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הרכבת

A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of the Middle East
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EDITORIAL.

The word that comes to mind this quarter is 'turbulent'. Throughout North Africa and the Middle East there have been political tensions, revolutions, civil wars - in some countries it appears the existing regimes have been toppled, in others they have been, like a James Bond Martini, „shaken, not stirred“ - but things will never be the same again. It is hard for a dictator to massacre large numbers of people in a modern hi-tech society where almost everyone has a camera in their Mobile phone and access to internet, and then claim to be the benign father of his people. Some will no doubt continue to try. And whether the new régimes will be able to concentrate much on infrastructure rather than religious fundamentalism, and whether surviving regimes will decide to invest more in infrastructure projects to create employment opportunities for disaffected and frustrated younger people - no-one as yet knows. It is almost amusing to read press releases prepared only a couple of months ago when everything seemed stable, solid and static. Some are reproduced here ‚for the historical record‘ only; it is unclear whether they are still actually valid as ‚news‘. Press date for this issue is 8th. May.

Within Israel - an amazing island of political content, one of the few countries where the government is not sending tanks to shoot at its own citizens - there is turbulence of another sort. Major plans for expansion of the railway system are taking shape, but there is also a power struggle for control within the Railways - a struggle between the various Ministries, struggle between Management and Unions. It would be nice to concentrate only on the good news but, alas, that forms only a part of the content.

Once more the sheer weight of news makes it harder to squeeze in historical items. One item worth mentioning is however that Chen Melling and others have worked enormously hard to ensure that Paul Cotterell's book will soon be available also in German, as ‚Bahnt den Weg‘ (Hentrich & Hentrich, ISBN 978-3-94 71- 0- .) This is more than just a straightforward translation of the original English version, and includes also extensive maps.

Nevertheless - Enjoy!

The Editor



93:03.

Accident at Netanya, see next page.

93:01.(Cover)

At press date (end of May) Muammar Gadhafi was still refusing to stand down as State leader in Libya. Maybe this is one reason? The IC-4 diesel unit, luxuriously outfitted and a gift from Silvio Berlusconi of Italy, on a section of the new railway under construction in Libya. (Photo courtesy of Minirex AG).

NEWS FROM THE LINE

(i). MORE MANAGEMENT CHANGES.

Issue 9 had barely gone to press - literally, Steve had just completed the layout - when news came on 16.03.2011 that IR General Manager Yitzhak Harel had announced his final resignation after three and a half years in the post and about nine months following his initial resignation and then return at the personal request of Prime Minister Netanyahu and Transport & Roads Safety Minister Katz. He would however continue his duties only until a successor was found.

There have been many achievements during his term of office; turning the railways into a commercial company, a record in track laying (95km. in 2010 alone), purchase of new rolling stock (including 31 single-deck Siemens push/pull carriages; 4 double-deck push/pull carriages from Bombardier; 34 main line diesel-electric locos from Vossloh); the \$8.4 Billion development agreement was signed, the subsidy agreement was amended to change the Railways from an operational to a service-directed company; a wages agreement was signed for the first time since 2006, the Retirement programme has been implemented, and attention has been paid to excessive wages. Mr. Harel also put especial emphasis on integrity.

He said „Railway management is a challenging, fascinating, hard and satisfactory job; I have taken no simple and certainly no populist decisions in order to promote reforms and lay the foundations for a more modern and efficient railway, always aiming at rail development and the company's welfare. Isra-Rail Co. Ltd. is today a powerful company in growth mode facing an increasing demand for services from the passengers who have decided to use rail as their transport mode. During the past years I have acted to promote an advanced infrastructure for the large growth forecast for the coming years as a result of opening new lines and stations, and particularly in terms of the switch to electrification which I am promoting, and which will put the railways in a position to provide a service level comparable to that of the world's advanced

rail networks. I am leaving the privilege of cutting the ribbons to others!"

Transport Minister Katz has thanked Mr. Harel for his contribution and wished him well in the future.

(ii). FURTHER BRAKING INCIDENT.

On Thursday 17.03.2011 there was a further incident of a jammed parking brake disc on a double-deck train which left Nahariyya in the morning. The brake overheated. One of the passengers who saw white smoke rising from underneath one of the carriages applied the emergency brake and the train stopped several kilometres south of Nahariyya. No-one was hurt but passengers had to wait a long time - one report says several hours - for replacement buses, though the management claim that they had called immediately for buses.

ACCIDENT AT NETANYA.

Around 09.00 on the morning of Thursday 8th. April a serious accident occurred at the southern end of Netanya station - with ca. 60 casualties but fortunately no fatalities. As is usual news came in dribs and drabs but it appears that a southbound train (Train 47 Binyamina - Tel-Aviv - Ashkelon) of double-deckers headed by 767 and due to depart 09.15 departed from Platform 1 against a red signal and hit the second and third coaches (also double-deckers, the driving vehicle was 401) of a terminating Rehovot - Tel-Aviv - Netanya suburban service Train 06 being propelled by 756 from the northbound main line track 1 into the Platform 3 loop line. This was due at 09.13 so was running some seven minutes late. The loco and lead carriage of the southbound train were derailed and damaged; at least two coaches of the northbound train were very badly damaged and look from photos to be write-offs. (JUST what IR needs at present!).

The collision took place at relatively slow speed since the brakes are automatically applied after a 'SPAD' (Signal passed at Danger'). Nevertheless, the combined closing speed was ca. 60 km/h., hence the damage.

The southbound train probably passed the red signal, the northbound train would also have been moving slowly if it was approaching the station and over a crossover. The loco driver suffered moderate injuries, some sixty passengers reported slight inju-



ries - this category includes trauma without physical harm. The main Tel-Aviv - Haifa line had to be closed until the Saturday for clearance and repairs.

There is a link to photos of the accident (scroll down a bit in the link)

<http://www.hnn.co.il/gallery13615.html>

Of course this all came on top of other lines being closed this week for infrastructure works, even with replacement buses organised, for traffic is heavy on Thursdays, and resulted in some chaos. The Transport Ministry and Police immediately established an investigative committee.

Benny Attar commented:-

„Here is a link to the police helicopter's video of the accident site:-

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XIF-0w9FTE0&feature=player_embedded#at=35

I understand that one carriage is a total loss, and at least one other carriage - the driving trailer of the northbound train - cannot be repaired in Israel and will have to be returned to Bombardier in Germany for repair. The locomotive is too badly damaged to be moved by rail on its own bogies. It has been mentioned that it might need to be removed by road. It will be anything from 1 to 3 years before it is returned to traffic (It will go to Spain for repairs - at the Alsthom factory, now owned by Vossloh - the Vossloh builders plate appears on locos from number 778 onwards).

Israel Railways currently has no reserve carriages and might have to make cuts in the timetable, following the recent losses of rolling stock (IC3 set number 5 destroyed by fire in December, two double deck carriages damaged in a shunting incident a couple of months ago, the loss of loco 767), a push-pull driving trailer damaged by an electrical fire last year“.

A few days later Chen Melling confirmed that the leading cars of train 06, Nos. 401 and 431, are believed to be write-offs,

while three others are withdrawn from service for repairs. All were taken to Haifa on their own wheels, but loco 767 was taken by truck.

Aharon makes the point that this

is only the second actual collision between two passenger trains in the entire history of IR; the previous one was in summer 1963 near Beit Yehoshua, a head-one smash which led one loco to climb onto the other - again, there were injuries but no fatalities.

On 05.2011 IR announced that all passengers who were on board the two trains involved will receive a free monthly ticket. Those who had been registered and taken to hospital are known, but others will have to contact the railways.

(iii). COMPENSATION ISSUES.

The YNET website (part of the popular newspaper 'Yediot Acharonot') in mid-March raised the question as to why the penalties paid by bus companies for late arrivals and departures are much higher than those of the railways; One example given was an Egged bus which arrived over an hour late, and the penalty was \$3360!!!! [Ed. adds - this can NOT be per person, but must imply everyone on the vehicle!] On the railways, for a delay of 30-60 mins. the passenger receives one free ticket, for two hours two tickets, and for less than 30 minutes, nothing. The site also complains that the Railways' General Manager sets these levels and not the Transport Ministry. The campaign is not new, but the public pressure on the Ministry is growing.

(iv). INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS.

These continue, of course, and involve much disruption to traffic. (One wonders - too much?) The lines Tel-Aviv - Beer-Sheva - Dimona, Tel-Aviv - Rishon-LeZion, Tel-Aviv - Ashkelon and Tel-Aviv - Jerusalem were to be closed from Monday 04.04.11 - Friday 08.04.11 (inclusive - i.e. an entire week!), traffic being due to resume Saturday night 09.04. Services to the north and Modi'in will operate as usual, but the stations at Tel-Aviv Hashalom and Ha-Haganah will of course be reduced and the stations Kfar-Habad, Lod Ganai-Aviv, Lod, Rishonim, Be'er-Ya'akov, Rehovot, Yavne, Ashdod, Ramla, Beit-Shemesh, Jerusalem (Zoo & Malcha), Kiryat Gat, Lehavim-Rahat, Beer-Sheva North/Universita, Beer-Sheva Central and Dimona will effectively be closed for the week. Works will include: Upgrading Lod station, infrastructure and signalling works on the Ayalon line between Tel-Aviv Haganah and Universita to increase capacity at peak periods from 11 to 14 trains/hour each direction, and the project 'Tel-Aviv to Beer-Sheva in 50 Minutes' which is now approaching completion; within this project 95km. of line between Lod and Beer-Sheva has been doubled, upgraded and where necessary realigned and straightened, thus enabling a cut in journey time from 75 to 50 minutes.

(v). THE NEW AKKO - CARMIEL LINE.

From a press release of the Transport Ministry & National Roads Co.: On Thursday 17.03.011 the first tender will be published for building the \$0.78 Billion, double-track, 13km. line between Akko (Acre) and Carmiel (in the Lower Galilee), to run parallel with Road No. 85.

The tender also includes preparing the alignment for laying tracks between Na'aman Junc. (operational station) in the west and Yasif road junction in the east. The line will have two new stations at Achihud and another at the entrance to Carmiel; there will also be tunnels, bridges and new alignments for creeks, two railway bridges over Na'aman River and Khilazon creek, and rebuilding Road No. 4 along 1.1km. to run over the planned tracks.

The National Roads Co. General Manager, architect Shay Baras, said that works on the planned 160km/h line will be completed within five years. Minister Katz and Mr. Baras said that the line to Carmiel was only the first stage of the planned line to Kiryat Shemona (in the Upper Galilee near the Lebanese border), which will enable those living on the country's periphery to reach Tel Aviv easily.

The Roads Co. will also publish the second tender for the revival of the Haifa - Afula line; this will deal with the 7.5km of line between the future stations of Kfar Yehoshua and Kfar Baruch, including also agricultural bridges and a bridge over Nahal Creek.

(vi). UGLY CONTROVERSY.

The General Manager Harel cannot enjoy his final weeks in office in peace; in the week of 01th. March he and his Chairman of Directorate Uri Yogeve were subjected to a 'siege' from angry employees protesting against the proposed outsourcing of rolling-stock maintenance; even death threats were apparently made! The police and security forces were called to evacuate the senior managers. Meanwhile the workers' union has instructed railwaymen to start sanctions, including the holding-up of freight traffic, and denied the accusations of having made such extreme threats. (And see below.)

(vii). HIGH TENSION.

On Wed. 13.03.11 there was concern that an overhead high-voltage cable might fall onto the line between B'nei Berak and Hod HaSharon. Traffic was suspended for several hours until teams from the Israel Electric Co. had repaired the line.

(viii). MONTHLY SEASON TICKET CONFUSION.

Due to the reduction in the prices of monthly bus passes, the sale of combined bus/rail passes started only on 30.03 after updating; Passengers who had al-

ready paid the higher price will be refunded the difference.

(ix). PUNCTUALITY AND CONGESTION.

Y-NET published a special article in March which claimed that IR is masaging its punctuality figures - in 008 for example it claimed 91% punctuality overall whereas on Sundays it was only 70.5% in the morning peak hours; in January 008 66.5%, in November 008 58% and in December 008 67%. Between January and May 009 average punctuality in morning peak hours was about 63%. In the first half of 010 punctuality reached around 91%, which is 7% than that required by the government; however, in the second half it was only 87%; the figures are even more problematical for December 010 when as a result of the IC3 'punctuality' was 90% and yet many services were cancelled.

The State Comptroller, who checked these figures, introduced the policy that created the bonus/penalty mechanism, which means that when punctuality is good the railways will receive a bonus, whereas in case of delays they will have to pay a penalty. According to Y-NET the budget for bonus/penalty payments is around \$1.8M as against an annual subsidy of over \$95M and a current budget of \$84M.

The Railways' response was that some of the delays in 010 were due to speed restrictions due to intensive infrastructure works (in addition to the line closures which still continue); in addition traffic on Sundays and Thursdays (when many soldiers use the trains to reach their homes or their remote bases) rises from 130,000 regular daily passengers to 150,000. This is in addition to the well-known shortage of rolling-stock caused partially by several accidents, and which will be resolved only with the delivery of rolling stock already ordered. The first of these will be the 37 Siemens push/pull carriages due to start arriving in August 011, much earlier than originally planned.

Harel, the retiring General Manager, and himself an Army General in reserves, had suggested some time ago that the Army and the Defence Ministry enable soldiers to reach their destinations later on Sundays, to board trains at 08.30 on Sundays and after 19.00 on Thursdays; the Finance Ministry has allocated the \$8.5M necessary and if the Transport & Road Safety Ministry gives its approval this new arrangement (which would ease the peak loadings) could start from Sunday 03.04.011.

[Ed. adds: Of course the whole point of 'average' figures is that they round out the peaks and troughs. I recall Clive Lawton once explaining hilariously how a British Minister of Education had complained bitterly that, despite investment in Education, 50% of the pupils were still 'be-

low average'.]

