By 1909 the track stretched all the way to Palestine, where the TSR interchanged with the International & Great Northern, later part of the Missouri Pacific. TSR interchanged with the Cotton Belt at Rusk. In the 1920's the line became part of the Southern Pacific system, where it remained until the 1970's, when Texas took the line back and made it into the state park it is today

### **(i). INDUSTRIAL RAILWAY ROUNDUP.**

Twenty years ago it was just possible to count on the fingers of two hands the number of locations where industrial railways were known to have operated in Palestine and Israel. Since then many discoveries have been made. Evyatar Reiter has compiled a list of all such individual sites and to date these total 157. A small percentage of these are places where industrial railway artifacts are now on display but which might not have had actual industrial railway activity. However, the great majority are sites where industrial lines worked or, in a few cases, still work. The term Industrial Railway is a fairly loose one and for our purposes includes all non-public lines such as those used in agriculture or by the military, as well as those in actual industrial installations; and also, for the sake of convenience, a few pleasure lines in parks and kibbutzim etc (though perhaps it would be best to list these separately). Most local industrial railways were non-locomotive worked. Several Israelis have begun taking an active interest in these usually exceptionally obscure little lines, mostly 60cm gauge Decauville railways, and some intriguing discoveries have been made lately both on the ground and on the printed page. More may be expected. (P.C.)

### **(j). MORE EARLY HISTORY.**

For Hebrew readers only. The magazine *Et-Mol* No.185 of January 2006, published by Yad Yizhak Ben-Tzvi, has several railway-oriented articles, including two on the pre-history and early years of the "Valley Railway". The first, by Yair Safran and Tamir Goren, deals mostly with the Syria-Ottoman Railway and includes pertinent quotations

**Continued on page 22**

## OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.

### A. TURKEY.

(i). **NEW ELECTRIC MULTIPLE UNITS.** From 'Eisenbahn Revue International' 12/2005 p. 594. The TCDD has ordered ten 6-coach high-speed e.m.u.'s from CAF in Spain for the Ankara - Istanbul services. They will be capable of 250 km/h. The order is worth €180M.

(ii). **ISTANBUL PLINTHED LOCOS.** (This and following from CRJ 144, pp.505f., based on August-September 2005 visits.)

"On the European side of the Bosphorus, at Sirkeci station, 0-4-0T 2251 is back on its plinth. At Haydarpaşa on the Asian side, 2-4-0 23004 is plinthed, minus tender."

(iii). **CAMLIK RAILWAY MUSEUM.**

"Locomotives on display in August/Sept. 2005 were:- 0-6-0T's 3305, 3355; 0-6-0ST 3362; 2-6-0T 3405; 2-6-2T 3558; 4-6-4T 3705; 2-10-2T 5701; 2-6-0 34068; 0-8-0 44041; 2-8-0's 45002, 45132, 45161, 45172, 45501; 4-8-0 56025; 2-8-2's 46103, 46244; 0-10-0 55037; 2-10-0's 56116, 56130, 56337, 56523, 56527, 56712, 56914; 2-10-2's 57002, 57018, 57023, 57026, rotary snowploughs 4, 138; and 60cm. gauge 0-4-0T 140. Although the 2-6-0 carries the number 34068, this is thought to be incorrect, as design features indicate that it is one of the Nohab-built locos 34051-60, with 34056 or 34057 as the most likely candidates. The locomotives on display were exactly the same as in October 2000, but 2006 is expected to see the arrival of three new arrivals from Alasehir - 0-6-0T 3312, 2-8-2 46059 and 2-10-0 56045."

(iv). **CAMLIK STATION.** "4-8-0 46005 and 2-10-0 56917 were still dumped in the sidings."

(v). **SELÇUK** "2-6-0 34054 remains plinthed at the station."

(vi). **ALASEHIR.** "In sidings at the station were:- 0-6-0T 3312, 2-6-0 34060, 2-8-0's 45165, 46158; 2-8-2's 46059, 46226; 2-10-0's 56045, 56142, 56153; 56503 & 56049, both minus tender; and 56912; 2-10-2's 57005, 57006, 57010, and 57025 (minus front truck); Locomotives previously here but which were missing were 2-10-0's 56117, 56514, 56521, 56534 and 2-10-2 57021. These were reported to have been sent to Ankara for scrap, which if correct means that the first CKD-supplied 2-10-0 (56117) has been lost."

(vii). **NAZILLI.** "2-10-0 56911 is plinthed at the station here."

(viii). **KONYA.** "In the final days of steam a new alignment through a tunnel was constructed bypassing the Bozdag Pass section west of Konya. Travelling over the new alignment a quarter of a century later on the Haydarpaşa - Adane "İç Anadolu Mavi Treni", our reporter was pleasantly surprised to see that much of the old alignment, where once the Henschels struggled, remains in situ, with the western (Meydan) end used to stable freight vans. In Konya itself, a steam loco, presumably the nominally-preserved Henschel 2-8-2 46052, was looking out of the shed, and 2-8-0 45011 was plinthed in front of the station."

### Continued from page 21

from contemporary newspapers. The second is by Yehuda Levononi and deals with the HR monument at Haifa East, medals struck for the building of the Hedjaz Railway, and also surviving pieces of rail which carry inscriptions in praise of Sultan Abdul II. Both articles are illustrated, carefully researched, written with suitable caution, and are recommended. (P.C.)

### (k). Re: 71:04:(b). 120-TON WELL WAGON.

Chen Melling has found early details on this, the first piece of new rolling stock acquired by IR, in File Peh/82/52 at the IRM Archives. The wagon was ordered for transporting large items of electrical equipment, in particular to the Reading power station in north Tel Aviv. The Israel Electric Corporation paid 66% of the initial cost of purchase and agreed to reimburse IR for the remainder at a later date by special payments. In Belgium the wagon was dismantled into 12 parts and shipped from Antwerp aboard the "Tzfonit", arriving Haifa Harbour on 11/11/1951. The parts were loaded onto IR wagons and entered Qishon Works three days later for reassembly. The well wagon, now IR no.5000, entered service on 20/11/51.

### (l). Re 70:05:(d). SALE OF OLD I.R. LOCOS

Paul asks: Could it be that the NRE mentioned in that item in connection with the sale of six redundant IR diesels to the USA is the National Railway Equipment Company? This firm is noted in TRAINS magazine of April 2006 as being rebuilders of old diesel locos and located at Dixmoor, Illinois, rather than Houston, Texas.

(ix). **ADANA.** "0-6-0T 3315 is plinthed in front of the station here."

(x). **1999 RAILTOUR.** Some old news from 1999 - from 'LCGB Bulletin' Vol. 52 No. 3, 15/03/2000 - included because this already seems such a long time ago and it would now be impossible to repeat the tour:-

"In September 1999 Steam Loco Safari Tours and Dietmar Kramer organised a tour featuring a number of steam-hauled special freight trains. Locomotives used were Skyliner 56359 on its old stamping ground of the Zonguldak line; 44071, 55043, and 56508 were used in different combinations in the south of the country (Burdur, Egridir etc.). A surprise at Afyon was 56009 in steam on an exhibition train about Kemil Ataturk. Modern Traction. E43 001 was seen at Ankara station. Three-car emus were noted numbered A4 14051 A/B/C, the lowest being 14028 and the highest 14066. E52 506 was also noted here. Of diesel types, DE21, DE22, DE24 were seen at many places in the north. The Usak area produced DE11 as well as DE24, whilst Afyon had many MR 400, Rp 3000 and RM 3000 out of use. (oou). DH 6520 seen here.

**Steam Locomotives.** Noted as stored etc. (but not preserved) were two 2-10-0s at Ankara depot about five miles west of the city. In fact there may have been more locos here. Karabuk depot had two oou Skyliners - 56378/82. Ulku steelworks had two 0-8-0T oou. Alasehir had two separate dumps of locos totalling 21 locos including 34060, 45165/8, 46059, 3312. Usak depot held many surplus locos - 14 being noted whilst Afyon had a smaller number - 7.

**Preservation.** Several museums and plinthed locos were seen. Ankara station front garden had 3328 whilst the nearby museum display had the expected ten locos. At Zonguldak docks 3305 was seen as well as a private 0-4-0ST by Bagnall. Ulku steelworks was noted as having a 33xx 0-6-0T preserved. Usak station still has 56547 whilst Afyon station has 55025 as well as KL 46001, the latter on a circular track with three carriages. Burdur station has 57020 plinthed."

(xi). **2000 VISIT.** From 'LCGB Bulletin' Vol. 53 No. 2, 2.2001.

"Two German groups organised steam specials in Turkey during autumn 2000 and your reporter was able to take part in them. Camlik museum was visited on 22/9/2000 and was as expected except that 46005 was not seen. The locos were well laid out for photographs. On 23/9 Izmir was visited where the new metro is in full operation from Bornovo to Halkapinar, Basmane to Konak and Ulcyol. The depot is at Halkapinar. A visit was allowed to the TCDD depot at Halkapinar where 56548 was on shed ready to work a special train to Camlik next day (open to the public.)

For the railtours there are only three other serviceable locos in Turkey. 56517 worked Alasehir - Afyon (2 days); 56009 Afyon - Konya - Aksehir (2 days); 56359 Filyos - Cantalagazi - Irmak (4 days), with 56009 performing again from Kayseri to

Ulukisla. On 2/10 Ankara museum was visited. At first the guard insisted that no photos could be taken but later, after a telephone call, it was allowed. The Ankara - Istanbul train was two hours late into Istanbul - the worst case of late running encountered, probably due to electrification work. Some of the time the train was diesel hauled with the electric loco still on the train."

**xii TCDD HIGH SPEED TRAINS.** From 'Lok Magazin' 2/2006 p. 31 a bit more information - CAF will build these ten six-coach electric multiple units based on the RENFE Class 120 which has recently gone into service on the RENFE standard-gauge high-speed network. They will be used on the Istanbul - Ankara line.

## B. HEDJAZ

### (i). 2000 TRIP REPORT.

This is included as, in view of recent developments, it seems almost nostalgic now.... From 'LCGB Bulletin' Vol. 53 No. 3. 2001.

"Hugh Ballantyne reporting on a visit in September 2000:

The first sighting at Amman station on the morning of 10/9 was the departure of a revenue earning freight train just after 08.00 hauled by two diesels and heading northwards towards Syria. On shed 2-8-2 51 was in steam and ready to work the first of several charters. The well-known YD type 2-8-2 23 was sitting high up in blocks outside the loco shed, staff assuring the visitor that it was under repair. (New tyres at long last?) No. 51 went off on its charter at 08.45 with a similar trip in the afternoon being headed by 2-8-2 No. 71.