However, a later report was that the negotiations over changes to transport rules for soldiers hit an unexpected snag which left Harel disappointed; he had believed that matters had been settled, when the Army authorities on 31.03.011 informed the railways by fax that the agreement was not yet ready; The Army wants to raise the budget by \$5.6M and demands a fare reduction for soldiers from 10% to 34%. Even were this to be speedily agreed, implementation could only begin at the earliest on 01.05.011. This means that matters rest with the Defence Ministry and congestion on these services on Sundays and Thursdays will continue for the time being.

(x). IN THE SUMMER TIME.....

Due to the introduction of summer time on 01.04.011, trains on Fridays will terminate one hour later than until them, and Saturday night services will start two hours later. The weekday timetable is unaffected.

(xi). EMEK LINE - FURTHER TENDERS.

On 03.04.011 the Transport Ministry announced that the third tender for the Jezreel Valley line rebuilding had been published: For the 6km. section (A1) from Haifa Lev HaMifratz station and Nesh-er cement plant including bridges over Ha-Histadrut Avenue (Road No. 4) and a total length of 11 km. (See under Tenders.)

(x). REINSTATEMENT OF THE OLD MAIN LINE.

Sudden news on 04.04.011 was an announcement by the Ministry of Internal Affairs that the Eastern Line project under the National Infrastructure Plan No. 111 has been handed over to the regional councils for study and to be published so as to allow for public comments and objections.

The so-called 'Eastern Line' is actually the section of the historic line between Haifa, Lod and Egypt. The section now to be revived after more than forty years of abandonment and dismantling (due to the short-sightedness of both the railways and of course the Finance Ministry in 1968, when it closed) is 65km. long and stretches from Lod to Hadera East (and thence to Remez Junction on the 'new' coastal main line.) The plan involves doubling the section still in use from Lod to Rosh-HaAyin South as well as new double track from the entrance to Kfar Sava and Hadera East; this will involve partly upgrading existing alignments and partly constructing new alignments (as the trackbed has not been kept totally free of development.) The line is intended as an eastern rail spinal route for hauling freight and north-south passenger lines whilst by-

passing the Greater Tel Aviv (Dan) area. It will have seven new stations: Hadera East (which will involve preserving the original building), Achituv, Taibe-Kalansua, Tora, Kfar-Sava North, Elad and Te'ufa (Aviatio), in addition to the two existing stations of Rosh HaAyin North and South (the latter not currently in use, it will also need to be enlarged.) Additionally an urban transport interchange centre will be built in the northern industrial zone at Lod, just 10 km north of Lod station.

The works will require - in addition to new tracks and stations - thirty grade-separated crossings, ten other road structures and rail links to the coast line, HaYarkon line (Tel-Aviv Universita to Rosh-HaAyin South), the A1 fast link to Jerusalem and the Tel-Aviv - Lod line. The line will significantly change some areas, in particular east of Ben Gurion Airport, as well as changing the alignment of the gas pipeline (approved in the National Plan 37B) near planned stations at Kfar Sava North and Elad.

(xi). PESACH TIMETABLE ALTERATIONS.

From an IR press release of 1.04.011: „During the Passover holidays trains will be operated to the following special timetable:-

On Sunday 17.04, the morning trains will run to the normal Sunday timetable, the afternoon ones as on a Thursday.

On Monday 18.04 - the Eve of Passover - as on a Friday.

On Tuesday night, 19.04 - conclusion of the first day of Passover - as on a Saturday night.

On Wednesday 20.04 as on a Sunday.

From Thursday 21.04 to Saturday 23.04 - as normal for these days..

On Sunday 24.04 - eve of the 7th. and last day of Passover - as on a Friday.

On Monday 25.04 - conclusion of Passover - as on a Saturday night.

On Tuesday 26.04 - as on a Sunday.

Due to expected high traffic volumes there will be no seat reservations.“

Behind these apparent complexities lies the principle of large traffic flows home before a Sabbath or festival, a system shut-down on a Sabbath or festival itself, and a large traffic flow back to work / base afterwards.

(xii). FREIGHT COLLISION AND OTHER INCIDENTS.

On Tuesday 1.04.011 the driver of a freight train entering a terminal ignored a red signal and collided with a standing empty freight. Luckily there were no casualties. On 13.04 a gate on one of the station platforms at Beer-Sheva Central, intended to regulate passenger flow, was left open and was hit by a train, causing some slight damage to the train.

Representatives of the ‚Indusi‘

(.Induktives Zugsicherung‘) safety system were in Israel to check its functioning.

On Saturday night a train hit and killed a pedestrian on the tracks south of Binyamina, and on Tuesday morning 6.04 a train hit a horse at B'nei Berak station.

(xiii). SAFETY DEMANDS.

On 17.04.011 Transport Minister Katz told the press that he had ordered the Railways administration to introduce within four months a programme to provide drastic improvements in passenger services, especially safety levels. If these precautions are not taken, he has threatened to close down the railway passenger services entirely until the company has been reorganised!!

[Editor adds - At first I considered this a late Purim joke - after all, would he stop all car traffic until the dreadful road accident rate has been eliminated?] He also instructed the Ministry's General Manager Daniel Harel to prepare an alternative transportation plan should the precautions fail! According to Minister Katz, Harel - formerly an Army Deputy Chief of Staff - had said during a meeting that ‚if the maintenance level of the railways had applied in any army unit, that unit would already have been closed down.‘ Katz added: ‚Trains are not supposed to be a battle field - railways must be safe and I do not intend to compromise on safety; in a country where people have suffered terror against buses and yet continued to use them, it is unacceptable that rail - which is supposed to be the safest and most comfortable mode of transport - is considered by the public as unsafe, meaning that people either cease to use it or board but only with misgivings.‘

The programme referred to by the minister includes an approach to all aspects of railway operation: rolling stock and motive power maintenance, driver training, and inspection of daily staff behaviour. The intention is that all this inspection should be carried out by an external independent body. Katz has instructed the railways to install surveillance devices to monitor the drivers' behaviour; this is because of several cases where drivers had passed signals set at red, and caused collisions - the worst being the recent one at Netanya on 07.04, though fortunately without fatalities.

He denied however that it was his intention to privatise the passenger operations, saying, „My policy is clear: The operation must be in the hands of the workers and of the railways' management.“ [The sequence here is interesting! Ed.] There were no railway representatives at the conference, but Katz said the resigning General Manager Harel is involved in implementing the programme. The railway workers in the meantime responded with a threat for a general strike.

In the meantime the Railways

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have advertised for a successor to General Manager Yitzhak Harel.

„Globes“ on 6.04.011 had the following „Interview with Minister of Transport Katz on the recent collapse of quality and safety at Israel Railways: Katz has reservations on railway reform. The Minister of Transport is discovering that railway construction is more expensive and complicated than in the Ottoman era.“ By Amiram Barkat:

„Changing the collective agreements at [Israel Railways](#) is one of the most burning issues in transportation today. Minister of Transport Israel Katz knows this, but his intentions are still unclear. To date, he has demanded that railway employees allow the installation of critical safety measures on trains, such as cameras in the drivers' cabins and GPS systems for positioning.

But when asked how far he intends to go on structural reform of Israel Railways, Katz is ambiguous. He supports some changes, but opposes the reform plan published in the media. As a friend of the strong workers committees, Katz says that he will support measures that will strengthen the position of Israel Railways' employees and that he will oppose any attempt to dismantle or privatize the company. Israel Railways will continue to be a monopoly.

Can't stand on its own feet

The Ministry of Finance also understands that Israel is too small for several train operators. It is far less clear why Israel Railways should continue to own the network of railway lines, train stations, and huge swathes of real estate around them. Israel Railways does not publish regular financial reports, but according to figures collated by „Globes“, it owns assets worth NIS 10 billion, and its annual turnover exceeds NIS 1 billion.

The ratio between assets and turnover, as well as the return on equity all indicate a distorted and illogical operational structure that cannot stand on its own feet.

The professional echelon at the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Transport, and the Government Companies Authority are prepared to be satisfied with modest targets, the most important of which is relaxing the collective agreements with the Israel Railways workers committee. Otherwise, there is no way to meet the passenger service, scheduling, and passenger safety targets.

The second step is to transfer responsibility for maintenance of Israel Railways' rolling stock to their manufacturer, Canada's Bombardier Inc. This step is necessary because Israel Railways' employees do not know how to maintain the rolling stock and they are not subject to minimal supervision or control.

The third step is to establish two subsidiaries: one to market cargo services, and the second to handle business development of train stations.

The government hopes that these changes will transform Israel Railways from a failing company into a „somehow functioning“ company, but it admits that this is only a partial correction of the distortion. The great chance to create an advanced company was missed in 2003, when Israel Railways was established.

A neglected stepchild

100 years ago, the Ottoman Turks built Israel's first railway line at an insane pace. With no planning committees or workers committees, they built the railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem in less than two years, and in the same period of time built the Jezreel Valley line from Haifa to Tzemach; 30 kilometers of track with more than 300 bridges altogether.

But once the era of the Ottomans and the British ended, Israel's railways deteriorated. For decades, the government neglected them and channelled budgets to roads. The railways were a neglected stepchild of the Ports and Railways Authority. Since the reform of 2003, which separated the ports and the railways, the government has tried to close the huge gap between the railway and roads networks.

More than NIS 30 Billion has been promised for a series of railway projects: electrifying the trains from diesel; build a new Jezreel Valley line, a line from Acre to Carmiel, and completing the high-speed line to Jerusalem.

The future includes building the eastern line along Road 6 (the Yitzhak Rabin Highway), a high-speed line to Eilat, and, most important of all - a fourth line along the Ayalon in Tel Aviv, which will double the traffic at the national railway bottleneck from 10 trains an hour to 20.

A lack of capabilities

These projects are just as ambitious as the railway lines built by the Turks, but their construction has become far more expensive and complicated, and many times slower. Again and again, plans are delayed for the same reason: Israel Railways lacks the necessary capabilities.

The first warning sign came during the construction of the high-speed line to Jerusalem. This line is now due to open in 2017 and its cost has reached NIS 6.5 billion: eight years behind schedule and NIS 3 billion over budget.

The conclusion reached by Israel Railways CEO Yitzhak Harel was to transfer the building of other lines to other companies. [Israel National Roads Company Ltd.](#) will build the Jezreel Valley and Carmiel lines; the Cross-Israel Highways Company will build the eastern line; and the Eilat line will go to a private contractor under a BOT contract.

But Israel Railways continues to create new problems almost daily: safety flaws, irregularities in procurement tenders, and incessant labour sanctions and internal disputes. If this is the situation now, it is clear that Israel Railways has no chance of meeting the high expectations made for it for the future.

Israel Railways by the numbers

Number of employees - 1,160

Annual operating budget - NIS 1.3 billion

Annual income from passengers - NIS 550 million

Annual income from cargo - NIS 140 million

Annual government subsidies - NIS 350 million

Other subsidies - NIS 150 million

Passengers to be carried in 2011 - 36 million

Passengers target for 2020 - 70 million

Railway lines planned by 2020

Tel-Aviv - Rishon LeZion line: cost - NIS 1.1 billion; completion date - September 2011

Double tracking the Lod - Beersheva line: cost - NIS 1.7 billion; completion date - December 2011

Rishon LeZion - B'nei Darom line: cost - NIS 1.03 billion; completion date - December 2011

Double tracking the Tel-Aviv- Kfar Saba line: cost - NIS 683 million; completion date - March 2011

Double tracking the Motzkin - Nahariya line: cost - NIS 590 million; completion date - April 2013

Ashkelon - Beersheva (Western Negev) line: cost - still in the tenders stage; completion date - 2015

Acre - Carmiel line: cost - NIS 1.5 billion; completion date - 2015

Tel-Aviv - Jerusalem high-speed line: cost - NIS 6.7 billion; completion date - 2017.

(xiv). SERVICE CUTBACKS.

As predicted above - Due to the severe shortage of rolling-stock caused by the various accidents, IR announced on 01.05.2011 the cancellation of further notice of train No. 640 (07.14 from Tel Aviv Central to Kfar Sava) and in addition all services between Beer Sheva and Dimona.

(xv). ROLLING STOCK PROCUREMENT WOES.

On 03.05.2011 it was suddenly announced (Haaretz p. 1) that the Ministry of Finance had frozen the order for 70 new coaches from Bombardier, due to allegations of corruption in the tendering process, and because they were not convinced these coaches were needed!

To this one of our 'Israeli correspondents' added:

„The corruption bit is correct, also the allegations that IR specified re-

laxed safety standards to reduce costs - after the Chinese competitor was disqualified on the grounds that their carriages did not meet current European safety standards. IR's response was that they were agreeing to purchase carriages with the older safety standards because these would be built on existing production tooling - effectively copies of the older double-deck carriages in use - and this would drastically shorten the delivery schedule.

The Finance Ministry have questioned the need for additional carriages; They set up a committee to find out how many carriages IR needs, and when they got an answer they didn't like, they altered the assumptions to get a different answer. The Finance Ministry would question the need for drinking water and fresh air, if it cost too much money. A decade ago they questioned the need for desalination plants, which is why Israel is suffering from a severe water shortage. The expert opinion is that IR needs carriages and needs them fast, not just to replace the ones they keep damaging in accidents, but also to run the new Tel-Aviv - Rishon LeZion line, due to open within a year, and to boost the capacity on the Beer-Sheva line when the line is double-tracked (work in progress). Rush-hour trains are already over-crowded. Within the next 7 years, IR is going to need more than an extra 7 carriages.“

(xvi). INDUSTRIAL UNREST.

On Thursday 11.05.2011 there was a one-day wildcat strike by railway employees; Aharon had already advised that „the struggle between the railway workers' union and the Management as well as the Transport & Roads Safety Ministry was heating up. Union members often appear in the media, where the correspondents have no idea what is really going on, but they are treated mercifully by the media. Matters have reached the point where workers have threatened the General Manager and the Human Resources Manager so that they required bodyguards!

A violent demonstration near the home of Isra-Rail Co. Chairman of Directorate Mr. Uri Yogev including a threat to kill him had resulted in the arrest of ten demonstrators. In response the union declared an overall and unlimited strike. The railway management in turn immediately asked the General Trades Unions leadership to become involved; the Labour Tribunal published an enforcement decree commanding the workers to return to their tasks immediately, but the union claims that this came after midnight and so most of the workers did not receive it!

Benny Attar adds: „Illegal strike by the union. Trouble started when 50 workers (mostly union members) demonstrated (without a licence) outside the home of the candidate for post of general manager. The police were called, the demonstrators

started shoving the policemen, and some of them, including the union leader, were arrested. In response, the union called an immediate strike (this is illegal under Israeli law - strikes must be preceded by a 3-week work sanction notice). The labour court issued a back-to-work order within a few hours, which the workers disobeyed.

The strike is over two issues;

1 - increased outsourcing of maintenance and other duties, which obviously puts jobs at risk

2 - Who is running the railway, management or the union? (Both are trying to).

Management claim that the union refuses to co-operate with (possibly big-brother like) safety rules and inspections. Union leaders, when interviewed on the radio talk shows, were largely incoherent (as union leaders everywhere tend to be) and spoke of management's refusal to negotiate with them. They didn't mention the word „passengers“ at all, only spoke of their „regret“ over an „unavoidable“ strike. Typical trade-union nonsense. Not all railway workers have respect for their union bosses.“

On 16.05 the Labour Tribunal instructed the railway workers not to strike until 01.07 and in the meantime called for management and labour representatives to sit around a table and discuss matters of maintenance, safety and wages.

On 13.05 both sides (management and workers) as well as senior representatives of the union and the General Labour Union met for negotiations for a new agreement according to the decision of the Labour Tribunal of 16.05 and the decision of Minister Katz.

These negotiations reached a dead end.

The Workers claimed: „The negotiations were tough as the railways' management did not provide full information and did not reveal all their cards. The workers wished to negotiate also on safety issues but the management claimed the time for this was not yet ripe, adding that they would be ready only by 01.07.2011, the date given by the labour tribunal for completing the negotiations. The management is therefore blamed for being unprepared to discuss this major issue. The workers insist on explanations for the intention to outsource rolling stock maintenance; the management refused but said they would bring this to a future meeting.“

The Management claimed: „The participants were Yitzhak Harel (General Manager), Yaron Hadari (Deputy General Manager for Logistics and Human Resources); Mrs. Laliv Baram-Elkayam (Deputy General Manager for Economy and Finance); Mrs. Shemesh (General Manager's Office Manager); Mrs. Levy-Meir (Human Resources Dept. Manager); Mr.

Aharon Goldman (Deputy General Manager of Governmental Companies Authority); Mrs. Na'ava Kraemmer (Wages Manager of Governmental Companies); Mr. Hezy Lipschitz (representatives of Governmental Companies); Mrs. Hamutal Ben-Dror (representative of Finance Ministry Wages Manager); Micha Friedman (representative of the Finance Ministry's Budget Dept.) and Yehuda Elbaz (representative of the Transport & Roads Safety Ministry).

The Workers' side were represented by Avi Edri (Chairman of Transportation Workers' Union); Mrs. Irit Ben-Ami (a senior member of the same union); three representatives of the three railway unions, and a representative of the Clerical Workers' Union.

As agreed previously between Harel and Edri, this meeting was essentially to decide on subjects to be discussed at following meetings, and to arrange for fair negotiation.

Regarding the maintenance of new rolling stock on order, the Finance Ministry and Transport Ministry representatives announced that at the next negotiating meeting (date still to be decided) detailed information as well as policy and considerations regarding the maintenance to be carried out by the manufacturer (in this case Bombardier) will be presented to the worker's negotiating representatives. They will have the right to respond and to reject, but the decision to outsource is itself non-negotiable. They will be invited to present their opinions concerning implications for the workers.

However, Mr. Edri and Mrs. Edrei have stated unequivocally that they refuse to discuss the implications and the only issue for discussion is the decision itself. This brought the discussions to a dead end.

The Railways Management and the company's Directorate have stated clearly that the whole issue of Safety is entirely under their responsibility; a special team is currently preparing a comprehensive programme of improvements for system safety and this will be presented to Minister Katz in early July 2011. Only after it has been approved by Government will it be presented also to the workers' representative to hear their opinions - but this topic is also non-negotiable.

The organisational and structural changes in the company are being prepared by the two Ministries and when ready will be presented to the workers' representative and negotiated in terms of any expected implications for the railway workers. The Unions rejected this, as well as an agreement to negotiate on wages.

(xvii). TENDER FOR EAST-WEST LINE ISSUED.

On 11.05.2011 the long-awaited tender for the east-west Highway No. 531

הרכבת

was published. This includes a double-track railway line linking the existing line to Kfar-Sava Hod-HaSharon Sokolov station with the Tel-Aviv - Haifa coastal line near Shefayim, north of Herzliya; this will include two new stations, Ra'anana and Ra'anana West and will provide a much faster journey both to Tel-Aviv and the south, and to Haifa and Nahariya in the north, compared to the current journey through Rosh HaAyin North and B'nei Berak.

(xviii). GERMANY PULLS BACK FOR POLITICAL REASONS.

From the „Jerusalem Post“ 13.05.2011, (by **Tovah Lazaroff and Benjamin Weinthal**):-

„Israel on Wednesday said it regretted the decision by German National Railways (Deutsche Bahn) to halt its work on the high-speed train line from Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem because a small section of the route crosses over into the West Bank. A spokeswoman for Israel Railways said Deutsche Bahn informed them recently of their decision, saying they withdrew because a portion of the project is located over the pre-1967 border. She added that Israel Railways was looking at options to replace the company. „We regret this decision,“ Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor told „The Jerusalem Post“.

Already in February, German Transportation Minister Peter Ramsauer, answered a query on the matter by Rudiger Grube, the CEO of Deutsche Bahn.

„In recent weeks Palestinian Foreign Affairs Minister [Riyad Al-] Malki, members of the German Parliament and media have criticized a project in which DB International is acting as adviser to Israel's state-run Israel Railway,“ Ramsauer wrote. „I want to advise you...that this Israeli railway project which runs through occupied territory is problematic from a foreign policy standpoint and is potentially against international law,“ he wrote.

In an e-mail response to the Post on Tuesday, Vera Moosmayer, a spokeswoman for Germany's Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Affairs said her office would continue to support the railway project, but not this particular line. The ministry „explicitly welcomes the engagement of DB-subsiidiary 'DB International' to contribute to the international development of railway traffic through passing on its experience and know-how. „It goes without saying that this is also the case with regard to Israel,“ she wrote. „However, the federal government out of principle sees to it that this activity does not include projects that might be potentially sensitive politically or with regard to international law – as the Deutsche Bahn is a company that is 100% state-owned. That was a matter of principle and applied in all countries,“ she wrote.

According to Moosmayer, Deutsche Bahn has been active in Israel since 1990. Moosmayer noted that Ramsauer visited Israel last year to discuss ways that the two countries could cooperate on infrastructure matters. During the March 2010 visit, both governments signed a memorandum of understanding to increase their cooperation in the railway sectors.

The German National Railways' decision to drop out of the Tel-Aviv to Jerusalem line came after a campaign against the rail line was launched last fall by the Women's Coalition for Peace, an Israel-based NGO. In a report titled "Crossing the Line," compiled by a section of the NGO called "Who Profits", the report explained that six kilometres of the 60-km track crossed into the West Bank. One section of the rail line goes into the West Bank by the settlement of Mevo Horon and the second crosses over by the Palestinian village of Beit Iksha and Beit Surik.

"Who Profits" coordinator Merav Amir congratulated the German government on its decision to pull out of the project. "It's encouraging to see a government abide by their own treaties and adhere to international law, and we call on other European governments to follow suit in making sure that companies in their countries abide by international law," Amir said. The rail line is one of many projects in which international companies are involved in

"illegal Israeli construction projects in the occupied Palestinian territories," she said. "There is a discrepancy between what EU governments say and what actually happens," Amir said. "Governments issue statements about the illegality of Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories, but when you see what the EU commercial sector actually does, many times it violates those very declarations, encouraging and profiting from Israeli control over occupied territory."

A report on Y-Net' on 16.05. 2011 added that Deutsche Bahn had been responsible for electricity and communications control on the new line and will continue to work on other projects in Israel, and IR had said that „we are currently working on finding a substitute company.“

The Editor will refrain from making any sarcastic comments in this case, but has heard that the Dutch are now interested in taking over. It is a moot point what 'technical advice and assistance' is actually necessary in this case. And should the Palestine Authority ever in the future ask for Israeli assistance in providing a rail link to the coast, one can only guess what the response might be....

(xix). FURTHER MINOR INCIDENTS.

On 18.05.2011 a fire broke out near the track at HaHotrim station (an operational passing place with loops between

Haifa Hof HaCarmel and Atlit); passenger services were held back temporarily and southbound services were terminated at Hof-HaCarmel whilst northbound ones were held at Binyamina. Traffic returned to normal after a few hours once the fire had been extinguished.

On 05.2011 a man was hit by a train between Rishpon and Kfar Shmaryahu, north of Herzliyya. Traffic was disrupted, although trains were later allowed to pass on the second line while MDA emergency teams attended. It is believed he was pronounced dead on arrival. Traffic returned to normal at 16.10.

On 3.05.2011 an underground hollow was discovered near the track on the Lod - Ramla section during works on upgrading and doubling the Tel-Aviv - Beer-Sheva line. As a precaution traffic past the site was suspended for over an hour and replacement buses provided; Traffic resumed gradually from 15.45.

Special additional services were run to/from Ramat Gan Stadium for the National League Final.

(xx). TIMETABLES AND PUNCTUALITY.

The District Court of Haifa in May rejected a claim against Israel Railways for not keeping to the contract - due to unpunctuality. The Court stated that „although efforts should be made to keep to the timetable, it is not considered to be a contract as such.“

93:05.

TENDERS.

(i). Tender No. MC/RC/01/10: For the Manufacture and Supply of an Ultrasonic Inspection System for Rolling Stock Wheelset Axles - Already published, the date for submissions is postponed to 04.05.2011.

(ii). Tender No. HN/KB/03/11: Design and Implementation of Earthworks, Infrastructures, Bridges and Landscape Rebuilding of the Netivot - Goral Junction section. (Tender 8). This is an integral part of the 60km. Ashkelon - Beer-Sheva line currently under construction. This 30.4 km. double-track line, planned for 160km/h is to be built on the Design and Build system, implementation time is 36 months, dates for proposal submissions: 01.07.2011.

(iii). Tender 48/11: Designing and Building section No. 1 between Na'aman Junction (near Akko) and Kfar Yasif Junction, as part of the planned Akko - Carmiel line. Implementation time: 27 months. Bids by 01.06.2011.

(iv). Tender 34/11. Designing and Building section No. 4 between Kfar Yehoshua and Kfar Baruch as part of planned Haifa - Beit Shean line. Implementation time: 27 months; Bids by 07.06.2011.

(v). Tender No. BN/KB/01/11. Upgrading of Nahariyya Passenger Station. Works include: Lengthening and enlarging the existing platform, expanding the station building, upgrading the air-conditioning system in the station building, adding new canopies, reinforcing the memorial monument (to victims of a terrorist attack here), installing a water supply system both for washing/drinking purposes and fire-fighting including reservoir tanks and a pressure-increasing device; supply and installation of a sprinkler system in the station building, supply and installation of toilets for the disabled; laying new tracks

and upgrading existing tracks; preparatory and dismantling works, earthworks, drainage, building supporting walls, and railway and signalling works.

The tender includes the following: Structure 01: Upgrading existing platforms; 02 Upgrading station building;; 03: Track doubling and upgrading;; 04; control works. Implementation time is 18 months, Latest date for submissions: 05.05.2011.

(vi). Tender No. TH/SR/02/11: Framework agreement for providing maintenance services for hydraulic systems - up to 300-bar pressure - installed on the track maintenance and other engineering mechanical equipment used by the railways. The tender refers to two service areas, north and south; there will be a separate tender winner for each area. The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months.

(vii). Tender No. HN/KB/06/11: Performance of archaeological rescue excavations at the Hermes ruins located on the alignment of the Rehovot - Benei Darom (near Ashdod) line. Works include: Coordination and obtaining necessary approvals from the Antiquities Authority, carrying out rescue excavations, preparing reports on archaeological finds. The project is divided into two sites: Site A (North): located between cuts 1+1.800 and 1+1.880 of the track and up to a distance 40m from the track; Site B (South) between cuts 1+1.880 and 1+1.960 and up to 45m from the track. The excavations will comprise 180 sq. (5 x 5m.) sites totalling 4,500 sq.m., of which 40 sites comprising 1,000 sq. m. form Site A and 140 sites of 3,500 sq. m. site B. The intention is to have two separate winners, one for each site. Implementation time is four months, submissions by 13.04.2011.

(viii). Tender No. MC/RC/05/11. For design, supply and installation of a full testing system for Diesel Engines. Bids by 30.05.2011.

(ix). Tender No. 17/2011: Yizra'el (Jezreel) Rail Project, Section A1, design & build system, from Haifa Lev HaMifratz to Nesher. Implementation time: 30 months. Latest date for submissions: 03.07.2011.

(x). Tender No. CA/RS/01/11: An annual framework agreement for supply of office furniture for all the railways' sites. The agreement is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Submissions by 03.05.2011.

(xi). Tender No. HN/KB/04/11. Building a Pedestrian and Bicycle passage under the B'nei Berak - Petah-Tikvah line at km. 7.500 (measured from Tel-Aviv) to link the Petah-Tikva Em-HaMoshavot neighbourhood with the agricultural areas north of the line. Works include: Prepara-

tory works and dismantling; treatment of existing lines, plating with piling, excavations, building concrete supporting walls, and a concrete roadbed at both entrances/exits, partial submersion of the passage in the ground while the line is operating, and building a pumping station. Implementation time: 7 months, submissions by 05.05.2011.