11/9. Information was gleaned that the international train to Damascus now runs twice a week and no longer has a mixed consist. The train this day comprised GE diesel 40212 hauling two yellow and red Romanian bogie coaches [sic. - actually Hungarian. Ed.] and a fourgon. It departed at 08.40 thought to be 40 minutes late. No. 51 was making ready to run e.c.s. to Qatrana and was assisted there by diesel 40213 which on arrival had to clear the triangle of wagons so that the steam loco could be turned. The return run also had the diesel piloting but it was removed for all the photo stops.

12/9. Early morning found 2-6-2T 61 and 4-6-2 82 in steam. Earlier in the year a film company making 'Mummy II' used railway scenes which prompted Hedjaz Jordan Railway to repaint much of its stock quite tastefully to dark red and cream. Unfortunately the same cannot be said for some of the steam locos, even including some of the long derelict examples. Formerly black 82 is quite acceptable in dark red (not maroon). The black 2-8-2 71 has a rather excessive amount of red paint over its front end including the outer smokebox plus brown cylinders and steam dome, but 61 is very garish and has to be seen to be believed. (It should only be photographed in black and white!). As a general description it has dark red boiler and tank sides with a broad band along the tanks. Blue tyres, steps, cab window frames and front hand rails, are set off by gold motion, valve gears, cylinders and smokebox

door. However, despite the paint it is still in poor mechanical condition and was restricted to shunting wagons up and down the yard. Japanese built 82 was substituted for 61 and made the uphill run towards Qasir quite competently.

Whilst going towards the Syrian border by bus the opportunity was taken to call in at Amman University to see plinthed Pacific No. 84.

At Dera'a 2-6-0T&T 66 was used for shunting displays at the station which it did in fine style.

On 13/9 an early start with 2-8-2 262 in red and green livery and steam tight (ex-works April 2000) went tender first down the Yarmuk Gorge as far as Zeizoun station near km. 136 (from Haifa) and some 25 kms. from Dera'a. This was reckoned to be a highlight of the visit as the Syrian railway authorities have made a tremendous effort over the last year in clearing where necessary the 7kms. into Zeizoun station. The journey fully came up to expectations with the railway dramatically cut into the sides of the gorge, which in itself is a remarkable geological sight as to how such a small river as the Yarmuk could over millions of years gouge a deep gash in the earth's surface. Besides the view this reopened section contains three tunnels and three bridges of which No. 14 has central steel lattice girder of 165 feet and three 40 feet masonry arches on each side. Zeizoun station is abandoned but has a run round loop so 262 returned uphill back to Dera'a chimney first. Later in the same afternoon, before 262 took the group northwards to Damascus a freight train from that direction arrived behind sister 261!

14/9: This started badly as arrival at Damascus station found 2-8-0 160 at the end of the platform with all ten wheels derailed. This was to have been the train engine to Serghaya but ex-rack tank 0-6-2T 805 was soon substituted. Prior to starting, Romanian built diesel A301 departed at 08.00 with the MThO train to Amman. On 15/9 the Borsig 2-8-0 was required for the service train to Serghaya so 805 had to work the enthusiasts train again, being the booked engine for this day. A visit to Cadem works found 2-8-0 91 and 2-6-0T 754 near the traverser apparently requiring minor repairs. Inside the erecting shop was 2-6-0T 755 and 2-8-0 90, the latter stated to be nearing completion for a return to service after many years out of use. Two Hartmann 2-8-2's, 260 (dead but serviceable) and 262 (which departed light engine to Dera'a) were also seen."

## C. JORDAN.

(i). "AMMAN. From "Continental Railway Journal" 144, (Winter 2005/6), p. 503f.

"On Saturday 3rd. September 2005 the Hedjaz Railway station was firmly locked up. "Sorry, holiday, come back tomorrow" our reporter was told. Next day he was sold a JD1 entry ticket to the railway museum by the friendly station master, who arranged for him to be shown round. An unidentified 2-6-2T is plinthed at the station, and an also-unidentified RSH YD-type 2-8-2 is

semi-plinthed on the bridge over the road, with HStP 2-8-2 72 dumped nearby. In a siding at the southern end of the station were HStP 2-6-2T 61 and Nippon Sharyo 4-6-2 82; opposite the turntable was RSH 2-8-2 23; in front of the shed was Jung 2-8-2 51, and inside were Nippon Sharyo 4-6-2 85 and HStP 2-8-2 71. All of these looked to be potential runners, though 85 was still being worked on.

According to the station master no steam activity was expected until some three weeks later, with tourist specials from Amman for a short distance southwards booked for 21st. and 23rd. September. Further information was provided by a steam driver who spoke perfect English. He said that 85 would work empty stock comprising some newly-refurbished teal coaches to Aqaba on 20th. September. The loco would be outstationed there, and on 21st. September would work the inaugural Aqaba - Wadi Rum tourist special. However, some vigorous testing of the freshly-overhauled engine was envisaged beforehand, especially as the King might attend the inaugural run on the 21st. On 23rd. September, 82 was booked for a special at Amman."

### (ii). AMMAN-DERA'A

"The international passenger service between Amman and Damascus (Cadem) still runs on Monday and Thursday, starting from both ends at 8.00. In fact, both the Syrian (Cadem - Dera'a and vice versa) and Jordanian (Amman - Dera'a and vice versa) freights carry one or two venerable passenger coaches on those days and provide a connection at Dera'a. On 12th. September the Jordanian train (diesel-hauled - regrettably the vigorous testing of Pacific 85 had not yet started) left Amman at 8.00 sharp, and with lengthy stops at Zarqa and Mafraq, and a short one at the border to take on the Syrian border officials, reached Dera'a at 12.00. After waiting for the train from Cadem, it left again at 13.30. Punctuality is much more of an issue in Jordan than in Syria, so any future traveller from whom time is a major consideration is recommended to make the journey southbound, as arrival at destination is much more likely to be close to schedule than northbound." [See below under Syria for more details.]

### (iii). A HEDJAZ RAILWAY QUESTION

A Reader's Letter by D.C. Kerr of Wellington, New Zealand in "Railway Magazine" August 1966 p.475f. (thanks to Brian Baxter!) revives in the Editor's mind a query regarding the fate of former HR/PR locomotives in Jordan. As is well known, the HJR steam loco fleet consists solely of post-war imports from Britain, Belgium and Japan - though the rolling-stock remains 'original'. In Syria, however, the steam loco fleet remains of World War 1 or earlier vintage. How did this investment policy discrepancy occur?

The letter involves a photo of Hartmann 2-8-2 No. 254 of 1918 standing derelict at Amman - "the builder's plate is prominent on the cabside, but I was not able to inspect this as I was being assailed by stones thrown by some Arab who apparently

objected to my activities! Besides the derelict locomotives, there were also some very spic-and-span examples under repair outside the engine sheds. These included a 2-8-2 of more modern appearance, and a massive 4-6-4 tank with Caprotti valve gear, built by the North British Locomotive Co. Ltd."

So in the mid-1960's former PR stock was still present but not, apparently, in service. It would be interesting to follow up rolling stock orders in this period. For example, Syria and Lebanon patronised mainly "Eastern Bloc" suppliers - Syria with coaches and locos from the DDR, narrow gauge diesels from Romania and railcars from Ganz in Hungary, Lebanon with Cegielski diesel locos from Poland. One might have expected Jordan, with its close British links, to stay with British loco suppliers - why did they also turn to Belgium, and to Japan, of all places? One is convinced that Politics played a major role in all these decisions.

#### **(iv). BBC WORLD RADIO FEATURES.**

Malcolm Billings has produced a series of radio programmes for BBC World Service - they can be accessed on Internet at : [http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/programmes/documentary\\_2.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/programmes/documentary_2.shtml). By the time this is published one will have to follow a link to the Archives. The Editor only heard one episode but it was well-made, factually correct, free of clichés and featured some interesting interviews.

#### **D. SYRIA.**

The following reports are also from "Continental Railway Journal" 144, p.505:-

**(i). DAMASCUS.** "In CRJ 139, the line between Kanawat station and Cadem was described as being totally rebuilt, but even this appears to be an understatement for the extent of works being carried out at Damascus. In fact, although the reception buildings will be retained, Damascus Kanawat Hedjaz Railway station has seen its last trains, and is now a building site for a shopping mall and a five-star hotel, with only plinthed 2-6-0T 62 as a reminder of better tdays. The 1.05m. gauge line to Cadem has been closed and lifted and will be replaced at some time, in the future, perhaps in a couple of years, by the first phase of a new standard gauge electric Metro system between Cadem and Baramke bus station, some 500m short of the old Kanawat station. In a second phase it is intended to extend this Metro from Cadem to the Airport. The Baranda Valley line towards Serghaya remains in situ north of Baramke, but is only operational north of Hame, and lost its Fridays-Only summer picnic service when the line was cut back. Unless some sort of link with Cadem Works is re-established after completion of the Metro works, this line is bound to fade away, as the boiler certificates of the locos marooned on it expire."

**(ii). CADEM WORKS.** "On 31st. August 2005, even at 7am., our reporter was made very welcome at the Works. Apart from the many decaying hulks, Hartmann Mallet 0-4-4-2T 962 was in the yard, where it had brought in a special the previous Monday.

Hartmann 2-8-2 260 was being painted up in the shed, with sister loco 262 beside the shed, dirty but apparently serviceable. Two 2-8-0's, Hartmann 91 and (presumably) Borsig 160 were undergoing overhaul at the Works. The De Dion Bouton railcar was in two parts, with the motor car inside and the trailer in front of the shed. With enough diesels serviceable for regular services and no specials ordered, steam action was improbable in the near future."

**(iii). HAME.** "On 2nd. September the same four locos as previously noted remained marooned here: Hartmann 2-8-0 90 and SLM 2-6-0T's 751 / 754 / 755. Clearly none of the tank engines had turned a wheel for some while, but the 2-8-0 looked serviceable. Indeed it was tender-first at the head of a rake of coaches, just as it had arrived on a special from up-valley some days or weeks before. The regular Fridays-Only picnic trains are alas a thing of the past. Hame is best reached from Damascus from the minibus station under the viaduct next to the national museum."

**(iv). DERA'A** "Some rebuilding work is going on here, with an ugly bluish foot-bridge having been built over the yard. On 1st. September, dusty 2-6-0T+T 66 and a stored 2-8-0 were present at the shed, together with railcars R-502/3, which had been at Cadem the previous day and were probably intended to work evening specials in connection with the Bosra festival (1st. to 10th. September in 2005). At that time, the Bosra line had clearly not been used for some while, but by 12th. September the line had been used, the railcars had gone and two coaches had appeared instead."

**(v). DERA'A - CADEM.** "The Damascus - Dera'a - Amman passenger service still operates Mondays and Thursdays Only, starting from each end at 08.00. On these days the Syrian freight trains Cadem - Dera'a and Jordanian freights Amman - Dera'a (and v.v.) each convey one or two venerable passenger coaches and provide a connection at Dera'a. On Thursday 1st. September the Jordanian train from Amman arrived at Dera'a behind two diesels at 13.00, and half an hour later the Syrian train arrived from Cadem hauled by diesel loco AV-402. The Jordanian train departed at 14.00, and by 15.00 AV-402 had positioned the Damascus train ready for removal men to start unloading somebody's household effects into a van. With no sign of the train departing, our reporter retreated to the bus station for the one-hour ride to Damascus. On Monday, 12th. September the Jordanian train arrived at Dera'a at 12.00 and, after connecting with the Syrian train, set off back to Amman at 13.30. The Syrian train, again with AV-402 in charge, had arrived at 12.40 and, this time after removal men had unloaded someone's household goods from a van, left again at 14.30. Cadem was eventually reached at 19.30, with lengthy stops at intermediate stations to allow the conductors to drink tea with the station masters, much to the annoyance of the driver. Eventually he got so frustrated by the delays that

at the last station before Cadem he responded to the message "five more minutes" by starting the train, forcing the astonished conductors into some unexpected exercise!"

**(vi). LATAKIA.** Plinthed in front of the station here is standard gauge 0-6-0 030-159 (Esslingen 2490/1891).

**(vii). "RAILWAYS OF SYRIA."** By Bertram Frenzel - in 'Lok Report' 1/06, pp. 56-59.

#### **"Chemin de fer Hejaz.**

An article in 'Lok Report' 8/2000 reported extensively on the Hedjaz line. In the meantime operations on the 1050mm gauge lines in Syria have been even further restricted. Only Jung loco No. 62 outside the Damascus Kanawat station reminds one that here the trains to Jordan and Lebanon once departed. During 2004 the tracks in the station were completely demolished, and now there is a massive building site here. An office and business complex will be built here. The tracks of both the lines that used to make their way through the city centre have been tarred over or removed in several places. As a result, the line heading for Serghaya is no longer connected to the rest of the system. There is in any case no regular traffic any more on this line. The steam-hauled excursion trains which once traversed the line several times a week from Damascus to Serghaya are now History. In the station of Al Hama, some ten kilometres from Damascus, stand 2-6-0T's 130.751, 130-754 and 130-755, built by SLM in Winterthur, and 2-8-0 90 (Hartmann, 1907), together with several coaches. 130-755 and 90 are in working order and are used occasionally on special trains. In addition, the last remaining De Dion railcar can be found here. At present the line can be traversed only as far as Deir Kanoun due to an earth slip. The station at Al Hama is manned, and the friendly railwaymen gladly provide information on the next special workings.

Between Damascus and Qatana there are also no further trains. The suburban service that used to be operated on this line with Hungarian-built diesel railcars has been totally abandoned. The only regular trains now are those from Damascus Cadem via Dera to Jordan - although the buses on the parallel and improved road parallel to the line are three times as fast. The passenger statistics on the CFH line are therefore extremely modest. In order to make operations as economical as possible, the two weekly passenger trains have actually run as mixed for quite some time. As a result, actual Freight Trains on the Hedjaz line have become rare. Since the goods wagons have vacuum brakes, use of the air-braked Ganz-Mavag coaches or railcar trailers is not possible any more. Once these ran through from Damascus to Amman; in their place the wooden coaches from the early years of the railway are now used once again.

Each Monday and Thursday the mixed train departs Damascus-Cadem at around 8.00. One coach is sufficient for the few passengers. Along the 120-kilometre line to Deraa there are now few manned stations. On the sidings at the stations stand



numerous stored wagons. After a journey of about three and a half hours the border station at Deraa is reached; At around the same time the HJR train in the other direction arrives from Amman. The through passengers have to change here. Following the exchange of goods wagons, the train departs back to Damascus. On the section from Damascus to Dera'a the trains are mostly hauled by a Romanian diesel loco, although also often with a steam engine. Should there be no freight booked, then the use of one of the 1975-built Ganz Mavag railcars is possible. On the Jordanian section of the Hedjaz line the trains are mostly double-headed by GM [sic. - actually GE] Diesel locos.

All CFH stock is maintained at the repair works at Damascus-Cadem. As well as the Hungarian railcars there are the Diesel locos AV300, 301, 400, 401 and 402 built at the '23rd. August' works in Bucharest in 1977. However, only a small proportion of these six-axle locos is available for traffic. In addition a few steam locos are available as reserve or for special workings. It was only in 2004 that the 1906 Hartmann 0-4-4-2 Mallet No. 962 was reactivated. In addition to 962, active locos in the CFH fleet are 2-6-0 66, (Jung 1907), 2-8-0 91 (Hartmann 1907), 2-8-0 160 (Borsig 1914), 2-8-2's 160 and 262 (Hartmann 1918). Almost all the vehicles are kept at Cadem, standing in the loco shed or around the yard area of the repair works. The works shunter is a small 4-wheel diesel of German origin, which over the years has suffered the removal of almost all parts not directly necessary - such as the cover over the engine. On the tracks next to the traverser at the works, as well as at Dera'a in the loco shed, are numerous stored steam locos. Occasionally steam locos are sent to Dera'a for special trains.

### **Chemin de fer Syriennes.**

The CFS operates the Syrian standard gauge network. In contrast to the CFH it is a rather modern railway, and there is a more extensive operation of traffic. The majority of these lines were opened only after 1968. Nevertheless the railway in Syria has only relative minor importance compared to the road traffic. It does not take long to list the few standard gauge lines. The main line from Turkey runs via Aleppo, Hama and Homs to Damascus. Two freight-only branches lead from Hama to Mhardeh and from Mahin, between Homs and Damascus, to the phosphate workings near Tadmur. In Aleppo the line via Der az-Zor to Qamishli begins, and in Qamishli there is a connection to the Bagdadbahn. The Bagdadbahn links Turkey with Iraq and runs for only a short section over Syrian territory. From Homs a line runs to the harbour town of Lataqia, which is also linked directly with Aleppo - this latter line crosses the mountain range of Djebel Ansarsiya and is the only mountain line of the CFS. No-one spending some time in Syria should fail to take a journey on this spectacular line - a series of viaducts and tunnels in quick succession. However, all major bridges are guarded by the military and it is advisable to be discreet when photographing. There is an abundance of

security personnel on all the major stations in Syria. Normally one may only enter the platform area shortly before departure of the train. Often one's entire luggage is searched beforehand.

It is intended to extend the line from its current endpoint at Cadem underground to the city centre near to the former HR terminus at Kanawat. It is however questionable whether such an ambitious scheme will ever be completed. For example, it was planned to build standard-gauge lines from Damascus to Dera'a, from Tadmur to Der az-Zor and from Der az-Zor via Abu Kamal into Iraq. However, little is heard nowadays about these plans.

Although all the major cities of the country have rail links, the majority of passenger traffic continues to be carried out by road. The buses are more frequent and are in the main also faster than the few passenger trains. Whereas the Bus Stations are usually in the city centres, the railway stations are often on the edge of town. So, for example, between the two cities of Damascus and Aleppo - with populations in the millions - passengers are provided with only four rail journey opportunities. Most of these trains travel at night. On the Aleppo-Qamishli line there are two trains a day (one of which runs through to/from Damascus); between Aleppo and Lataqia is the highest frequency - five trains per day in each direction. On the weekends - that is, for the Moslem population, Fridays, and for the Christian population, Sundays - there is a further train each way. There is as yet no really good road along this route, and in addition both Aleppo and Lataqia stations are fairly centrally situated. In contrast, despite the heavy population there are few passenger services along the coastal line. The sole train from Lataqia via Tartus to Damascus departs at 1 am., as does the return train from Damascus. There are a further two daily trains each way between Lataqia and Tartus.

In addition there are international trains to the neighbouring countries. It is even possible to travel by rail from Europe. For this, one must first travel to Istanbul; from Haydarpasa station in the Asiatic part of Istanbul there is a train every Thursday at 09.00 to Aleppo. According to the timetable this journey should last 32 hours. Due to the very low passenger numbers, a single CFS Sleeping Car traverses the entire line, and within Turkey this is attached to an internal express train. A further train travels weekly from Syria into Iran; this departs Damascus on Mondays at 07.20 and travels via Aleppo, initially into Turkey. Tabriz, on the Lake Van, is then reached early on the Wednesday. Here one must leave the Syrian train and travel with the ferry to Van; from Van the journey continues with an Iranian train, and the planned arrival at Teheran is Wednesdays at 19.20. The return from Teheran departs Mondays at 18.35 and one should arrive in Damascus at 07.30 on Thursday. There is a further weekly train in each direction between Aleppo and Mossul in northern Iraq. It is of course questionable whether this train operates reliably in view of the politically unstable situation in Iraq.

Rail freight traffic in Syria is likewise

relatively modest. A positive factor is that the main Mediterranean ports have rail connections. The CFS transports mainly mass products such as grain, mineral oil, phosphates and cement. Containers are also transported by rail from and to the harbours.

The last steam locomotives on the Syrian standard gauge worked in 1976. Locomotives of German origin had dominated. In 1939 a total of 48 Prussian G8's came to the then-DHP (Damas-Hama et Prolongements); some of these engines remained in Lebanese territory, and although no trains have operated in Lebanon for some years, one can still find numerous examples standing at Beirut, Rayak and Tripoli. The oldest loco remaining in Syria is 030-109 (0-6-0, built Esslingen 2490/1891). It stands plinthed outside Lataqia station. (It could never have worked here since the town was first rail connected in 1975).

During the Cold War Syria stood on the side of the Soviet Union. The supply of stock for the CFS therefore came mainly from the former Eastern Bloc states. The majority of the coaches were built by the Vereinigte Schienenfahrzeugbau of the DDR; the livery and the lettering of the passenger coaches - orange and ivory, are similar to that of the DR Städte-Express trains.

The majority of trains on the CFS are hauled by Diesel locos of class LDE-2800. On the basis of the TE109 (equivalent to the DB Class 232) the 'October Revolution' loco works in Voroshilovgrad developed a machine with the designation TE114 especially for operation in tropical countries and deserts. The Kolomna 5D49 Diesel motor is also built into these locos, which weigh 120 tons and can work at 100km/h. In 1974 and 1975 CFS ordered 80 of these engines, and a further 30 in 1984. Between 1971 and 1985 essentially-identical machines were delivered to Cuba (107 examples), Egypt (23) and various Soviet industrial railways (16). From 2001 many of the LDE-2800 locos were modernised by General Electric. Amongst other alterations, a 12-cylinder 7FDL Diesel motor was installed, and the engines received completely new cabs and are therefore easy to distinguish from the original locomotives.