(xi). Tender No. RF1 - for preparing a tender for leasing an area at the hazardous material storage centre at Ramat Hovav, using the rail link for transportation to and from the centre. Proposals by 11.05.2011.

(xii). Tender No. TM/KB/91/11: Framework agreement for maintenance works around all railway lines, including cutting trees and weeds, anti-weed spraying, maintenance and cleaning of ditches, culverts etc. The intention is to divide this work into two areas, the northern area from Nahariyya to Tel Aviv South (inclusive), the southern area from there to Har Tzin, and to select two winning bidders, one for each area. The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Proposals by 15.05.2011.

(xiii). Evidence that the plans for opening the Tel Aviv - Rishon-LeZion West - B'nei Darom line this summer are really concrete can be found in the following tenders:-

Tenders Nos. RC/2011/8 - Providing Coffee and baked products sales stands at Holon Junction and Holon Wolfson stations; RC/2011/9 for the same at Bat-Yam Komemiyut and Bat-Yam Yoseftal stations; and TC/2011/10 for the same at Rishon LeZion West (Moshe Dayan) and Yavne West stations.

The contract for each station is for 36 months with optional extensions of up to additional 24 months. Latest date for submissions is 30.05.2011.

(xiv). Tender No. TK/SR/07/11: A framework agreement as part of a Turnkey scheme to design, manufacture, supply, install, test, operate and hand over, support, guarantee and maintain low-level digital transmission systems. The contract is for 60 months with optional extensions of up to additional 60 months. Submissions by 13.06.2011.

(xv). Tender No. TH/SR/08/11. Framework agreement for providing maintenance services for pneumatic systems with up to 20 Bar pressure, railway engineering equipment. The tender is divided into two areas, North and South, with a separate winning bidder for each area. Contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Proposals by 01.06.2011.

(xvi). Tender No. MH/SR/01/11: Framework agreement for supply, installation and integration, operation and maintenance of a computerized system for managing the IR refuelling system and maintaining control hardware. The contract is for 60 months with optional extensions of up to a further 60 months. Submissions by 31.07.2011.

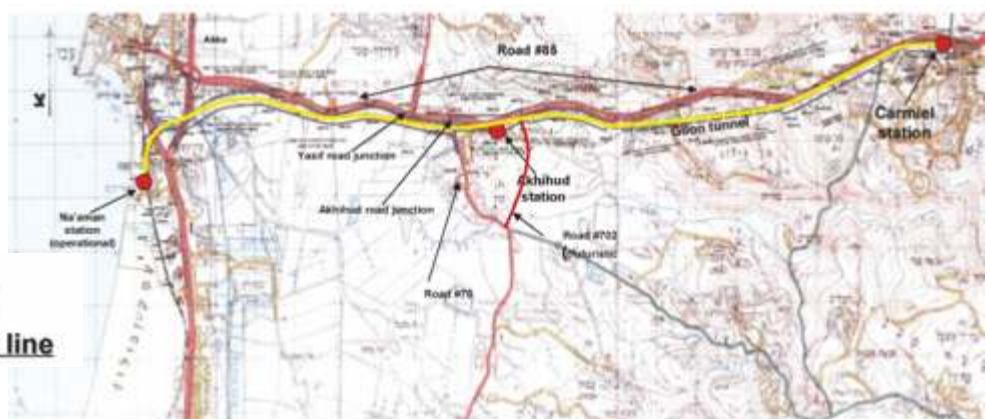
(xvii). International Tender No. MC/RC/01/10 For Manufacture and Supply of an Ultrasonic Inspection System for rolling stock Wheelset Axles. Latest date for proposals: 31.05.2011 - later extended to 14.06.

(xviii). International Tender No. MC/RC/05/11: For Design, Supply and Installation of a Full testing system for Diesel Engines. Proposals by 11.06.2011.

(xvii). Tender No. MS/RC/2011/11: Providing Taxi Services from/to Asdod-Ad-Halom railway station. Contract is for 36 months, bids by 16.06.2011.

Tender TC/MT/18/10 for a chief designer for the electrified lines has been won by Yani Ltd., a local design firm.

**National Rail Plan
Akko (Acre) – Carmiel line**



LIGHT RAIL SCHEMES.



A. JERUSALEM.

(i). LOGO.

From a press release by CityPass on 13.03.2011: CityPass has unveiled a new logo as part of overall preparations towards the start of commercial services in August 2011. The advertising officer, Shalmor-Avnon Amichai, who introduced the new logo - three red windows of a train in motion - explained that it reflects the fast traffic sequence, the landscape of the city as seen from the train windows, the variety of colours of the city and even the stones of the old city wall. The choice of colour is due to the fact that this first LRV route is called the Red Line. The new logo will soon be seen not only on the trains, but also on stations and ticket sale points.

(ii). WARNINGS (I)..

From a press release of 30.03.2011 by City Pass: This week City-Pass has removed the temporary fencing along Jaffa Street which had been set up during the infrastructure works and should now enable the public to become accustomed to the new transport mode. A publicity campaign on the new arrangements and the risks associated with them includes distribution of leaflets by stewards and stewardesses and advertising on boards, hoardings, bridges, buses and newspapers at a cost of several hundred thousand dollars. These instruct the public how to behave when a tram is passing. [i.e. don't walk in front of it! The Editor sadly expects nonetheless to be reporting the first casualties by the next issue....].



(iii). WARNINGS. (II).

As an example of public reaction, here is a statement Aharon Gazit forwarded, from: „METUNA: The Organisation for Road Safety P.O. Box 7 08 Jerusalem 91071

LIGHT RAIL TO OPERATE IN JERUSALEM WITHOUT NEEDED SAFETY MEASURES

In view of the fact that certain crucial safety measures have yet to be implemented for the Jerusalem Light Rail Project, Metuna, the Voluntary Organization for Road Safety in Israel, has written to the Israeli Transportation Minister and the Mayor of Jerusalem informing them that their decision to remove the temporary fencing along the rail right-of-way that has protected the residents during the test phase of operation is illegal, unreasonable, and engages their personal responsibility.

Metuna points out that on the one hand the authorities anticipate up to 10 killed and dozens injured in Light Rail accidents during the first year of operation, while on the other hand advertising and educational campaigns to educate the citizenry on proper comportment in the vicinity of Light Rail have just begun, in spite of the fact that such campaigns can take up to a year before they have a significant effect on behavior and safety.

During testing, the Light Rail has proven to be silent and invisible, with residents marveling at how the train „just appears before your eyes“. To counter this danger, Metuna has demanded the implementation of five basic safety measures prior to commercial operation of the Light Rail:

1) Designation of the right-of-way with ADA strips or some other conspicuous and uniform marking so that pedestrians

and drivers know the exact limits of the danger zones.

2) Increasing visibility of the rolling stock by retrofitting flashing lights that operate automatically when the train is in motion.

3) Outfitting the front of each train with an automatic bell to ring every few seconds and warn of the train's approach.

4) Installation of permanent fencing in pedestrian zones wherever sidewalk width is less than two meters, or where the sidewalk narrows and channels pedestrians toward the right-of-way.

5) Establishment of appropriate Light Rail speed

limits, allowing for safe stopping distances in different field-of-view conditions, and not to exceed 25 km/h in pedestrian zones or 30 km/h at unguarded vehicle crossings.

However, since none of these measures has been adopted by the authorities, the organization claims that it is forbidden - from both a moral and a legal point of view - to remove the temporary protective fencing from along the right-of-way and knowingly subject the public to mortal danger.



Metuna's Chairman, Mordechai Feder, says: By agreeing to removal of the fencing at this premature point in time, the Transportation Minister and the Mayor have in essence approved a trial involving human beings under conditions that would be considered abuse and cruelty to animals. Unwavering adherence to the architectural concept of an open pedestrian plaza „just like in other cities of the world“ has caused the authorities to ignore the toll in human lives that will result from unsafe operation of the Light Rail. Jerusalem's residents and visitors have a right to be properly protected from the dangers of the Light Rail in Israel's capital. It is unconscionable that the authorities should deliberately endanger the public while knowing full well that alternatives are available, and we hold them personally responsible for any deaths and injuries that may result.

Metuna is an independent, apolitical volunteer organization dedicated to reducing deaths and injuries from road accidents in Israel.

Mordechai Feder
Chairman, Metuna
P.O.B. 7008
Jerusalem 91071 ISRAEL
Tel/Fax: +972-6-1970
metuna@ymail.com“

[Ed. adds: Well, they don't as yet demand a man with a red flag walking in front of each tram, nor do they seem to consider what happens when buses also use public highways. But it is an interesting example of moral blackmail.]

(iv). DELAYED INTRODUCTORY RIDES.

On 07.04.011 the Transport Ministry's General Manager announced that the intention was to run trams in pre-public service not from 07.04, as previously announced, from 17.04.011 along the Jaffa Street, at a ‚symbolic fare‘, to help acquaint the public with the new transport mode. Sybil notes that these introductory rides will be from Damascus Gate to the Central Bus Station, and „Road safety organisations expect that there will be around thirty people killed by the light rail every year. I wouldn't be surprised, because there is nothing to distinguish the pavement from the light rail tracks, no fencing or anything. People wander across Jaffa Road everywhere, with just a quick look to see whether a tram is coming (they are now going up and down all the time.)“

Then on 10.04 Jeremy Topaz first reported: „On April 17th. the light rail will begin to carry passengers between the Central bus station and the Damascus Gate. The ride is free for Jerusalem residents (on presentation of an ID) but the fare is NIS 1 for non-residents. The full opening of the line is slated to be in Sep-

tember.“ And then: „This morning the paper said there is another delay; the German company which is testing the safety of the system did not give it a passing grade and said there are still things to fix. So it looks like it won't start running before the beginning of May.“

(v). UNIONISATION.

Even before the LRV commenced services the 80 trainee drivers have created their own union in order to improve terms of employment, arguing that their work in a closed environment with up to 500 passengers aboard a train will put them under both mental and physical pressure. Both CityPass and Veolia have declared that everything had already been established in the work contracts, and that their terms are already the best among all public transport drivers.

(vi). ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS.

On 04.05.011 The Minister for Environmental Protection Mr. Gilad Arden visited the LRV project and was hosted by CityPass management. He visited the control centre and was impressed by the quiet journey along the entire line. He stated „The LRV is an environmentally-friendly transport mode and a comfortable and efficient alternative to the private car. Since the LRV started running on Jaffa Street (on test only so far) and the street was closed for buses and taxis, air pollution has decreased by an average of 65%. This is the first Israeli green urban public transport vehicle.“

(vii). IMPATIENCE.

On 04.05 some fifty people demonstrated on Jaffa Street against the delays to the project. they threw garbage on the tracks and were arrested by the police.

Meanwhile 98 people, mainly businessmen, have lodged a Court Appeal against CityPass, demanding ca. \$150M compensation due to the fact that more than 70% of businesses were effectively closed since the works began and more than 15000 people lost their jobs. CityPass claims in return that property values along Jaffa Street have risen sharply recently. The Court will have to decide. The General Workers' Union has declared a work conflict with CityPass due to the firm firing six employees and ceasing special bus services to/from work.

B. TEL AVIV.

(i). Tender: NTA (Tel Aviv Metro)/ LRV Project management) tender No. 017/2011: Design of BRT lines.

The BRT (i.e. Bus Rapid Transit) lines are an integral part of the National Plan No. 03/A/4; defined as a public transport mass transit system it will consist of

seven BRT lines in the first stage, of which three lines will later be converted to LRT; both modes of public transport will have high capacity, will operate along the main traffic axis at high frequency and will enjoy segregated alignments. The lines will be identified by colours - yellow, brown, blue and pink = BRT; red, green and violet = LRT. NTA is interested in awarding the tenders to several main designers, each such team manager will be responsible for a single line or a section of it.

Latest date for submission of proposals: 11.04.011.

(ii). NTA Tender No. 010/2011 for providing preliminary design services for the deployment of metropolitan transportation control systems. Submissions by 01.05.011.

(iii). Tender No. 014/2011: Providing consultancy services for control centre and priority at traffic lights. Submission by 09.05.011.

(iv). NTA Tender No. 024/2011- Providing consultancy services for creating schedules; senior Consultant. Latest date for submission of proposals: 00.06.011.

(v). Tender No. 025/2011- Providing consultancy services for creating schedules; Project Consultant. Latest date for submission of proposals: 00.06.011.

(vi). Tender No. 026/2011- Providing consultancy services for creating schedules; Primavera Consultant. Latest date for submission of proposals: 00.06.011.

(vii). Tender 030/2011. Providing economic and commercial consultancy services. Bids by 06.06.011.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

(a). A DUTCHMAN IN EGYPT.

Marc Stegemann has sent a (translated) excerpt from a book with the snappy title „Mijne reis naar Java in 1869 en terugkeer over Engelsch Indie, Palestina enz. in 1870.“ (J. van der Chijs, 1874, printed by C. van der Post, Utrecht, 1 5pp.) i.e. „My Journey to Java in 1869 and return via India and Palestine etc. in 1870.“ Mr. van der Chijs travelled initially by ship from the Netherlands to Egypt and noted in his diary:-

„Upon arrival in Alexandria, with regard to the lower temperature in the evening, we went to the train station. The ‚Expresse‘ fast train turned out to be uncomfortable even in the first class coach. For 54 florins it would bring us over 104 miles to Suez. Because of darkness I missed the desert view. In 1840 a stage coach was run and camel caravans over five stages, but at that time you could not find hotels in Cairo and Alexandria! The canal was still not yet completed. A steam launch took us to the English mail steamer Candia. After arrival in Surabaya (Netherlands East Indies) I had a walk with a surveyor who told me that when on the Suez train he was travelling behind a goods van that caught fire. They could not give an alarm signal and ran the risk their coach would catch fire too. It was not before the next stop (which were few) that the crew discovered the fire.“

Some months later he returned from the East Indies:) On the return trip from Aden, he made acquaintance with an Irishman and decided to travel together by train from Suez to Ismailia. „The train runs alongside the Suez Canal, the river Nile and the old Irrigation canal. It seemed the Suez Canal was in many places not yet navigable because of sand blown into it and soil displacement induced by the water displacement by steam ships. There was an English ship with a draught of 6.5 metres stuck at El Gizar where a dredger had to remove another 4 metres. For dredging, narrow gauge trains and bucket dredgers were employed. A weekly steam boat service connected Madras with Marseilles; if there would have been a Dutch service the journey to Batavia would take just 45 days without the troublesome overland transversal of Egypt. In Ismailia there were abundant donkey drivers who were a real nuisance, but you could not find any in Port Said.

We boarded a steamer of the Austrian Lloyd to go to Jaffo/Joppe, but it was overcrowded and only seats were available, no cabins. The food was excellent, especially the fresh fish. I made acquaintance with a German Polishman who had worked on the Suez Canal and wanted to visit Palestine before returning home.“ They saw the Lebanon and Mount Carmel and finally after 18 hours on board Jaffa came into view. „For landing, we had to board a dinghy and traverse the breakers and avoid the rocks. The Turks command high rents which ruin the land, which lacks beauty of nature, sights and lodgings. Because of the latter we stayed at the Franciscan monastery. Although nowadays it is not unsafe for Christians, it is not recommended not to observe women. We passed Jasor and Lod and then it did not take longer than half an hour to the monastery at Ramleh. Travellers will not find food in this dirty place. From here to Jerusalem there was no stage coach service so we had to ride horseback in a caravan for eight hours.“

(b). TRAVEL IN THE 1960's.

I have been sent a translation by Sybil of an article from ‚Ma'ariv‘ of June 4th. 1964 Reproducing it here allows for some comparisons with the modern equivalent services.....

„The Train between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem is late, dirty and uncomfortable. By Y. Ben-Shaul. „Israel Railways makes things very easy for the inhabitants of Beit Shemesh and the surrounding villages who are forced to travel to Jerusalem and back to do their daily errands, and for some of them their daily work.

The railway station is right at the edge of the town and the residents do not need to go to the distant Shimshon Junction to catch a bus from there to Jerusalem. In addition, the train is much cheaper than the bus or the sherut. So naturally most residents of Beit Shemesh and the surroundings would prefer to travel by train to and from the capital but for the terrible state of the line.

„I went by train almost every day in the last few weeks,‘ a resident of Beit Shemesh tells us, „and I don't remember a single time when the train wasn't eight to 30 minutes late, and even more. The dirt in the carriages and the lack of comfort are indescribable, and I prefer to pay more and go by bus.‘

At the beginning of this week we went by train ourselves from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv. We left Jerusalem five minutes late, and this delay increased to 10 minutes by the time we arrived in Tel Aviv. On the way we managed to count 17 (twenty-seven) pairs of shoes (with feet in them) on the padded benches. When we reported this to the train conductor he reacted as if it was nothing to do with him. This was train No. 54 on Sunday of this week.

The buffet on the train is primitive, inconvenient and sells only one kind of drink, and that costs no less than 30 agorot.

On our return home from Tel Aviv, a few hours later, the situation wasn't much better. The ‚express‘ train took an hour and 43 minutes instead of an hour and 15 minutes according to the timetable. In view of this fact we don't understand the justification for charging an ‚express passenger‘ supplement. by the way, passengers were still putting their feet on the padded seats. We asked a railway employee the reason for the state of neglect. The man shrugged his shoulders in despair. ‚We have to argue with those responsible, with our colleagues, with the stationmasters and even with the public.‘ he complained about the police, who according to him don't come to the aid of the ticket seller when there is a dispute between the ticket seller and a passenger. ‚The most that happens is that the policemen try to settle matters instead of arresting someone who doesn't pay for his ticket or fining him for not buying a ticket at the station‘, he said.“

(c). MOTIVE POWER PROBLEMS IN WORLD WAR 1.

That things were very difficult for those running the supply routes to the Balkans and the Middle East in World War 1 can be seen very clearly in a letter from the ‚Direction‘ of the ‚Compagnie d'Exploitation des Chemins de Fer Orientaux‘ to the ‚Vertreter des k.u.k. Feldeisenbahnhofs, Herrn Generalstabshauptmann Hoffmann von Ostenhof‘ - i.e. to the representative in Constantinople of the Imperial and Royal Austrian Military Railways. (Thanks to Keith Chester who found this in archives in Vienna).

“We have the honour to inform you that we are in negotiations with the Central Direction of the Royal Hungarian State Railways in Budapest regarding the purchase of three six-coupled superheated steam locomotives of the 1-6-6-0 Mallet type, however these can only be completed when the Royal Finance and War Ministry gives its approval to the purchase and delivery. We have already submitted such a request to the Finance Ministry, however the carrying out of this request has hit difficulties in terms of approval by the War Ministry. We therefore allow ourselves to approach you directly with the request that you intervene as quickly as possible, and will therefore explain here fully the circumstances that have led to the urgency of this request.

Already in the Balkan War of 1911-1913 our locomotive stock was very intensively used and fifteen locos were in

the hands of the enemy for the duration; these were only returned to us at the beginning of 1914 and in very poor condition. It was not possible to repair all this damage before the outbreak of the World War in 1914, since on the one hand the materials had first to be ordered, and secondly the emigration of populations after the Balkan Wars led to major changes in our workforce and the loss of many experienced workers, who could not be replaced immediately.

As a consequence of this the proportion of our stock of engines awaiting repair as the war began was already higher than normal, and this has risen even further during the past three years, since following the closure of the Dardanelles our railway has provided the only artery of communication with the Orient for the entire mass of military and civilian traffic. What this means in terms of an enormous rise in demand can be seen from the following: In 1911, the year that is best taken as a datum before the war, with a system length of 470 kilometres we transported on average only 4,300,000 wagon axle kilometres per month, whereas in June 1917 with a system length of only 304 kilometres we moved 7,700,000 wagon axle kilometres.

In order to cope with these demands we have spared ourselves neither money nor effort; we have - at great expense - brought experienced railwaymen from Germany, when it became clear our demands could not be met from Austria-Hungary. We were also able to hire locomotives and crews from the German Military Administration, and at present 100 of these are at work. This increased motive power stock also means of course an increased amount of maintenance is necessary. Our main workshops in Jedikule - which is the only one available to us for all repair work now that the second one at Adrianople/Odrin has been handed to the Bulgarians - is hardly able to keep up with the regular routine maintenance workload. The number of locomotives awaiting heavier repair is therefore steadily growing and is currently 43 - 45%, whereas in normal times one would reckon with around 20%.

As one can see from this overview we will not be able to last long even with the German locos currently on hire and we must decide to purchase new machines, especially as the German authorities have made it absolutely clear that they are not able to provide us with any further engines.

That our decision is forced upon us by the bitter and urgent need is also documented by the exorbitant prices which are currently demanded for locomotives. But apart from this, we also consider it our patriotic duty and a matter of honour to undertake whatever we can to ensure that the traffic on this so-important stretch of line to the Orient is in no way

negatively affected. Since our Company is largely financed from funds from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and our railway is also serving the needs and interests of the Austro-Hungarian forces in the Orient, it seems to us appropriate in these circumstances that the k.u.k. Military authorities recognise our urgent need for locomotives and especially so, since the Royal Hungarian State Railways are in a position to offer us the three locomotives demanded from a large order for such engines which is currently being delivered to the Royal Hungarian State Railways and then replace these.

In view of your reliable support so far, which you have always provided our company, we hope that you will in this case too inform the k.u.k. War Ministry of the absolute necessity for meeting our request..... Yours Sincerely,...."

(d). GERMAN MILITARY RAILWAYMEN ON HEDJAZ LINE.

In Alfred Gottwaldt's 'Heeresfeldbahnen' (Motorbuch Verlag 1986) on the German military railways of both world wars, p. 15 is a very tiny item on the 'Palestine Front' - which at least adds some bits of information from the German archive perspective, though the information is also a little dated and incorrect!

"The well-known Hedschasbahn of 1050mm gauge from Damascus to Medina, 1305 km. long, was opened on 1st. September 1908 together with the 161 km long branch Dera - Haifa. In the world war it became a transport line to the Turkish Front in Palestine, which was supported by the German 'Asien-Korps'. To support the Front (against England) the Turkish Army, supported by German railway troops, built a 1050mm gauge line in 1914 from Sileh (Nazareth) - Nablus (- Jerusalem) 100 km. long with stations 30km. apart and 50m long. The continuation to Jerusalem was built by four contractors. In later war years, starting in Winter 1917/18, two German Special Companies Nos. 11 and 44/48 were sent to the Orient Front to take over operations on the main lines; these comprised mainly professional railwaymen. The last military train on the main line was an armoured draisine that left Amman on 4th. September 1918 at 10.30pm."

[Notes: The line to Nablus was from Afule through Sileh and was not near Nazareth, the line to Jerusalem was never in the end completed (it is unclear how much was even done in terms of earthworks - instead the line from Massoudiyeh on the Sileh - Nablus line went down to the coastal plain at Tulkarm and Jerusalem was eventually reached via Lydda. WLR.]

(e). MORE ON SNCF AND AMERICAN LEGAL ISSUES.

(See issue 90). On 1.03.2011 AFP reported: "US Bill targets French rail

over Holocaust: The measure seeks to counter SNCF's argument that it is immune to legal action thanks to the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, the new proposal's Republican and Democrat authors said as they unveiled it Thursday.

'Nothing will ever make up for the atrocities undertaken by Nazi Germany and its collaborators - but every bit of justice is important', said Democrat representative Carolyn Maloney, one of the bill's lead sponsors. 'This bill allows some measure of justice and closure for those who have suffered.' The measure has been introduced in the House of representatives and the Senate, which would need to pass identical legislation to send it to President Barack Obama to sign into law. The bill aims to clear a legal path for Holocaust survivors and their heirs to sue the SNCF, which is seeking lucrative contracts to build high-speed rail in the United States.

The company has formally expressed remorse and insisted it was forced by France's World War II German occupiers to help deport 75,000 French Jews to the gas chambers, and noted that 1,000 of its own rail workers were executed.

The SNCF is bidding on a \$1.6 Billion rail project linking the Florida cities of Orlando and Tampa that is part of Obama's multi-million-dollar initiative to improve rail service across the United States. In California, where the SNCF is interested in another rail project, lawmakers tried last year to pass a law obliging bidders to disclose details of their involvement in wartime deportations. It was vetoed."

Related to the above is a story which appeared in several media in early 2011: The closed station at Bobigny near Paris was to be handed over by SNCF to the local authorities who would then restore it as a memorial to the deportations of Jews and others from nearby Drancy.

(f). BUYING MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY.

As has been noted, Paul Cotterell's book has been published in Hebrew and English and a German version (slightly expanded with a map and a couple of additional photos) will be published in September 2011 by Verlag Hentrich & Hentrich, Berlin.

This latter will be available from bookshops but the Hebrew and English ones are not. Gerry Kandler has informed me that IR will indeed accept cheques in Sterling or US Dollars - anyone interested in purchasing is invited to contact Aviad Shafir at aviads@rail.co.il

The price is roughly £16 plus postage and packing. Gerry adds,, He had rather a lot of copies when I went to his office in Tel Aviv and I thought I would like to help them out a bit (they made me very welcome)."

(g). ROBERT W. RICHARDSON - OBITUARY.

Back in issues 30:25, 31:6:(d) and 45:9 we featured some memoirs of Robert W. (Bob) Richardson under the title „A Yank in Palestine“; Chen Melling has sent me an obituary by Ron Hill from the website of the Colorado Railroad Museum. It seems he was born Rochester, Pennsylvania on 21st. May 1910 and died at State College, Pennsylvania, on 23rd. Feb. 2007 at the age of 96. He moved age 5 to Akron Ohio, became a printer there, had to close down in 1937, and became co-editor of a stamp-collecting magazine. His other hobby was photographing railroads, and he later served in the US Army in Iran in WW2, studying the Persian railroads and learning Farsi. In 1941 he had got to know the narrow-gauge railroads of Colorado and in 1948 moved to Alamosa, Colorado and opened a motel there featuring narrow-gauge equipment he and others had saved, started a magazine on the topic and campaigned against total abandonment of the network. This interest and the contacts he developed led to the formation of the Colorado Narrow Gauge Museum, which has grown steadily with a roundhouse, loop of track, a library named after him, and more. He retired in 1991 and moved back to Pennsylvania.

(h). DUBAI TRANSPORT FAIR.

The 59th. UTIP World Congress and Fair ‚Mobility and City Transport‘ was held at Dubai 10-14th. April 2011. The motto was „The smartest way to save the Planet.“ One could (cynically) assume that not flying large numbers of European tourists unnecessarily to a beach on the Persian Gulf might be one contribution to this laudable aim...

Bombardier had stand 7C200 in Hall 7, next to the Dubai Roads & Transport Authority (RTA).

http://uitp.bombardier.com/1_0.jsp.

(i). NEW ARRIVAL AT ISRAEL RAILWAY MUSEUM! DEUTZ 0-4-0D. FROM KIRYAT HAPLADA

Chen writes: „On Friday, May 13th, the little Diesel-mechanical Deutz industrial shunter which used to work in the Kiryat HaPlada („Steel City“) steel recycling complex near Akko was transported to the Israel Railway Museum in Haifa. The 1960-built 55hp loco was designated by Deutz as type KS 55 B (not A4L 514 R as I erroneously entered in Paul Cotterell's second book, Make Straight the Way) and worked the complex's standard-gauge sidings for some four decades, losing its engine bonnet sometime near the end.



to the Israel Railway Museum.