As well as the LDE-2800 one also sees the Alstom LDE-3200 class engines of 1999 in line service. With 2,355kW and a top speed of 120km/h these are the strongest and fastest machines on CFS.

For shunting work some TEM2 type locos were acquired from the Brjask works in the USSR. 25 examples of the LDE-1500 from CKD (identical to CD Class 770) were put into service in 1982. In addition there are some rather elderly four-axle diesel shunters from France as well as six-axle line locos from the USA. There are even some B3yg rebuilt six-wheel coaches of former DB origin in Syria - these are either withdrawn or are used only in maintenance trains."

### **E. IRAN.**

#### **"THE RAILWAYS OF IRAN".**

Translated from an article in 'Eisenbahn Kurier' January 2006, pp.72-76. By Werner

Drescher.

"In October 2005 a very successful DGEG tour covered the majority of the Iranian railway network. The Islamic Republic of Iran, the former Persia, has around 69M inhabitants; it is one of the countries with the fastest-growing population. In 1956 there were only 18.7M inhabitants. With an area of 1,684,000 sq. km. Iran is five times as large as Germany.

Due to its central location in the Middle East Iran was a Transit country even in the time of the legendary Silk Road. In addition the country has many natural resources; in addition to the main product of Oil, Iran is rich in Coal, Iron, Copper, Chrome, Lead, Zinc and Uranium.

There were plans for the construction of a Trans-Persian railway already from the 1860's. Lesseps, the builder of the Suez Canal, planned a line from Asia Minor (the Asiatic part of Turkey) and Mesopotamia (Iraq) via Bagdad through southern Iran to India. In reality, only a short narrow-gauge line was built, from Teheran to the shrine of the Shah Abdul Azim in Shahr Rey. This was constructed in 1887 and operated until 1961. It was of metre gauge and only 8.5km. long. Five 0-6-0T's were built by Tubize (Belgium), and the line was used mainly by pilgrims on Fridays.

At this period Persia lay at the centre of both British and Russian interests. Russia required a rail link to the oceans in the south, and this would traverse Persia to the Gulf of that name; The British wanted to be able to reach India by land, and this route traversed Turkey and Persia. Each Power hindered the other, since neither wished to permit the other to get any commercial or strategic advantage. Nevertheless it was these two countries that began railway construction in Iran.

From the border with Russia at Jolfa (in the north-west of Iran) a line to Tabriz was built from 1916, 146km. long and to the Russian 1,524mm gauge. A 53km.-long branch led from Sufiyān to Sharif-Khaneh on the Lake Urmia.

From the north-western area of British-ruled India, nowadays Pakistan, Great Britain built in 1919 from Quetta on the Pakistan side to Zahedan on the Iranian side a line to the Indian broad gauge of 1,676mm. It crossed the border near Mirjaveh and ran for 92km. on Iranian territory. Even today this line has no connection to the rest of the (standard-gauge, 1,435mm) Iranian network, but from 1969 it has been operated by the Rah Ahan Iran - the Iranian State Railways or RAI.

After 1925, during the reign of the Pahlavi Dynasty under Shah Reza, not only was the name of the country changed back from Persia to Iran ("Land of the Aryans"), but the Shah engaged himself in the construction of railways. As a result the first line important for Iran itself was built - the Trans-Iran Railway, linking the Caspian Sea in the North with the Persian Gulf in the South. It is 1,392km. long and was opened fully on 26th. August 1938. In 1942 a 123km. branch was built from Ahwaz to Khorramshahr on the Shatt-el-Arab. The topographical situation made the line diffi-

cult and expensive to build. The financial costs were met from within Iran itself. For this special provision was made from the oil revenues.

In 1936 work began on the line from Teheran to Tabriz. The first section was finished by 1940. Then the Allies took over control of the Iranian railways and between 1943 and 1949 ceased all further railway construction. The line to Tabriz could only be fully opened on 24th. April 1958. The line on to Jolfa had been converted to standard gauge beforehand. In 1971 the line from Sharif-Khaneh to the Turkish border was completed.

On 27th. April 1957 the line from (Teheran) - Gamsar - Mashhad was opened. In 1938 construction had also begun of the Qom - Zahedan line - this line was intended to enable through transit traffic between Europe and Asia. It was opened in sections until 1977. In the meantime a branch was built from Badrud to Esfahan - Yazd (40 km.) - this line being especially important for the economy, specifically the Iranian Steel Corporation. At the end of 1977 the Iranian network had a length of 4,225km. How difficult construction was can be gauged from the fact that by this time the network included 330 tunnels with a total length of 115,785 metres and 16,287 bridge.

In the 1970's there were extensive plans for further expansion of the rail network - a further 10,000km. were envisaged, and a large proportion would be rebuilt for double track and electrified. Thoughts were even given to a high-speed line with top speeds of 185km/h. The provision of electricity was to be through nuclear power stations, in order to be prepared for the eventual exhaustion of the oil reserves. Further ambitious plans, such as improved links to Afghanistan and Pakistan as well as a north-south line along the eastern border, were also planned.

The Five Year Plan from 1973-1978 envisaged, amongst other measures, the double-tracking and electrification of the lines Teheran - Tabriz (736 km.), Tabriz - Jolfa (148 km.), Teheran - Mashhad (926 km.) and Teheran - Bandar Shahpur - Khorramshahr (937 km.). Near Teheran a fully-automated marshalling yard with a capacity for 3,500 wagons was to be built. Factories for steel and concrete sleepers were to be built at Karaj, Kerman and Bandar Abbas, as well as a wagon works at Arak.

It was however only in the 1990's that a clear push towards further construction could be seen. The line Bafq - Bandar-e-Abbas (630km.) was opened in two sections, in 1991 and 1995; in 1996 the line from Mashhad to Sarakhs was opened for traffic, and thereby provided a rail link with Turkey. In the following years the next lines were opened:-

- 1997: Badrud - Meybod. 261 km. (A cut-off for the route Teheran - Bandar-e-Abbas and Kerman);
- 1998. Beshar - Bandar-e-Amirabad. 12km. (Better link with Russia);
- 1999. Arkadan - Chadormalu. 204 km.;
- 1999. Teheran - Qom. 167 km. (high speed line);
- 2005. Bafq - Mashhad. 768 km.

The Iranian network today comprises 7,266 km. The 148km. section Tabriz - Jolfa is electrified; 1,082 km. are double-track - effectively from Teheran to Mashhad.

### **Traffic.**

According to the timetable valid until 4th. October 2005, there were:-

- a weekly train pair Teheran - Tabriz - Van - Malatya - Aleppo - Damascus, that required three and a half days for the 2,340km. Departures were Mondays from both Teheran and Damascus.

- also weekly, a train pair Teheran - Tabriz - Van - Malatya - Ankara - Istanbul Haydarpara (depart Teheran Thursdays, Istanbul Wednesdays.) This train is a bit faster, needing only three days for the 2,963 km.

- a train pair traverses the Zahedan - Quetta line on specific days, departing Zahedan 08.30, arriving Quetta 15.20, or dep. Quetta 12.00 and arriving Zahedan 14.30. [sic. - why the discrepancy in times is not clear. Ed.]

At present there is no passenger traffic to Azerbaijan or Turkmenistan.

Internal passenger traffic is based on/from Teheran and is divided into five Districts. There are one or two train pairs daily, which can be classified as Inter-City:-

- Teheran - Tabriz (Azerbaijan).
- Teheran - Gorgan (Golestan).
- Teheran - Bandar-e-Abbas. (Hormozgan).
- Teheran - Khorramshahr. (Khozestan.)

Only on the Teheran - Mashhad line (Khorasan) are there twelve train pairs daily; on specific days there may be up to six train pairs on certain other lines. So, even though the passenger trains themselves are usually formed of up to 15 coaches, one can say that the passenger traffic is relatively limited. There are in addition some local trains on various sections.

There is unfortunately no information available regarding freight traffic. Observations revealed that it must be extensive. The new line from Bafq to Mashhad must have led to especial increases, since there are extensive mineral deposits along this line. Double-headed trains of over 50 wagons are not uncommon.

### **THE R.T.G. TRAINS IN IRAN**

From 'Lok Magazin' 2/2006 p. 31. The fact that the SNCF withdrew its last gas-turbine RTG multiple units in 2005 was helpful for the Iranians, as they were able to acquire these for spare parts, their own RTG trains had been withdrawn from service from the early 1980's due to a shortage of spare parts. The SNCF trains were brought to Iran, the engineers got to work and now one set has been refurbished and makes a daily return journey between Tehran and Zanjan.

### **Rolling Stock.**

Formerly, vehicles from various builders in Europe and America were used. Originally they came mainly from Germany - including bogie coaches to DR design and oil-fired steam locos from Krupp and Henschel. Steam locomotives remained in use until 1964.

Following the Second World War

some American diesel locos remained in the country. Iran also received credits to purchase some diesel locos from General Motors. By 1976 Iran had obtained over 400 diesel locos from the USA. Following the political split, further deliveries came from Canada, Rumania, Korea and the Ukraine.

For operating the electrified sections RAI purchased eight locomotives of class Rc4 from ASEA / SGP Graz - similar to the ÖBB Class 1043. They are based at Tabriz. In order to accelerate its passenger services, RAI acquired four Gas-Turbine sets from France in 1975. These were five-car sets, each with two turbines providing a total of 1,720 kW, and with a top speed of 160 km/h. They were used mainly on the Teheran - Mashhad route but suffered under the climatic and geographical conditions. At present two sets are in use between Teheran and Zanjan.

In addition vehicles from a variety of builders was in use until recently. These included some diesel railcars from British Leyland (1989), or Danish Inter-City railcar sets from Scandia / Randers (1982). In 1991 it was even intended to purchase some Diesel locos of class 131 from the Deutsche Reichsbahn, but this deal fell through.

In 1997 a contract was signed with Alstom, according to which RAI should receive 100 Diesel locos of 2,880 kW. A condition was that 20 would be delivered from France and the other 80 would be built at the 'Wagon Pars' works in Arak. These are locos of Type AD43C, of the 'PRIMA' series with a Ruston diesel engine of Type 16RK215. Alstom has not been able to keep to the schedule with this contract, and on 11th. October 2005 only the 34th. locomotive could be accepted into service.

The newest vehicles are Diesel-Hydraulic railcar sets by Siemens of the 'Paradise' type (DH4-1). It was agreed in 2001 that five four-car sets would be built at the Siemens works in Maribor, and a further 15 at the 'Wagon Pars' in Arak. The first vehicle of this order arrived in Arak in October 2005 and was to be rebuilt at the request of the Iranians, since their wishes regarding the design had changed. Further, the sets should now receive two additional centre cars - and there are even discussions as to whether to extend them to eight cars! The steel construction and assembly is carried out at Arak under supervision of Siemens technical staff, and Siemens is delivering the equipment required. Each coach is powered (with MAN engines of 558 kW), and the sets are designed for a top speed of 160 km/h. The initial test runs revealed problems regarding contact with the rail surface, since this is not properly ground and smoothed and there are remains of weld. The result is that the ride is severely affected, and problems with the bogies and the electronics became evident. The regular test operations between Tehran and Mashhad were planned to begin in November 2005.