Mr. Gur approached IR's Gilad Helfer, who referred him to me. I was naturally all-too-willing to accept the kind offer, but there was still the small matter of getting the owner's permission for not only handing-over the loco, but also giving it a little cosmetic restoration at the works, as the Museum would have been hard-pressed to deal with the missing bonnet and the many dents. This was eventually agreed, as the owner of the works, Rami Shani, considered the project to be in memory of his son, Assaf, who was tragically killed in an accident at the works.

As there was no documentation left at the works of the loco, and my contacts failed to come up with appropriate drawings in time, the works' fitters and welders created a rough approximation of the missing bonnet, based on the pictures of similar locos found on-line, and welded a spare Deutz engine inside. While this is inoperable and of a somewhat larger type than the original, it does look very nice when viewed through the imitation ventilation screens in the sides of the new bonnet. They were also kind enough to replace some wasted panels and to eventually paint the loco in scheme similar to what it probably wore when new.

Finally, the loco was ready for dispatch and approval was received from IR's management for the transportation expenditure. The little machine was loaded on a truck by a very large forklift, thoughtfully supplied by the works, and off we went to Haifa, keeping our fingers crossed that the rather thin chains used to secure the Deutz would not fail while travelling on the area's busy main roads. Eventually all was well, and after figuring out that in the intended spot of disembarkation the track was about half-an-inch too narrow, the road crane in attendance managed to push the shunter a few metres further, where the old track widens.

There still remain some cosmetic finishing-touches to perform on our new acquisition. First and foremost is the reassembly of the Deutz emblem on the cab's back side, and the surviving works-plate on the bonnet. Then, we hope to be able to replace the missing glass windows in the cab and perhaps correct a couple of painting errors on the buffer beams. And who knows, perhaps some day in the distant future, someone decides the Museum needs an operable small shunter, and funding will be found to restore it both externally and operationally.“

(j). SCHIENENZEPPELIN BEGINNINGS.

Baruch Katinke had a predecessor. An article in ‚Lok Magazin‘ No. 83 for March/April 1977 p. 107 describes a small, low 4wh. long-wheelbase trolley (built by Sternberg & Co. who built Draisines) which was fitted with a 100hp motor and in 1909 was used at the Airship Exhibition at Frankfurt am Main to test and demonstrate the use of various types of propellor, which could be powered at anything between 100 and 1,000 rpm.



Little is known about its operational history but by the time I first had the chance to view it in person in 2000, it was already withdrawn at least since the original owners, ‚Kur‘ closed-down the plant in 2000. Since then its Diesel engine was also taken out, and it was on the verge of being scrapped in the summer of 2010, when one of the works' operational managers, Roni Gur, whose grandson is a train-loving kid who recognized the loco from Paul's book mentioned above, came up with the idea of presenting it

OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.

INTRODUCTION AND WARNING.

The political upheavals in the region continue - this may be obvious to readers right now but is included as part of the historical record should anyone read this magazine in future years. For decades Dera'a was known to railway enthusiasts merely as a sleepy town with a station boasting a footbridge and a two-road engine shed, where loco changes occasionally took place - now, on 23.04 it was reported that seven people had been shot by Syrian security forces in Dera'a and other Syrian cities in anti-Government demonstrations; the following day that another fourteen had been shot during funeral marches, the town was sealed off, international sanctions were being threatened.... . In Yemen at the same time the long-term ruler had finally agreed to go, President Gadhafi of Libya was acknowledging the loss of the city of Misrata to 'rebels', and for all we know his wonderful new train is already a smoking ruin; there were tensions in some Gulf states, and Yemen, (and even Morocco), and of course Iran remains a totalitarian enigma. (Part of the enigma being why so few in the West are prepared to acknowledge this.)

What all this means is that Nobody Knows what is really going to happen, or what effect all this may have on long-term political coalitions, on national and international infrastructure works, on investment, on hobby-based tourist activities, on anything much at all. All we can do is report the items we consider relevant that come to us, in the secure knowledge that any quarterly magazine is already out of date before it is despatched from the printers or put on the net. Maybe in ten years or so one can look back at past issues and at least have the information of the time recorded.

The Editor.

A. LIBYA.

Further to 93:08 (and see 93:01): In 'Eisenbahn Magazin' 4/ 011 p. 1 is an item regarding the Ansaldo-Breda IC4 diesel multiple units for the DSB (Danish State Railways); 83 of these four-car units have been ordered, at an original price of €700M, but delays due to all sorts of reasons including software mean that entry into service has been delayed for years and the builders have had to pay €85M due to penalty clauses! In addition, 33 3-car 'IC' units were ordered and there is a photo of the first of these at the Velim test circuit in the Czech Republic.

It transpires that the DSB was astonished, in view of all these problems, to learn from the press that an 84th. set had been completed and had been in use in Libya since last year! Further, Libya owns (or had owned until now - there are so many changes at present in this region) 10% of Finmeccanica, of which Ansaldo-Breda is a subsidiary....

So this is what Signor Berlusconi had presented to the Libyan leader Gadhafi.....!!

In 'Schweizer Eisenbahn-Revue' 4/011 p. 173 is more: The double-track main line along the coast from the Tunisian border at R'as Ajdir via Tripoli, Misrata, Sirte to Benghazi is intended to link the largest Libyan cities; The 600km. extension via Tobruk to the Egyptian border at Umm Sa'ad and thence on to a link with ENR at Sollum is being planned by the German 'Dorsch Afrique' agency. A single-track freight line will head south from near Sirte to Sebha - this line is intended mainly for transport of minerals such as iron ore, kaolin and quartz sand; In the longer term there is the intention to extend it via Al Gadrin and Tournu into Niger, in order to provide African markets with access to the Libyan ports. The coastal line will be laid out for 150km/h running, though initially it will be operated at 160km/h and with diesel traction. Electrification can be provided later. Near Tripoli a five-kilometre trial section is already in operation.

The main contract was awarded in 2008 to the China Railway Construction Corp. and the Russian State Railways (RZD). China is building the 650km. western section from R'as Ajdir to Sirte and the north-south line from the coastal town of Al Hisha (near Sirte) to Sebha

- 810km. long. Russia is building the 554km. line from Sirte to Benghazi. The contract to the Russians also includes signalling and safety measures and communications. As regards rolling stock, the newly-formed 'Libyan Railroad' has ordered 16 locos as part of an Egyptian order for 56 locos from General Electric.

The traditional links between Italy and Libya are also noticeable in this railway project. The Italian Finmeccanica has, through a subsidiary Ansaldo STS, gained the contract for the signalling on the sections of line (totalling 1460km) being built by the Chinese. In return, Italy has also presented Muammar al-Gaddafi with a Saloon Train to mark the fortieth anniversary of the revolution - an IC4 set taken from the running production line of sets for the DSB and rebuilt with a luxurious interior. This includes two Saloon Cars and a Conference Car. The chances for this unit ever to reach its designated top speed of 200km/h are probably still intact...

Hardly anyone would ever have guessed that the IC4 would also run under the hot African sun. The DSB learned of the delivery of an IC4 to Libya only from the press. Since the technical problems of these trains have been resolved partially with Danish know-how, any series delivery to Libya could run into contractual or legal difficulties. However, at present no-one can tell how the political situation there may develop."

B. TURKEY.

(i). HIGH SPEED TO KONYA OPENED.

In 'Eisenbahn Amateur' 04/ 011 p. 00: "On 17th. Dec. 2010 the 1 -km. long high-speed line Ankara - Konya was formally opened. This is electrified at 25kV/50Hz and laid out for maximum speeds of 250km/h. The line, which is also fitted with ECTS Level 1 signalling, reduces the travel time from ten hours to one hour, fifteen minutes! This is the second high-speed line to be opened, following that from Ankara to Eskisehir in March 2009."

(ii). FORMER KÖLN 'B'-CLASS STADTBAHNWAGEN IN ISTANBUL.

In 'Nachrichtenblatt' No. 100 (4/10) of the 'Arbeitskreis Schienenverkehr im Rheinland Köln/Bonn/Koblenz' pp. 34-46 is an article by 'chg' on the second career of these 3-car articulated electric units.

"With over 1 M inhabitants Istanbul has grown into one of the largest cities in the world. Just as the population, within the past twenty years the urban transport network has also grown rapidly. This process is even more remarkable since at the beginning of the 1980's one was starting basically from nothing. At this period there only existed a modest suburban service on the two railway lines left and right of the Bosphorus, whereby these services even today still share the same two tracks as the infrequent freight and long-distance passenger services. To this could be added the ancient 'Tünel', an underground funicular dating from 1875. In this respect Istanbul could at least lay claim to possessing one of the oldest underground railways in the world, but nevertheless this was one which had only very limited and local significance. A really decent urban rail network simply did not exist. Buses, taxis and ferries dominated local public transport, but were increasingly unable to keep pace with the demands caused by the expansion of the city and the increasing congestion on the streets. The former tramway network, which like the railways had been divided geographically into two separate sections on the European and the Asiatic sides, had been run into the ground and closed in 1961 (European) and 1966 (Asiatic).

Development of 'Schnellbahn' and Tramways in Istanbul.

In view of the increasing traffic problems, in 1986 construction of the so-called Hafif Metro commenced, with Swedish assistance. This is the sort of system which the Stadtbahn in Nordrhein-Westfalen was actually meant to be - a completely crossings-free 'Schnellbahn' with high platforms and overhead power supply, laid out for vehicles 100m long and 2.65m wide. The Hafif Metro was opened in stages from 1989, and in a large semi-circle connects up the new suburbs at the western side of the city, the enormous long-distance bus station and the Atatürk Airport. In the city centre and also in some outer regions there are short stretches in tunnel. 6-axle units are used, built by ABB; their technical parameters are very similar to the then-Stadtbahn B trams. They are currently used in sets of four, and under the line designation M1 convey some 140,000 passengers per day.

The next step was a modern surface

tramway in the early 1990's. This, designated line T1, serves the historic axis of old Istanbul on the European side. At two places there are interchange possibilities to the Hafif Metro, and at the Zeytinburnu terminus even a rail connection. It was initially intended that the tramway should work from the start with low-floor vehicles, but at the opening in 1991 these were not yet available; instead some of the Hafif Metro cars were adapted, since some were temporarily surplus as the line was not yet fully complete; in consequence the stops received temporary higher platforms. The low-floor trams only entered service since 2003, and the high platforms were then removed. Vehicles used are Bombardier Flexity Swift, similar to those used in Stockholm, which in turn were derived from the Köln K4000 type. They operate in pairs. The tramway is now one of the busiest in the world, with 45,000 passengers per day.

In the following years the rail network was further extended, however without the use of identical standards. At various ends of the urban area new rail systems sprang up, often not even linked to one another. There is now a wholly-underground M1 metro line, with longer and broader trains than those used on the Hafif Metro, as well as third-rail power supply; two 'traditional' tramways with historic trams, the modern 'Funiküler' cable car and the Metrobus guided bus system with its own lane in the centre reservation of the motorways. In addition two new lines, T2 and T4, were built connecting to the Hafif Metro and T1; these are Stadtbahn lines but not free of all same-grade crossings, albeit with high platforms. Currently under construction is the Marmaray, the future S-Bahn system with the Bosphorus Tunnel.

Köln Vehicles in Istanbul.

Interestingly the network of Hafif Metro and Tramlines T1, T2 and T4 have almost exactly the same technical specifications as the Köln Stadtbahn network. Although there was no common consultation at the time, there emerged in Istanbul a network with platforms set at either 35cm or 90cm height depending on line, both sections were worked by vehicles 6.65m long, and electrified at 750V DC. The alignment, profile and clearances and platform length permit the use of six-axle Stadtbahn units in pairs on all these lines, and on the M1 even with four sets together. This internal unity between the lines is due partly to their origins with the provisional use of high-floor vehicles on the T1 when it was first opened. The same strategy was then used some years later when the T2 line was opened in 2006. Here 35cm high platforms were built for double-trains, and then fitted with temporary extensions to make them 90cm. high, and the Hafif-Metro units that had once been used on the T1 were used again. In this way the shortage of low-floor vehicles could be covered for a while. The line T4 which opened in stages in 2007 and 2009 was also initially intended to be a low-floor operated line but evolved during its construction into a purely high-platform Stadtbahn line of the type known in Germany. There are some sections on a separate alignment in the middle of roads and with same-level crossings, but also tunnel sections and other sections of above-ground track totally free of any road crossings. In the end it was decided to build here proper permanent high platforms from the start.

Of course the stock of spare cars from the Hafif Metro could not match all the

provisional needs of this expanding high-platform network. However the newly-ordered high-platform cars ordered from Hyundai Rotem were initially faced with major teething problems, and the creation of a local tram-building industry also took a lot longer than expected, despite the production and lengthy testing of some prototype cars. At the same time a massive increase in passengers on the two initial lines M1 and T1 led to the need to employ more vehicles on these as well. As a result of this situation the opening of line T4 was substantially delayed, even though the infrastructure was ready. Suddenly some new provisional solutions were required.

Once more it was really nothing more than coincidence that these developments in Istanbul should take place at approximately the same period as Köln was beginning to withdraw its first Class B Stadtbahn units. These had become largely surplus to requirements following the delivery of the K4500 series in 2005-7 and the expansion of the low-floor system. This meant that suddenly second-hand cars were available on the market which would suit wonderfully the specifications employed in Istanbul. This was a stroke of luck for both sides, for there is no other network really in Eastern Europe - where many old vehicles are sold on - which possesses such an infrastructure suitable for the broad and high-floor B-Type cars. In other words, Köln would otherwise have had to scrap the cars, even though they were essentially in good condition in terms of bodywork and running gear. Instead, a deal was struck with the Istanbul transport operator Ulasim whereby the majority of these redundant vehicles would be sent to Turkey. Following some subsequent deals a total of 30 Stadtbahn B cars have gone to Istanbul, two of these as sources of spare parts.