The passenger vehicles in use also originate from several countries. German coaches are especially noticeable - there are large numbers of coaches built by Linke-Hofmann-Busch and 165 seating and restaurant cars by Waggonbau Bautzen in cooperation with Waggon-Union Siegen. In addition there are Austrian, French, Spanish and Danish coaches. At the 'Wagon Pars' works carriages are built in large numbers on the basis of vehicles from the Simmering-Graz-Pauker Werke.

This has become a very efficient works. About 1,500 employees produce passenger and freight vehicles, using equipment from both former German States. Vehicles are constructed not only for the IIRR (Islam Iranian Republic Railways - the new name) - but for other industrial systems or for other countries such as Syria and Bangladesh.

#### **The Iranian Railways Today.**

Iran has gained importance as a transit route especially due to the dissolution of the USSR and the formation of independent Republics in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. The nearest ocean access for these countries is now on the Persian Gulf. Russia also has a strong interest in access to the Persian Gulf, but also to Pakistan and India.

The line between Mashhad and Bafq, opened in May 2005, is of especial significance for the Iranian network. It reduces the distance between the border of Turkmenistan and the Persian Gulf by some 830km. The border station at Sarakhs for Turkmenistan and, through here, to Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan is the busiest in Iran at present. It is planned to transship 7M. Tons of goods here per year.

Azerbaijan is also interested in a new link with and through Iran. The current line traverses Armenia and then an Azerbaijan Exclave and via Jolfa into Iran. Since the Moslem Azerbaijan is in conflict with the Christian Armenia, traffic over this line has become less secure. As a result the border station at Jolfa has only minor importance at present. A project to construct a line from Qazvin to Bandar-e-Anzali and further to Astara to the Azerbaijan - Iran border is already being planned from the Iranian side. Armenia is also interested in construction of a rail link with Iran and is planning one via a border station at Mergi; this is a part of the general improved cooperation between Armenia and Iran.

Iran is a partner in the various projects of the UN and the EU to improve rail freight corridors between Europa and Central Asia and India. For example, block trains are offered between Turkey via Iran to Kazakhstan as part of the 'Traceca Project'. Planning of a link from Sagan to Harat in Afghanistan has also reached an advanced stage. In the same way, a line from Arak via Khermanshah to Khosravi is to be built. An extension into Iraq to reach Baghdad is also envisaged. The closing of the 540 km. gap between Kerman and Zahedan will also be important.

Further important projects being considered at present include construction of an 180 km cut-off from Miyaneh to Tabriz. Once a line is built from Esfahan to Shiraz - 450km. - the last major city in Iran will also become rail-linked.

#### **Travel Information.**

Iran has only become a country for visiting within the last ten to fifteen years. Rituals are very important in this Islamic country, but the people are friendly. Often one has the feeling that they are not fully in agreement with what is happening in their country.

The journey which led to this article was the first organised railway enthusiast visit by Europeans - a fully new phenomenon for the local tourist authorities. Perhaps this explains why the security standards employed were high, and one often had also the feeling of being observed. There is no printed timetable available. Only the conductor is in a position to give informa-

tion regarding the intermediate halts. Even timetable departure sheets in the stations do not exist. Since the current timetable is not even available always on the Internet (on 23rd. October 2005 the new timetable, valid from 8th. Oct., was not yet available) and even then is restricted purely to the originating and destination stations, the preparation of a journey is not easy - the secretive Iran! The waiting rooms in stations and especially the platforms can only be accessed shortly before the train departure, and when in possession of a valid ticket. Tickets may only be obtained on presentation of a passport or identity card. This does not just apply to foreign tourists. In return one receives a ticket valid only for a specific person and with a guaranteed seat. The coaches are securely closed during the journey and are only unlocked when passengers need to get in or out at intermediate stations.

Photography is difficult or, better said, forbidden. This applies to all public buildings and areas. A permit must be obtained from the appropriate Ministry for each visit or excursion; in practice these permits were often interpreted in a very small-minded way (the right side of the street may be photographed, the left side not!) Often photography was simply forbidden despite the permits....."

#### **F. PALESTINE**

From 'Technische Weekblad' 2005. (Thanks to Marc Stegeman - translation from Dutch by the Editor).

Dateline Pittsburgh. Now that the Israeli colonists have left Gaza, the World Bank is trying to get some momentum into the scheme to build a rail link between Gaza and the West Bank of the Jordan. The idea is for a line or road of 40 km. between Erez in the Gaza Strip and Tarkumiya in the West Bank. The World Bank is making \$200M available, and the road or rail line would be built in a cutting some three to five metres deep, to ensure that Palestinian vehicles could not enter Israel. According to the Arcadis engineering consultancy, there is also talk of construction of a harbour in Gaza. France and the Netherlands wanted to provide \$45M at the end of the 1990's for a sea harbour for ships of max. 35,000 tons. Between 1993 and 1996 Arcadis had prepared a feasibility study and a definite outline scheme, but progress came to a halt in 2002 with the Intifada.

#### **HARAKEVET**

The world can change quickly and at the time this issue was being put together in February, various Arab and non-Arab Moslem countries were threatening to cut off all trade relations with European countries and especially Denmark. (How ironic that there are so many former Danish coaches currently in use in Iran!). So some of the news has to be taken with a pinch of caution.

#### **G SAUDI ARABIA.**

From 'Lok Magazin' 2/2006 p. 23. A consortium of Siemens and the Saudi-Arabian Nour Communications Company has won the contract from the Saudi Railway Corporation to modernise the infrastructure of the Saudi rail network. Siemens will fit the Riyadh - Dammam line with new signalling, a GSM-Railway Network and a video supervision system for the level crossings. The line is around 1000km. long. The contract has a value of 91M Euros, the Siemens part of this is worth €59M.

# THE EDITOR'S WANDERINGS.

The Editor was able to visit Israel again - briefly - for the conference on '200 Years of the Hedjaz Railway in the Emek', 6-8th. December. Here are some excerpts from the notes he took.

"Landed at Ben Gurion at 15.25 local time. (Austrian Airlines flight from Vienna). Taxied to the new terminal, Gate B7. Noted outside there are signs to the station, which is below ground level underneath the entrances - the entrances for cars, buses etc. etc. are actually all on different levels. There are ticket machines, I tried to get a single to Haifa, it wouldn't take my NIS 100 and NIS 200 notes, then a woman came out of a booth and sold me a ticket for NIS 34.50. In the meantime I had heard the 16.00 train move off below! So no rush any more. I took a few photos at the upper level then went down to get the 16.23. This was in the platform formed of 750 on old stock - 603/78/76/621/636/601/71/637 (Generator).

At 16.15 745 arr. on 56/-/ 639/115/620/74/629/638/608/79. I was quite surprised to see this old stock still in use and on this prestigious service - the exteriors are now VERY rusty, even though the insides are OK. (Opposite to the ex-SNCF coaches, as I later learned.) Of course, taking notes and pictures meant I got stopped by security while photographing the exterior of a coach with my new digital camera and asked who I was and what I was doing.... But no real problems.

Off we went. The junction with the Lod line is at km. 8.8. and then we traverse the central reservation. At the sidings south of HaHaganah there was no stock (trains now run through to the airport) but some stacks of track panels with concrete sleepers, and some cut steel bridge girders. HaHaganah, the new platform complete but not all the tracks. 16.25 7220/7201 southbound. Crossed 7013/7041. At T.A. Merkaz 731 on D/D's at 16.31, 732 on 5 D/D's was heading in as we left at 15.35. New sidings have been laid north of the station and IC3's 7032/"Mabat" livery/7008 stood there. The screen has long gone from the open-air cinema at Tel Baruch Junc. but the signal box still stands. Bought a drink and sandwich for 24 NIS from a trolley passing through. n.s. through Beit Yehoshua, at Netanya there was a rake of unidentified ballast wagons in the dark. Binyamina 16.25, a train with 4 D/D's dep. as we arrived. Atlit, then Hof Carmel, 748 in Plat. 3 on P/P stock. At Bat Galim Paul Cotterell was waiting.

Tuesday 6th. Dec.

My own lecture at the conference was a bit rushed as I only had 20 minutes for the lot! I added that one of the great Might-Have Beens was that, had the Syrian-Ottoman Railway scheme not failed, there would have been a standard gauge line along the Jezreel; this would have meant that

it would have been linked more closely with the rest of the later PR system, and Hedjaz influence would never have reached down to the coast here. This could possibly have had major political ramifications.

A Professor Hulagu of Kayseri in Turkey spoke on the Railway Policy of Abdul Hamid II. The Sublime Porte entered the Council of Europe in 1856, there was war with Russia in 1877, in 1878 England took Cyprus, and in 1881 England took Egypt, and France took Tunisia. A major aim of the Hedjaz and Baghdadbahn schemes was to obviate the need to use sea routes and the Suez Canal to reach parts of the Empire. The British campaign in the Hedjaz cost a total of GBP 45,205,000! 2,300,000 in 1918.

Paul and I were then driven down to the Haifa Museum where there was an exhibition of photos of the Hedjaz - I also bought a CD-Rom with some for NIS 20. I wondered why there seem to be no extant photos of the unloading of wagons or coaches etc. at Haifa wharf. How were things delivered? One photo of stock at Haifa shows, when looked at close-up, coaches with the windows still sheeted over for transit - i.e. they had just been delivered, presumably at the wharf in the background. but one would have thought this would have made for a dramatic photographic subject. And had the Syria-Ottoman Railway built the first jetty?

## Wednesday 7th. Dec.

I nipped out first to take some shots near the level crossing at Dolphin Bridge, Bat Galim. At 07.45 741 pushing S-bound P/P. At 07.50 733 on older stock northbound. At 07.56 three IC3 sets northbound.

Then Paul and I wandered to Bat Galim, and onto the 08.44 Parvarit local for Merkaz - 432, 486, 487 pushed by 743; 122 was on the Dagon shunt. Noted 737 on 626/ 639/ 115/ 620/ 74/ 629/ 638/ 608/ 79. We stayed on till Mizrach, not a public stop. The eight French coaches still stand there, attached to Generator coach 633 - then 96/91/94/97/95/93/92/98; they are used only once a week, for one return trip on Sunday mornings, peak period. Externally they are fine, internally they are shabby and there are complaints about them. We went over to the Museum where I was able quickly to photograph the new well wagon arrival and the P-class tender from 62, and the G16 163 and G12 107 and various tractors and trollies, before heading back to the station to meet the tour bus and the tour guide, Yossi.

At Mizrach, noted 756 on three D/D's, at 09.00 731 went northbound on Push/Pulls, 117 was shunting up and down. 09.10 track machine 902, then 3 x IC3, then Kronit 841; IC3's 7208/7203/7032/7043. 742 northbound on old stock at 09.53, e.c.s., 75/ 77/ 81/ 635/ 624/ 116/ 631/ 632 Generator.

While waiting around the East station or looking at the Turkish monument there was a lot of activity. 09.20 Jumbo 611 southbound on containers:- 70.039 Shin/ 70.026 Shin/ 70.313 Shin/ 70.047 Shin/ 70.055 Shin/ 70.124 Shin/ 70.030 Shin/ 60.244 Tet/ 60.126 Tet/ 70.076 Shin/ 60.123Tet/ 60.154Tet/ 70.065 Shin/ 70.312 Shin/ 70.140 Shin/ 70.011 Shin/ 50.014 Tet/ 70.129 Shin/ 70.074 Shin/ 70.013 Shin/ 70.035 Shin/ 60.112 Tet/ 50.022 Tet/ 70.132 Shin/ 70.059 Shin/ 70.148 Shin.

At 09.26 752 on 3 D/D's southbound, at 09.29 'Yo-Yo' 263 came LE out of the Port area. At 09.33 738 on 315/ 319/ 324/ 332/ 317/ 337/ 334/ 302 arrived at the station, paused and moved e.c.s. into sidings. Then at 09.40 763 on D/D's 473/ 472/471/470/417 southbound. Then at 09.50 Jumbo 603 moved LE southbound - no number on its cabside!

We were shown the old Moslem cemetery of the Halil family, who donated it to the Waqf of the Istikla mosque ("Independence") - which was built in 1928 by a Jewish architect! This was the only private family cemetery in Haifa.

Then we set off along the old Rakevet HaEmek. First stop the viaduct over the Kishon River - soon there will be a massive road interchange over this spot, at the moment, despite the main road, it is still rather idyllic and there was a tiyul of schoolkids down by the river itself. Then on to El Roy where an enthusiastic local chap had restored the small shelter and established a 'museum', used also for the entertainment of local children. There are a set of wagon buffers at the end of a section of narrow gauge track, a signal awaiting erection, the original station shelter, and three freight vehicles (standard gauge) on bits of extra track to hold the wider gauge. These include an ESR Goods Brake Van (built by Mitsubishi) inside which is a small exhibition of photos, a 25 Resh ballast wagon, and a wooden box van with PR 1921 axle-box covers. All wagons have been repainted and no original numbers can be made out.

Contact is: Nachum Levi, Rehov Katzenelson 11/12, 36038 Kiryat Tivon. 04-9834210. The museum was established in June 1999.

At Kiryat Haroshet there is a bit of track left in a park with a 'fake' steam loco parked on it, but we drove past at a higher level and did not make the detour.

At Kfar Yehoshua, the former Tel el-Shammam, we were greeted and addressed by Rafi Yarivat. The main and some associate station buildings have been mostly very nicely restored and re-roofed and the former road side of the station turned into an open-air entertainment area. Two standard-gauge

IR goods vans painted yellow (no numbers visible) stand here and are used for storage as necessary. The road now runs on the former tracks side of the station, and here lie also an HR van body and two HR wagon underframes - unfortunately, thieves had stolen the bogies and wheelsets which had been detached for restoration - they were found at Kiryat HaPlada steelworks three days later, but already cut up.... It appears that the increased price of scrap steel (due especially to demands for steel from China) have led to a spate of such thefts.

When the 'new' or 'rebuilt' line to Beit Shean and on to Irbid is built, soon, it will take a new alignment some 300m of the former Kfar Yehoshua station, due to the need to bypass the Ramat David airbase and other later developments. Indeed, it appears that for one reason or another quite a lot of the original HR trackbed will NOT be used by the new line.

At Afule the station area now seems much more cramped than I recalled it, new developments around, but the buildings still stand in a small 'Railway Park'.

Past Shatta Prison and to Beit Shean, where the old remains of the station still stand and decay, though some rails are visible in the dirt.

At Gesher we drove first to the police station and border post area and were then told we ought to be first at the Kibbutz for lunch, so retraced our route to the other side of the main road, and to the *Hadar Ochel* for a pleasant meal of Kibbutz food. A sign from 1948 announced that 'Turkish eggs' were now available through the Ministry for Food - a reminder of the austerity days.

Back at the museum, there is a BRCW goods van body painted green doing duty as a store next to the kiosk; the Hunslet 4-6-0T, painted green as 'H7', stands on a spur of track under a corrugated iron roof, coupled to five 60cm. gauge tubs. The line it is on leads out of a gate, and then along the road alongside the border fence, for about 200 yards, ending around a curve at a simple buffer stop. There are no points on the line.

The key exhibit is of course the set of bridges - the former HR railway bridge of Jisr el Majamie, blown on the night 14/15 May 1948 by Israelis to prevent the Jordanians and Iraqis using it, also the adjacent road bridge of Mandate times and directly next to that the Mameluke bridge (on Roman foundations and lower section). Down by this, actually in the fenced-off section, is a small viewing area near the Jordan, dedicated to an Italian-Jewish woman (Arditi) who served in the IDF and with a narrated text in Hebrew, English or Italian.

On the railway bridge stand two HR vans and two HR open wagons, in various stages of semi-restoration. One has 'Hedjaz' axleboxes in Arabic, another 'Breslau' axlebox covers. By the road bridge, an old Egged bus stands (propped up to spare the axles and tyres), with some dummies sitting inside, at the restored old border post.

Omri Shalmon, the organiser of the museum, led us on in his car along the bor-

der fence track and over a bridge, till we approached the so-called 'Island of Peace' - we were told that this area had seen several changes of sovereignty during the various negotiations with the Jordanians, and on this island several Israeli schoolgirls were shot and killed while on a picnic.... there is a memorial at a little car park near the entrance, which is also a border post and in the middle of the former Naharayim power station complex. Also standing here, almost overgrown and on a panel of track next to the dirt track, are the two IR ballast wagons.

By the old trenches above El Hamme it was getting rather dark - one could see the blown bridge deep down in the gorge. We then tried to locate where the railway line had once crossed the road - and couldn't! I found a culvert on our right and we stopped the bus to explore, but decided it was probably from the former alignment of the road, not the railway. Back past Samakh and straight on towards Tiberias, then left up to Poriyah, it now got pretty dark as we drove back to Haifa.

#### Thursday 8th. Dec.

Decided to go to Beersheba and Jerusalem. This is effectively what happened, though with a few adventures along the way. Also called Sybil Ehrlich and arranged to meet her at Beit Shemesh and travel to Jerusalem and back with her. After breakfast set off for Bat-Galim and bought a return to Beersheba. 92.NIS. Noted 754 pushing D/D's northbound. At 09.44. 756 pushed 447/448/415 towards Merkaz. My train, 305/320/316/342/329/335/323/318/339/753 pushing. (I had been rather hoping to get a set of the old coaches where one can sometimes open a window.)

08.54 4 IC3 sets headed northbound at Hof Carmel, and in Plat. 3, 742 on 311/313/338/301. (This is a loop line). At Atlit trolley 841 stood in the loop. Plat 3 is a northbound loop.

At Zichron Yaakov several wagons, incl. 50 106 Resh/ 50.112 Resh/ 50.104 Resh/ 40.007 Resh/ etc.

At Binyamina Quarry the sidings are still connected but looking rather disused. At Binyamina crossed 735 on 603(Mekomot Shmurim)/ 78/ 76/ 621/ 636/ 601/ 71/ 637. There is a new footbridge over the south end of the station. At Remez Junc. the line to Hadera Maarav looks well used - there is a daily freight here.

At Hadera Maarav 70.139 *Shin*, 70.046 *Shin*/ 70.011 *Shin*/ 70.005 *Shin* and several other flat wagons standing in the container sidings on the west side of the station.

At Netanya there are at least 12 of the CFR bogie ballast wagons standing in the sidings. At km. 72 at Beit Yehoshua the short remains of the stub siding are still in place. At Kfar Vitkin still the northbound goods loop. At around km. 83.5, just N. of Herzliyya, still a wooden box van body grounded on R. We passed through Herzliyya n.s. 09.40, still a northbound loop and siding by the old station, S. end points are km. 84.9.

At Tel Aviv University the fourth platform now has the rails connected at the south

end, over a new bridge, but not yet at the north end. Doubling of the Bnei Berak line has not yet reached here. At Tel Aviv Merkaz I could now see in daylight that a third island platform 5/6 is almost ready. Three loop sidings for empty stock have been laid (not all fully ballasted yet) north of the station on the east side. 761 dep. at 09.52 northbound pushing 414/464/465/466.

I was amazed to see, parked on the track under the bridge on what will be Plat. 5, a yellow German lorry from Bad Oldesloe, reg. no. OD.TS 168, MAN Zweiweg, "Thormählen Schweisstechnik Bad Oldesloe, +49 4531-17620, Railtech Schlatter System". The driver was in the cab eating his sandwiches. It was still there in the evening.

7028/7017 arr. in Plat. 1 and terminated. 747 was pushing four D/D's. 755 was on /- 483/ 477/ 476/ 419 for Ashdod.

Dep. at 10.05, took the crossover from track 3 to 2; the third track is now in the whole way, at HaShalom the side of the platform (making 2/3 into an island) is still blocked off but at HaHaganah where the new track divides I jumped off - here there are now two island platforms, the new 3/4 not yet open - and jumped up some stairs and managed to get a couple of photos albeit being challenged. 766 on 75/ 77/ 81 etc. went past.

Took the 10.17 on to Beersheba from HaHaganah, IC3's 7043/7047. A flyover rises on the alignment of tracks 3/4 and rises over us roughly opposite the old Tel Aviv South station and presumably then forms the route under construction to Rishon LeTzion North. At Lod Plat. 1 is used for Jerusalem and Beersheba, Plat. 3 for Rehovot etc.. 50.015 *Shin*, and D/D set 409/ 449/ 450/ 454 with 759 stood in sidings on L. 7028/ 7017 e.c.s. at sdg. Passed n.s. through Ramle at 10.32; the old signal still stands solitary and lonely amongst the scrub and grass where the old cement works branch went off to the works! 10.35 a brief sigs. halt before Naan. The old PR station buildings are still there though there has been earth cleared next to them; the former trolley shed with its corrugated-iron sides and roof still stands but trackless. Next to the signal box where the half-PR-coach once stood is now a lot of new growth.