Transport of the vehicles from Köln to Istanbul was carried out by heavy lorries and overland. There are several anecdotes connected especially to the transportation of the first two cars, through which experience was gained for later transports. For example, it was necessary for rails to be laid on the flat bed lorry, so at short notice some unused track was dug up at the main workshops. Four cranes could then lift the two cars onto the transporter. Due to the improvised piece of track the load was now however 5cm. higher than permitted, so it was necessary now to dismantle all equipment from the roofs of the cars and place them in the interiors for movement. After eight hours of work the convoy finally set off. They came as far as Bulgaria without any significant problems, but here the next obstacle awaited them. The heat. In summer 2007 the weather in south-east Europe was so warm that the asphalt began to melt. The two transporters each weighed around 50 tons and therefore left deep grooves in the road surface behind them. The result was an enforced halt of one month, until the authorities considered the asphalt had cooled enough to become sufficiently hard. But all the cars had reached Istanbul by 2008.

Service in Istanbul.

The B-Cars were fettled and made ready for their service in Istanbul. In the Ulasim workshops at Esenier they received heavy overhauls and some technical modifications; thus, one coupling per car was removed to reduce the risks while in use in the streets. Two cars

therefore work now as permanently-coupled sets. The lower fixed step was removed since in Istanbul all stops have either the 35 or 90cm. platforms. The folding steps were however retained - this is another element that makes these cars so well-liked in Istanbul, they are the only vehicles that can be freely employed on both the high- as well as the low-floor networks. In terms of livery they are now in the corporate design of Istanbul Ulasim, white with grey shading at the bottom and grey steps, a black band over the windows and a blue roof. Apart from the doors there is a thin red line at entrance level between the grey base and the white sides. The lamp surrounds at the vehicle ends are painted blue like the roof.

During a visit to Istanbul at the end of 2009 numerous B-Cars were found in service. They provided the entire services on Line T2 with its provisional high platforms, eight double-sets are in use to provide a five-minute interval service. The Cars were also active on the high-floor line T4 together with the first of the Hyundai-Rotem cars which were entering service and some of the Hafif-Metro cars. Finally two double-car sets were used for peak-hour supplementary services on the low-floor line T1.

In the meantime deliveries have begun of the new Citadis trains from Alstom. These should permit the removal of the high platforms on T2 and a conversion to low-floor operation. Theoretically through services between T1 and T2 should then be possible, transferring without problems at the Zeytinburnu stop. However, the first Citadis have been put into service on T1 only, in order to strengthen the services here. Whether and when T2 will also be converted to low-floor is not at present clear. Likewise what would then happen to the B-Cars. Since a major extension to the Hafif Metro will also be completed in the near future, albeit no new vehicles have yet been ordered for it, one can assume there will remain a need for high-floor vehicles for a while in Istanbul. The B-Cars will certainly then celebrate their 40th. birthdays on the Bosphorus, and who knows, maybe also their 50th.? Their robust construction should enable this, if they are well maintained.

A Bit of Statistics.

We could here take a quick look at the careers of these first series B-Type Köln Stadtbahn cars. A total of 59 of the cars of Series 000 were delivered; the first two 001/2 were prototypes of 1973, the series production with 003-0054 and 0095-0099 followed in 1976, 1977 and 1978. This later series was separately numbered as they were originally delivered to the then-existing Köln-Bonner Eisenbahn for the 'Rheinuferbahn' and were taken over by the KVB in 1991. The stock remained complete until three cars, 004, 0046 and 005 were victims of arson between 1996-1998; Prototype 000 was withdrawn in 1996 and 001 in 2004, and both were scrapped. The rest remained in service until series K4500 were delivered in 2007-8. A total of 30 were then sold to Istanbul - 003, 004, 006, 007, 010, 011, 013-016, 018-018, 030, 034, 036-038, 040, 043, 045, 047, 051 and 097. In Istanbul they received three-digit numbers, simply by removing the 0 as second digit - so 097 became 97.

A further 15 sets were withdrawn and scrapped by the end of 2008 - 005, 008,

009, 017, 009, 033, 039, 041, 048, 050, 053, 054, 095, 096, 099; this meant that by the end of that year only seven were left in Köln - 010, 031, 030, 035, 044, 049 and 098. 010 has since become a museum car in original livery; 044 has become a works car and 098 was also scrapped after fire damage. This meant by the end of 009 only four cars were left as 'iron reserve' for line 5..... Their end is also in sight, but maybe Istanbul will need a further small delivery? We shall see."

(iii). "TCDD MODERNISATION:

This and following items are from C.R.J No. 165, pp.315f.

„Based on a visit in November 010: With the Turkish economy flourishing, rail construction is in full spate. The Marmaray project will connect the European and Asian networks, by a tunnel coming off the existing line at Yenikapi (the third station out from Sirkeci) via a new underground station at Sirkeci, then below the Bosphorus to another such station near the Üsküdar ferry terminal to join the existing line outside Haydarpasa station. The suburban services on each side will use this line, as may high-speed trains in the longer term. Such existing services as continue may still use the surface termini.

The high-speed line from Ankara was opened to Eskisehir in April 009, trains running most hours and taking 90 minutes against the previous 3 1/2 hours or so. Istanbul connections are provided four times a day by cross-platform connection, scheduled for 15-20 minutes, with an overall journey time of 5 1/2 hours or a bit more. One day train and all night trains run throughout on the old line. Construction progresses towards Istanbul, and from a triangular junction at Polatli, 90km. west of Ankara, south to Konya. Later sections are planned from Irmak direct to Sivas, and to Kayseri; from the Ankara direction via Afyon and Usak and Izmir, and from Bilecik to Bursa. Further still in the future may be a link on the European side from Istanbul to Edirne. The 6-car trains run at up to 250km/h, and the route ahead can be seen through a glass door behind the driver.

(iv). ESKISEHIR.

There is a modest-looking railway museum (closed for Moslem holidays) near Eskisehir station (turn right outside). Plinthe between station and museum is 0-6-0T 3303. Other attractions in the pleasant town include an excellent modern metre-gauge tram system with two routes, and Venetian-style gondolas on a revitalised canal through the centre.

(v). RAHMI M. KOC INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM, ISTANBUL.

This is situated on the north side of the Golden Horn (ferry from Galata Bridge to Kasimpasa), and has various transport exhibits. The only TCDD loco is G10 0-10-0 55000, but Sultan Abdülaziz's private coach from 1867 is displayed, along with three industrial diesels, one horse and one electric tram, and red-painted 600mm gauge 0-6-0TT No. 6, without description, but American in appearance and reputedly a Davenport of 1930 originally supplied to the Turkish Forestry Commission. Curiously, their train models are mostly of UK types, and a further reminder of Great Britain is a Routemaster bus!

(vi). HAYDARPASA STATION FIRE.

On the afternoon of 08th. November 010 fire broke out at this station, Turkey's most famous railway terminus and one of Istanbul's most important historic buildings. It started in the main roof at about 15.15, quickly enveloped the centre roof section and spread into the western ends of the roofs of the north and south wings. Fire appliances arrived on the scene within 15 minutes and the fire was under control within 45. It was at this time that three fire tugboats arrived and pumped tons of sea water onto the burning building. Two years earlier permission had been granted to convert this listed building into a high-class shopping and tourist centre and a five-star hotel. Work was well under way on the five million dollar restoration work, but two months before the fire, the director of the Department of Architecture warned that there was a serious risk of fire! Since the disaster, questions have been raised about the type of insulation being installed in the roof, and the decision to use fire tugs to pour salt water on a listed building. Tenderless 0-4-0 03004 (Sharp Stewart 3501/1888) formerly ORC No. 00, on display outside the station appears to have survived unscathed, but our reporter has been unable to learn the fate of the beautiful painted ceiling inside the main booking hall. There was certainly much water damage to the lower floors, particularly where windows were broken.

Haydarpasa, in Scutari, on the east bank of the Bosphorus, was the starting point of the Anatolian Railway, construction of which started in 1871, with the first section opening the following year. The original station had a grand but conventional building, set beside the tracks a little way inland. The tracks then continued onto two quays, built out into the Bosphorus. The line was extended and became the CFOA, and plans developed to extend it to Baghdad and ultimately to Basra on the Persian Gulf. As part of this grand scheme, a new port was developed north of the quays, and the area of the quays was filled in and a new terminus was built there in 1908. It was designed by German architects Otto Ritter and Helmut Cuno, and much of the construction was carried out by German craftsmen and Italian stonemasons. The resulting building is like a palace. In 1917 the building was severely damaged by a fire, believed to have been started in a store and generally thought to have been sabotage."

(vii). 8F'S AT IZMIR. On 4th. Nov. 010 two rusty 8F -8-0's were seen being shunted out of a freight train at Halkapinar station....."

(viii). TCDD ORDERS 80 HYUNDAI ROTEM ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES.

From 'R.G.' , 06 January 011: „Hyundai Rotem signed a contract to supply state railway TCDD with 80 electric locomotives and a driving simulator on December 00. The South Korean firm said this is its first export order for electric locomotives, although it has exported diesels and multiple-units. Eight of the 5 MW locomotives will be manufactured by Hyundai Rotem, with the rest to be assembled locally in co-operation with Tülomsas for delivery by the end of 014. Technology transfer agreements will see local content reach 35%. The order is worth a total of US\$330m, with Islamic Development Bank providing US\$00m.

Other bids were submitted by Bombardier Transportation, AnsaldoBreda and Chinese suppliers. Hyundai Rotem was the lowest bidder, and has a strong footprint in Turkey through its Eurotem local business. The South Korean firm said it has now won orders to supply around 800 heavy and light rail vehicles for seven projects in Turkey, and is hoping to win an order to supply high speed trains."

(ix). GATX TANK WAGON CONTRACT. (from 'R.G.' of 0 April 011).

„GATX Corp's tank wagon leasing business GATX Rail Europe has entered the Turkish market with the deployment of a fleet of 95 m3 petroleum tank wagons ordered from RAIL Tur of Kayseri. Transtur will manage the fleet, which carries refined products for BP Turkey. „It is especially satisfying to enter this market with local experienced partners and high quality Turkish-manufactured wagons for service with our strategically important customer', said Johannes Mansbart, CEO of GATX Rail Europe on April 18. „GATX works closely with companies in the BP family throughout Europe and North America to meet their rail transportation needs, and we are delighted to extend that relationship into the Turkish railway market.“"

C. MOROCCO.

Not really 'Harakevet' territory as such, but an item in 'Lok Magazin' 04/ 011 p. 30 by 'WOH' describes plans for a new TGV network in the country, work beginning in June 011 on a 000km. line linking Tanger with Kénitra (- Rabat) and further ambitious extensions planned towards Algiers. The total cost will be some €1.8 Bn., of which Morocco will pay €500M; and France €75M plus €845M in cheap credit on condition that orders go to French suppliers; But "Arab brother countries such as Saudi Arabia and Kuwait will contribute €380M." One wonders whether such promises have survived the recent turmoil.

D. IRAN.

In 'Eisenbahn Revue' 4/ 011 p. 189, a photo of SBB Cargo Re 401.376 on 13/000011 hauling four Siemens diesel locomotives for Iran from München-Allach to Hamburg-Harburg.

E. UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.

(i). In the Swiss magazine 'Eisenbahn Amateur' 04/11 p. 00 is a brief note: "A railway line is currently being planned between Abu Dhabi and Riyadh; Should this be extended into Jordan, it would take over the role of the former Hedjaz line."

(ii). Several items from websites are worth including here though how much is fact and how much propaganda is sometimes hard to tell. The following are all from the 'Railway Gazette' site:

18.11. 009. 'Gulf Railway could start next year'. The Gulf Co-Operation Council remains optimistic that a 1940 route-km. regional network could be operational by 017. Despite concerns that the ambitious railway network linking the six states in the Gulf Co-operation Council could be delayed by the global economic downturn, officials are insistent that work will begin next year, and that the bulk of the 1,940 route-km. core route could be operational by 017.

Painting a vision of 000km/h diesel

trains cruising seamlessly across the borders within the planned common market and currency union, GCC Assistant Secretary-General Mohammed Obaid Al-Mazroui confirmed on September 30 that the initial study by Systra, Canarail and Khatab & Alami had now been approved by the region's leaders. According to the study's project manager David Lupton, a final decision to proceed is expected in 2011, followed by two years of engineering design and four years for construction. The six countries have agreed to share the anticipated US\$5Bn cost in proportion to the length of main line in each country, says Al-Mazroui. Saudi-Arabia and the United Arab Emirates will shoulder the largest proportion, with Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Oman the other partners. Each country will build its own branches, stations and freight terminals to feed the core network.

UAE has already taken its first steps with the establishment of Etihad Railways Co., also known as Union Railways [Al-Ittihad means Union or Joint; Ed.], following a decree by President Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan in July. With an equity capital of 1 Billion Dirhams, ER will be responsible for building around 1100 route-km at an estimated cost of 30 Bn dirhams. A second decree issued on October 1 appointed the ER board members, who will serve for an initial period of three years. New chairman Hassem Jassem Al Nowais has already started looking for potential traffic, opening negotiations with the Abu Dhabi National Oil Corp. to serve oil and gas fields in the west of the country.

ER is to develop the network within UAE, with main lines running from Al-Ghuweifat on the border with Saudi Arabia to Al-Fujayrah and from Abu Dhabi to Al-Ayn and the Oman border. It has a mandate to procure its own fleet of freight and passenger trains.

Qatar has also launched its own national railway project, under the management of state-owned property development group Qatari Diar. According to its chairman Ghanem Saad Al Saad, railway development will run from 2011 to 2016, starting with a metro network in Doha and a connection to the Gulf railway in the south.

To the east, Systra is working with Oman's National Engineering Office on plans for an initial 400km network in the Batinah region, with a feasibility study to be completed by the end of this year. The 60km main line would follow the coast from Khatmat Malaha on the UAE border near Al-Fujayrah to Barka, with a 30km link from Barka to Rusayl. A 110km branch from the port of Suhar would run to the UAE border at Al Buraimi near Al-Ayn.