From here on to Beersheba a lot of changes. Many engineering works for the new road, and also some for new railway alignments or for doubling - but I could not make out kilometre posts most of the way, and it was often unclear which was which. Stacks of new concrete sleepers to the trackside, but very little actual doubling done yet - just the pre-existing lengthy crossing loops.

At 11.05 to Kiryat Gat - the little industrial spur curving off eastwards at the north end has been lifted. However, a third, separate platform is being built on the loop, on the east side. Why? Unless anything terminates here, or has to be overtaken, both unlikely why would a third platform be necessary? A large yellow track machine "C330 Fno 2278" of 'Track' attached to a 4wh. flat wagon stood on one of the two (or three?) short sidings on the E. side - there is also a shed here for P-Way vehicles.

At a loop we crossed 2 x IC3, before the remains of the old Turkish embankment were briefly visible once more.

Passed Dvira n.s. 11.25; sign at S. end. By km. 56.4 the embankment has been widened. Then a cutting on R. big enough for two more tracks. A new alignment?

At Beer Sheva Universita cross IC3 sets 7015/7046/7011; The new station comprises an island platform, very long, and numbered Platforms 3 and 4, and then on the south side a platform still under construction, presumably the future Plat. 2, and the large new airy building. No sign of a Platform 1 or even really space for one. From outside the building, by the plaza, a covered footpath sets off and becomes the lengthy footbridge forming the link to the university campus itself. I was able to walk off the end of the platform, across the track, onto the old platform and along, alongside the MTR works and back, then outside the building, inside, and retrace my steps without passing a ticket barrier!

12.28, a set of IC3's backed into the old station. Sets 7032/7043/7047. At 12.32 the 12.21 to Beer Sheba Merkaz, running late. 7205/7025/7041/7213. Two catering trolleys were taken off, to join the northbound service on the other side of the island platform. Quite a few people waiting. Got the next train on to Beer Sheba - 7047/7043/7032.

In the freight sidings were Jumbos 606, 605 and crane 916. In the MTR yard still the derelict BR Mk.2 coach and an IC3 set 7003 in 'Mandarin' all-over advertising livery. Ramta - 4 D/D Steuerwagen, 2 other coaches and a blue/yellow 4wh. shunter. There is no sign of any triangle being built or even of land being cleared for such an alignment; the Beersheva - Dimona service will be merely a shuttle from Dimona to Universita - but it is not clear whether this will be to a separate bay platform 1.

Shortly before the final curve to the right to enter Beer Sheva Merkaz station, a spur goes off to the left - this is the line to Ramat Hovav, a dump for unpleasant rubbish. At Merkaz station itself the initial two platforms with their crossover are in use, but the new platforms 3 (the second side of 2) and 4 (a new side platform) are almost complete; workers were on ladders fixing lighting; The station nameboards, covered in clear plastic, stood nearby ready to be fitted. However, there are no tracks laid as yet, and on walking to the station throat it becomes clear that the existing platforms are served by a line which crosses a road bridge and curves quite sharply to the north, and there is no indication of where or how the tracks to the new platforms (on the south side of the existing ones) can or will be connected! The platforms are about ten coach lengths - just too short to take a 12-coach train - when four IC3's come in, the last two coaches are off the platform end.

Arr. 12.40. Decided not to dash for the next departure a few minutes later but to take the hour to look around and photo-

graph, and did so. (Also went to the bus station to buy a couple more films and a felafer for 6 NIS.) At 13.12 7004(Zevulun)/7047/7043/7032 arrived. Then got these as the next train back to Lod at 13.46 (at 13.44 7416/7206/7236/7035 had arrived), arrived 14.48, and changed here for a Jerusalem train. (There is no sign of any doubling works on the Lod - Na'an bottleneck.)

At Lod noted a rake of ballast wagons including 40.025 Resh/ 40.023/ 019/ 028/ 004/ 002/ 022/ 036/ 024/ 012/ 023 Resh and a couple of 25 Resh hoppers. At 14.51 736 and four D/D's left Plat. 4 for Binyamina. At 14.52 7214 alone formed the Jerusalem train from Plat. 1. Na'an,. paused 15.06 to let two units (7039 at rear) cross.

At Beit Shemesh Sybil Ehrlich got in and we sat together as the train wound its way up the hills. It was noticeable just how good quality the workmanship seems to be - retaining walls out of carefully-matched and sized stones, not just any old concrete - of course the speed is still slow. Loops in at Bar Giyorra, where we crossed a train, and at Bittir.

At Malcha (arr. 15.58) 7037/7034 sat in the opposite platform. Sybil went up to get return tickets and I wandered around and used the last of my film. (The battery on the digital camera had expired some time earlier in the day....) Then a bossy woman security guard came and demanded to know if I had a ticket and why was I taking photos, "Assur Letzalem!" and all that. Sybil came back, we all discussed matters, I showed her "Harakevet" with photos of the very station under construction, told her that it was nowhere written that photography was forbidden, but nothing worked. She called another guy, he called a superior, all wanted to see passports etc., we explained we were OK, we were "Chovevei Rakevet", things seemed to calm down so we shrugged and took our places on the waiting 16.09, but then the guards came on and demanded we follow them! We protested we would miss the train but we insisted, so we had no choice but to get up. Now I decided to stop playing "Mr. Nice Guy" and smiling and shrugging, but to get angry, so I shouted that this was silly - and then the doors closed and the train glided out! So I demanded to know his name. We went up the escalator, and I got rather angry with the security chap. But we had to follow him upstairs to the Menahel haTahanah, where Sybil burst out with "Yossi!" - it was her old friend who used to be Station Master at Beit Shemesh! He gave the security chap a wiggling and Butz coffee was made for us. We walked around, looked at the ridiculous Egged bus stops. These have Hebrew on one side and a form of English on the other - really, it is NOT a good advertisement for Egged, but they never seem to care. For instance, "K:" doesn't help anyone who doesn't know it means Kiryat or Kfar. Plus, they all were headed "Malcha Rail Way Station" !! (sic.)

On the other hand, on the rail platforms one wants, in addition to the rather complex all-system timetables with their various columns and different colours, a straightforward Departures sheet of the type common in Europe.

Apparently there is a regular morning Minyan on the 07.45 from Beit Shemesh.

At 16.55 7022/7040 arrived. The station is vast and largely unnecessary - two platforms would be enough, there are no sales or refreshment outlets yet in the big hall. We set off 17.09, by which time it was pitch dark. At Bar Giyorra waited in the loop until two IC3 sets passed us at 17.37.

At Lod, 18.20, there were now a rake of grain wagons and two rakes of containers in the sidings. Arr. Tel Aviv Plat.2 at 18.40, perfect to cross over to the 18.42 Express, due into Bat Galim at 19.44 and terminating at Haifa Merkaz 19.51. The Bad Oldesloe lorry was still there. I noted that palm trees have been planted opposite Plat. 1 and might help to shield it from the noisy road on the other side of the wall. A stopping-point marker for double-deck trains is placed between the tracks, and labelled "Nekudat Atzira Do-Komati".

762 was on 328/327/312/314/326/340/333/331/303. Coaches 331 and 333 are branded "GEC Alstom-Haargaz". Both the headlight and tail lights were on simultaneously! The train stopped short at first, then inched forward before the door release was activated. The platform surface on Plats. 1 & 2 is being relaid. I noted that Universita station also bears "Merkaz HaYedidim" on the signs. At 19.05 there was a brief sigs. stop north of Beit Yehoshua, a level crossing problem as we were waved across. At Netanya there seemed to be around 20 wagons. Arr. Bat Galim 19.55. Sat on the platform a bit. At 20.00 another train went northbound - formed of IC3 sets 7026/7023/7010/7045, and then at 20.01 a southbound train, grubby exteriors, coaches 305/320/316/342/329/335/323/318/339 pushed by 753. Then at 20.10 a southbound freight passed through Bat Galim on the centre track: Jumbo G26 607 on:  
65.044 Peh / 65.024 Peh / 65.009 Peh / 65.027 Peh / 65.035 Peh / 63.054 Shin / 63.060 Shin / 63.002 Shin / 63.018 Shin / 63.040 Shin / 63.042 Shin / 63.042 Shin / 63.029 Shin / 63.037 Shin / 63.006 Shin / 63.031 Shin / 63.007 Shin / 63.030 Shin / 63.020 Shin / 63.034 Shin / 63.024 Shin / 63.022 Shin / 63.025 Shin / 63.027 Shin / 63.056 Shin.

At 20.39 Plasser machine 902 passed the LC southbound.

Then after sitting and talking and reading till after midnight, Paul and I walked down to the road and I got a taxi to Hof Carmel - NIS 40. Here the station was open and I could buy a ticket to Ben Gurion for 34.50 NIS. and then wait on the platform. (5 NIS = □1.) Nothing else came through in the hour or so I waited, but gradually more and more people arrived for the train.

Waited for the 01.40 train to the airport - IC3 7009. 20 got on at Hof Carmel. Through Atlit 01.47, then crossed an Alstom on a block train of containers. After Zichron we travelled on the R-hand track until Binyamina, arr. 02.00. Here crossed another Alstom loco on containers in Plat. 3, and there was yet a further train of containers in one goods loop beyond and a rake of grain wagons in another loop. A few more got on. The new

## I R STEAM ENGINE KILOMETRAGES

By Paul Cotterell.

The Hebrew language File Kaf/69 ('Monthly Survey of Engine Kilometrages') in the IRM Archives provides a detailed and fascinating insight into practically the whole of the steam loco era on Israel Railways. It also gives the same statistics for the diesels following their entry into IR stock but I shall limit this review to steam only, leaving the diesels to someone else who may – Lord knows why – take a sufficient interest in the things.

The file covers the period from June 1948 (ie. the first full month of IR) to July 1959, not long after steam working finally ceased. It is mostly a pretty ghastly mass of numbers, and would require a mighty long time to digest fully and put into proper order for any sort of definitive article. Even then, the final result might easily take up a whole issue of Harakevet. The statistics are not to a set layout, the format changing over the years as experience was gained in how to present the material. A computer would probably be essential to keep track of everything while compiling a comprehensive and accurate work for publication. Computers are definitely not my field of expertise (if it don't work on steam then I'm lost). Nevertheless, a very broad initial outline of the IR steam loco saga can be presented in much abbreviated form here; perhaps something similar will be attempted for each individual engine at a later date. But first, some main points to bear in mind:

1. All working engines are listed individually on a monthly basis making it possible to extrapolate reasonably accurately those periods when each loco was out of use for maintenance, repairs, or final withdrawal from service.
2. The different types of kilometrage worked by each loco (passenger, freight, shunting, light engine etc) are recorded separately in the file as are the kilometers worked since the last general overhaul.
3. There are marked seasonal fluctuations in the use of steam locos, particularly from the early 1950s as the first diesels began to arrive. These variations also reflect traffic patterns as more locos were required for the winter citrus fruit picking season or other temporary traffic flows. The percentage of kilometers worked by steam and diesel was approximately equal as early as the first half of 1955, the diesels being used as much as possible on main line work with the steam locos being increasingly relegated to shunting and trip work etc, which entailed less travelling distance.
4. From October 1949 the loco allocations for Haifa and Lod are shown separately (previously they were lumped together). By October 1957 all the remaining active steam engines are listed as being concentrated at Lod. The last active steamer recorded at Haifa the previous month was Nasmyth Wilson 0-6-0T No.42.
5. Narrow gauge loco kilometres are also listed. Just two Hedjaz Railway engines are recorded as working after May 1948, these being SLM 2-8-0 153 and Hartmann 2-8-2 265. They only worked occasionally, and the very last HR train in Israel appears to have been in September 1951 (which accords nicely with the details given in 68:6:b). In that month 153 is shown as working 480 kms and 265 as running 80 kms. Thereafter no further reference is made to HR locos.

6. Israel Railways gained five extra steam locos following the Sinai Campaign of October 1956. These were ESR 2-6-0s Nos.546, 550, 577, 607 and 613. Hardly anything was previously known about their time on IR but file Kaf/69 confirms that four of them saw service in Israel. The only one that did not was 607. I have a photo showing this loco well and truly shot-up. It is not possible to identify the engine from the print but, by a simple process of elimination, we can now be certain that the much perforated 607 was simply laid aside until scrapped. 546 and 577 entered IR service in January 1957 after their boilers had been hydraulically tested. 550 began work in Israel in April and 613 in July 1957. 550 is recorded as still active in February 1959, the last month of regular steam working, together with USA/TC 0-6-0Ts 20 and 21 (but see Note 2 for complications).

7. By no means all standard gauge locos taken over from PR saw service on IR. Only examples from the following types are noted as working after June 1948: Baldwin 4-6-2T, Baldwin 4-6-4T, Baldwin 4-6-0, Nasmyth Wilson 0-6-0T, P Class 4-6-0, LMS 2-8-0, USA/TC 0-6-0T.

The following table gives a summary of the kilometers per month worked by steam on a six-monthly basis from June 1948, both on the standard gauge (SG) and narrow gauge (NG). No attempt has been made to break this down into categories for the reasons given in the second paragraph. The first figure shows the kilometrage worked each month and the figure in brackets records the number of locos which actually worked during that month. It will be seen that the number of steam engines in service rose from just twelve in June 1948 to well over fifty by the early 1950s as both Israel Railways and the State of Israel began to recover from the War of Independence and its aftermath. Thereafter steam working declined, quite gradually at first, as the diesels arrived.

footbridge is lit up. Hadera, 2 off, 1 on. At 02.14 south of Hadera we crossed a freight. Netanya, 1 off, none on. After Netanya there were 44 passengers on board, thus proving the need for such a service. Passed Herzliya n.s. at 02.28, crossed a light engine north of Tel Baruch Junc. Tel Aviv Merkaz Plat. 3, 9 on, 7 off. At the junction to the airport we moved to the right-hand track until the station itself. Arr.Plat. 1 at 02.46, 6 mins. late. Trolley 988 stood in Plat. 2.

It was an uneventful trip except that I kept being asked by the security guard why I was interested in making notes. At the airport station at ground level are plaques, the station was designed by Lissar-Eldar Architects, the Contractors were A. Arenson Ltd., 2004.

At the airport discovered that the Austrian Airlines check-in was on the ground floor, the rest are on the 2nd. floor, and I couldn't check in until 04.00! So had to wander around with my suitcase for a while. Risked a few photos. Watched the 04.00 departure from by the bus access road level - IC3 units 37/34/29/30."



72:11 Kfar-Ssava Sokolov Station almost completed..  
Photo A Gazit

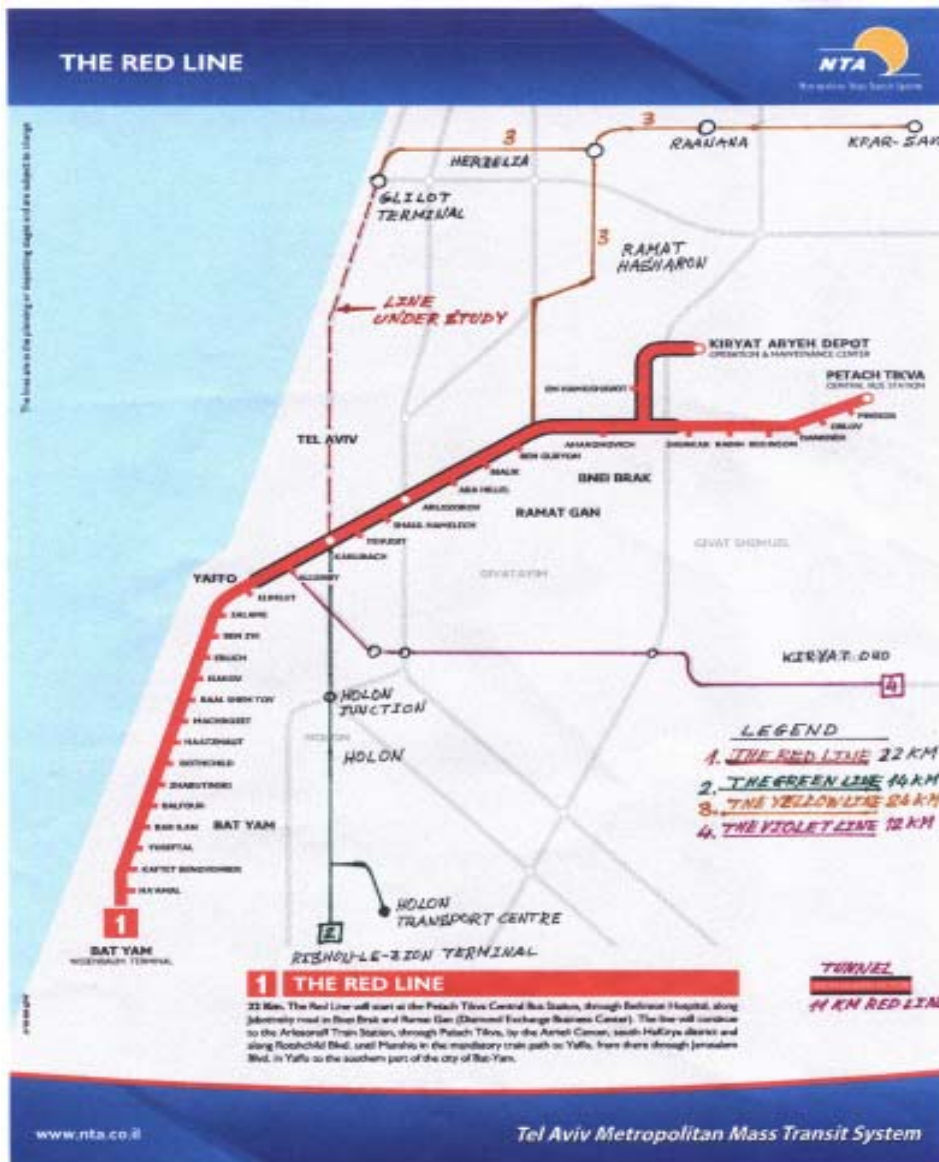
June 1948 SG: 25,948 (12). NG: 74 (?).  
 December 1948 SG: 16,409 (18). NG: 0.  
 June 1949 SG: 23, 667 (13). NG: 72 (1).  
 December 1949 SG: 84,560 (43). NG: Not shown, presumably 0.  
 June 1950 SG: 117,758 (42). NG: Not shown, presumably 0.  
 December 1950 SG: 147,036 (51). NG: Not shown, presumably 0.  
 June 1951 SG: 139,263 (49). NG: Not shown, presumably 0. (No NG steam working recorded after 9/51).  
 December 1951 SG: 143,806 (54).  
 June 1952 SG: 129,189 (53).  
 December 1952 SG: 92,316 (39).  
 June 1953 SG: 59,147 (47).  
 December 1953 SG: 115,617 (48).  
 June 1954 SG: 85,306 (38).  
 December 1954 SG: 113,321 (41).  
 June 1955 SG: 62,059 (27).  
 December 1955 SG: 71,831 (26).  
 June 1956 SG: 46,376 (23).  
 December 1956 SG: 45,597 (17).  
 June 1957 SG: 28,715 (17).  
 December 1957 SG: 24,886 (14).  
 June 1958 SG: 19,265 (9).  
 December 1958 SG: 15,352 (7).  
 February 1959 SG: 1,961 (3).

**NOTES:**

1. February 1959 was the last month of steam working. There is no mention in the file of further occasional use being made of Baldwin 4-6-0 901 to about mid-1959 (as noted on p.29 of my book) for which there was only anecdotal evidence. According to legend it was put back into service to shunt and work some local trip freights between Lod and Petach Tiqva. However, the file shows that 901 did not work for IR at all! So we can safely dismiss that particular story, certainly so far as 901 is concerned, as strictly non-kosher. A myth demolished!

2. There is a well known short black & white film called 'HaKatar' ('The Locomotive') which features LMS 2-8-0 70414 hauling the last steam powered passenger train out of Beersheba, and always believed to have been made sometime in 1958. From Lod, where it is exchanged for a G12 diesel, 70414 continues light engine to Haifa and is finally seen entering Qishon Works for disposal where it passes an obviously derelict ex-ESR 2-6-0 No.550 among other dumped steam engines. Now, there is a problem with this. 70414 was noted in File Kaf/69 as having last worked in October 1958, so how could 550 still be working regularly (for so it is recorded) right up to

the bitter end in February 1959 if it was filmed derelict at Qishon several months earlier?! A frenzied search turned up a very few relevant memos in File Kaf/43/4 ('Films') and, while not providing a definitive answer, they do point to the filming being carried out in 1958. This would seem to be confirmed by a note from Schweizerische Bundesbahnen of 26/4/60 to M. Gabrielli, then Public Relations Officer of IR, in which it was stated that "Your film 'Engine No.70414', shown at the Brussels World Exhibition 1958, is certainly a fine piece of work". So there we are - stuck with that niggling riddle of the derelict 550. I should add that, when asked, Ya'akov Abutbul (former Traffic Manager on IR) remembered that the General Manager, Menachem Savidor, had belatedly realized that the steam era was over on IR with nothing to commemorate it - the inference being that the film was an outcome of this sudden revelation. Ya'akov thought it "very possible" that 70414 had been resurrected specially for filming purposes sometime after February 1959 but, of course, this version cannot be reconciled with the film being screened in Brussels in 1958. And there we must leave things for now, lest we become guilty of creating a new myth.



Plan of the T A Mass Transit System courtesy of A Gazit