As an aspiring candidate to join the GCC, Yemen is anxious to plug into the emerging rail network. On October 14 Yemen's Ministry of Transport invited tenders for a contract to manage the construction of three routes. A trunk line would run along the coast from the border with Saudi Arabia in the northwest to the Oman border in the east, with two branches serving ports on the Red Sea and Arabian Sea."

9.03. 010: "Partnership to develop Emirates rail projects. Deutsche Bahn and Al Masood Group signed a memorandum of understanding in Abu Dhabi on March 19 under which they will form a strategic partnership to plan, build and operate future railways in the United Arab Emirates. Various metro and tram

proposals are currently being developed in UAE, while Union Railway is working on plans for a main line railway linking the federal capital Abu Dhabi with the southern emirates. Over 360 local, regional and international companies attended an Industry Outreach Workshop in Abu Dhabi on March 14 organised by Union Railway to outline the contracting and procurement strategies for the first phase of its rail project.

UR CEO Richard Bowker said the strong attendance at the event 'reflected the confidence of the international business community in the investment climate of the UAE.' According to DB, the Al Masood group already co-operates with German companies in the logistics sector, and now wants to establish a foothold in the rail sector. 'We are delighted to have found such a highly qualified partner and are confident that our planning services will play a part in the forthcoming projects', said DB Chairman Dr. Rüdiger Grube. 'Later, we also intend to deliver proof of our expertise as rail operators.'

DB International Chairman Martin Bay said the German firm had gained extensive regional knowledge from being active in UAE for five years, undertaking a conceptual study for Union Railway and planning a tramway to serve Al Raha Beach in Abu Dhabi. DB International is also developing plans for the proposed rail network in Qatar."

01.1 . 010: "Union Railway starts prequalification process.

Prequalification bids have been submitted for the first two contracts on the 65km initial phase of the proposed Union Railway network linking the Gulf port at Ruwais with the gas fields at Shah and Habshan in the western region of Abu Dhabi emirate.

The first two lots to be tendered include a contract for enabling works and earthmoving valued at around 300 M. dirhams and a larger civil engineering and trackworks package worth up to 1 Billion dirhams; total cost of the new line is put at around 11 Billion dirhams. At least 14 companies had submitted bids by the November 11 deadline, including firms from Australia, Austria, China, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, South Korea, Spain, Turkey and the UK, as well as local companies from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon and Bahrain.

According to Union Railway CEO Richard Bowker, the first contract covers site preparation and clearance works, whilst the main contract will include earthworks, installation of new utilities and access roads, highway diversions and the erection of both operations and maintenance buildings. The trackwork element includes the supply and installation of ballast, sleepers, rails, switches and crossings. However, UR said it has cancelled plans to award a separate contract for a study into the impact and mitigation of sand on the railway where the line passes through areas of sand dunes. This work will now form part of the main construction contract which is due to be awarded in 2011."

4.01. 011: "Union Railways to call civil tenders. Union Railway announced on January 13 that it planned to call tenders in March for the first civil engineering contracts on the proposed 1,000km national rail network. The winning bidders will be named by mid-2011, allowing construction work to get

underway in the second half of this year. UR is already prequalifying bidders for implementation of the 70km Shah Habshan Ruwais section in western Abu Dhabi, designated Stage 0. The scope of work covered by the civil works contracts includes earthworks, construction of bridges, tracklaying, and installation of the signalling and communications systems, as well as construction of the depot and project offices at Mirfa.

The next two phases of the project will see the establishment of a route linking Abu Dhabi and Dubai (Stage 1) and proposed network in the northern Emirates (Stage 2).

UR has already appointed Atkins as preliminary engineering services consultant to oversee the execution of all three stages, with selection of the project management consultant expected to follow shortly. Preliminary design for the Shah Habshan Ruwais line is due to be completed next month. Explaining that 'the development of an integrated and modern railway network is critical to enhancing the current freight transport system and driving economic growth in the UAE, Union Railway CEO Richard Bowker said a large number of leading international companies had expressed interest in prequalification, 'allowing us to select the best partner to undertake the first steps in constructing the network.'"

On 4.03. 011: "Etihad Rail on course to open in 2013. The first freight trains on the emirates' nascent rail network will start running in 2013, according to the Chairman of Etihad Rail Nasser Al Sowaidi. Speaking at an event in Abu Dhabi on March 13 to mark the rebranding of the company previously known as Union Railway, Al Sowaidi confirmed that the initial line between Ruwais and Habshan would be ready for operation in 'early 2013' with the Habshan - Shah section to complete the 64km Phase I ready 'by the end of 2014'. Civil works contracts have already been awarded for the first phase, and tendering is now underway for electrical and mechanical systems including track and rolling stock.

Etihad Rail has adopted a new corporate image incorporating the colours of the national flag 'to symbolise the national significance of the railway.' Al Sowaidi said the development of a network of up to 1,000km was 'one of the most significant national projects in the development of the UAE', which 'signifies a new chapter of transport', forming a key part of the country's infrastructure and promoting integration between different modes. Vice-Chairman Matter Al Tayer revealed that design work on the second and third phases would be finalised by the end of this year, allowing construction to get underway during the second half of 2011.

Phase 1 covers the remaining lines in 5th Abu Dhabi emirate plus a link to Dubai, connecting the region's two largest cities as well as serving Mussaffah and the Khalifa and Jebel Ali ports. Phase 3 would add further routes in the northern emirates. There will be links to neighbouring countries as part of the emerging Gulf rail network, including Saudi Arabia at Ghweifat and Oman at Al Ain.

Al Sowaidi said Etihad Rail had made 'dramatic progress' since its establishment in 2009. completing technical, commercial and financial studies to confirm the social benefits of the rail network and predict traffic flows for the next 10 to 30 years. The railway is expected

to carry around 50 million tonnes of freight and 16 million passengers.

Etihad Rail is working with leading investment banks, and says its financing strategy is 'close to completion' and sophisticated studies have been undertaken to understand and manage rail operations in desert conditions. This had given the project 'unstoppable momentum', he believed."

F. ERITREA.

From 'C.R.J. No. 165 (Spring 011) p.303.

"An October 010 visitor found the rail scene much as previously reported, with Mallets 44□.54 and 44□.55 and Breda 0-4-0T □0□.0□ in action. Earlier Mallet 440.008 is said to be workable but unreliable. Mallets 44□.56 and 44□.59 were in different stages of reassembly, □0□.004 was in the workshop, and □0□.008 said to be next in line for a general overhaul. Biggest problems with the main-line locos are their injectors and their quality of coal.

Encouraging noises are being made by railway staff about the 104km section from Asmara north-west to Keren. The trackbed is now almost clear and bridges are intact, with track relaying and provision of rolling stock the next steps. The commercial outlook of the Massawa to Asmara section is not encouraging, as up to October there had been only two rail tours in □010. However, one encouraging event was the test run of a train hauling a wagon loaded with a □0ft. container to see how it negotiated the curves and tunnels."

G. JORDAN.

From 'C.R.J.' No. 165 (Spring 011) pp. 31 f. "Hedjaz Jordan Railway. Postcards produced by the railway show its title as 'Jordan Hejaz Railways', but it is not clear whether this new name has been formally adopted.

Picnic Train.

The picnic train ever Friday between Amman and Al-Jizah has become popular. After a break for the winter, it resumed from April □010, running every Friday and Saturday, with a round trip fare of 3 Jordan Dinar (somewhat under 3 Pounds) for an adult. The schedule remained as in □009: Amman dep. 09.00, Al-Jizah arr. about 11.00, dep. 14.00. After a break for Ramadan and the busy period of steam charters, the picnic train resumed from 15th. October.

International Train Resumed?

On □8th. May □010 a special train ran from Amman to Dera'a in Syria commemorating Jordan's Independence Day (5th. May) and carried more than □00 passengers. After spending the afternoon in southern Syria, the train returned to Amman. From the following Saturday, 5th. June, an international working with the same schedule began to run every Saturday. After the pause for Ramadan it was intended the operation would resume, but lack of bookings meant that no train had run up to the beginning of November. Available diesel locos in Amman are A1A-A1A DE 40□10/□3 (GE 1976, model UM10).

Steam Specials.

In September □010 steam specials were operated for the Railway Touring Company of Great Britain, with schedules almost the same as in □009. On the 18th. □-8-□ No. □3 (RSH, 1951) hauled four coaches from Amman to Qatrana, 103.8km. south of Amman, where the group transferred to a bus and went

further south for sightseeing. In □009, No. □3 had suffered mechanical problems *en route* and got only to Al-Jizah, but in □010 it succeeded in reaching Qatrana. The train departed Amman at 09.00, but *en route* the loco ran short of water and the driver called up a water tank truck from a vendor. This fed the tender with water at a crossing in the desert. The train arrived at Qatrana at 14.30. □3 was turned on a triangle, and then hauled the empty stock back to Amman.

On the □1st. 4-6-□ No. 85 (Nippon Sharyo, 1953) hauled four coaches from Amman to Dera'a in Syria. The loco was decorated with gold paint on its dome and some pipework, and red along the running plate and elsewhere. The train left Amman at 07.40, made several stops for run-pasts and arrived at Mafrqa, 60.7km. north of Amman about 1□.□0. After the loco had taken water there, the train departed at 13.10 and ran through to the Syrian border, some □0km. distant. The tour group returned from Syria to Amman on the □5th. On the morning of the □6th. □-8-□ No. 71 (Haine-St.-Pierre 1955) hauled four coaches from Amman the short distance south to Qasr.

Several other steam charters operated in the latter part of □010; from Amman to Al-Jizah on 1□th., □0th., □7th. and □8th. September and □4th. October with □-8-□ No. □3, and from Amman to Qatrana on □1st. October with 4-6-□ No. 85.

H. SYRIA.

From 'C.R.J. No. 165 (Spring 011) pp. 313f. Notes based on a visit in November □010 by David Dixon. "CFS Standard Gauge.

Some passenger trains do run, mostly from Aleppo to Damascus and Latakia, but it is somewhat of a struggle to find out when, as all publicity, departure boards, etc. are in Arabic script. Both routes appear to have four trains each way a day, two fast and two rather slower and cheaper, though all costs little by European standards. The morning fast at 06.50 from Damascus Cadem (or Qadam, depending upon how it is transcribed) to Aleppo consisted of a smartish 5-coach diesel unit, apparently unable to be trusted to move itself as was hauled throughout by loco LDE-□800 □58, which ran round at the intermediate terminus at Homs. No freight trains were passed on the 5 1/□ hour journey, but lines of wagons resided at many stations. Here as elsewhere, the lorry seems to rule.

The only steam locomotive seen, plinthed outside Latakia station, was outside-framed 0-6-0 030-159, plated Kessler □490/1891. This loco is one of 18 supplied to the Anatolian Railway (CFOA) by Esslinger/Saronno in 1890-93 for the lines from Istanbul (Haydarpaşa) to Ankara and Konya. This one was CFOA 59, and would have reached Syria some time after completion of the Baghdad Railway extension from Konya to Aleppo opened in 191□, and presumably got to Latakia after the railway reached there in 1975."

Hedjaz-Syrian Railway.

"There appears to be no traffic on the former Hedjaz Railway in Syria beyond the occasional special for overseas enthusiasts. The short Friday trip on a section of the former Beirut line may still run but was not investigated. The former Damascus city terminal at Kanawat remains in splendid isolation, with

many photos displayed of steam specials, and a ticket office for the CFS. Where the lines once ran south from the station there remains a big hole, with no signs of work to redevelop it, with or without standard gauge tracks; a model inside the station shows how it might look in the future.

The Cadem site is now promoted as a railway museum, an interesting one. As the only visitor in mid-November, our reporter was treated to a personal tour by Mr. Aboura of the railway's 'General Establishment', who spoke some English. Seventeen steam locos are lined up side by side to the north of the workshops buildings, mostly in a good state though some with pieces missing. They are reasonably placed for photography, apart from most facing north. They are (not in display order): Hohenzollern 0-6-0T's 33, 34, 35 and 37; Jung □-6-0T 61 (6□ is still outside Kanawat station); Hartmann -8-0's 93 and 106; and -8- 's □59, □60 and □63; Borsig □-8-0 161, still with original 4-wheel tender like its three sisters which went to Greece; SLM 0-6- T's 751-754 and -6-0T 804; and Hartmann 0-4-4-4□T 961 of 1906 with the memorable works number 3000. Another 0-6-□T, 803 was tucked away beside the buildings, behind which an unidentifiable □-6-0 was dumped. In the running/repair shed, being worked on, were three of the active fleet, Hartmann □-8-0 91 and □-8-□ □6□, and Borsig □-8-0 160 with its 8-wheel tender, presumably ex-Hartmann. The de Dion railcar was tucked away in a shed. Various diesel locos and coaches, many of recent build, were lying around the yard, waiting for someone to decide to restart railway operations.

Indoors was a good display of smaller items from the railway, including maps, photographs, signalling and ticket office equipment. The workshop has belt-driven machinery which still functions. A series of illustrated bilingual (Arabic/English) brochures is available. Altogether, Cadem is well worth a visit - and the city of Damascus has some splendid sites too!"

I. EGYPT.

In 'C.R.J.' No. 165 p. 98: The firm ZTS Pohronské Strojárne s.p. was established in 1990, independently from ZTS Martin in Slovakia; in 1996 the company was privatised but went bankrupt in 004. „The works was then taken over by a new company, PHS Stojárne a.s. The company's main output consists of locomotives for use underground in mines. In September □009 a class DNH-18-□50 (600mm gauge, four-wheel diesel-hydraulic, weighing 18 tons and producing □50kW) was exported to Egypt. Photographs of the locomotive show it was named 'Marianna'. It is hoped that this will be the prototype for a new generation of locomotives on the Egyptian sugar cane railways; however, twelve months later PHS Stojárne were still waiting to hear if they were to receive a follow-up order."

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Aerial views of Yavne West station on the Rishon-Le-Zion West - Ashdod line in a progressive construction stage; source: Israel Railways

