HaRakevet

הרכבת

Series 33#1 Issue 124 March 2019

ISSN - 0964-8763

A Quarterly Journal on the Railways of Israel and the Middle East
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124:01. Not a night train on the Israel Railways and, despite the multitude of rubber-tyred wheels, not a new version of the Paris Metro sets! The former IR motor driving car built by Esslingen in Germany 1955 is being transferred from outdoor display at the Museon HaAretz in Ramat Aviv to the Israel Railway Museum at Haifa (See 124.04.(xii)) and clearly is passing very close indeed to a road sign. (Photo:Rotem Dozetas)

124.02.

EDITORIAL.

At around the time this issue of Harakevet appears, the first of yet another Series, the Editor will reach the once-magic age of 65. ("Once-magic" because State pensions now kick in a little later... and not being a civil servant I cannot be forced into retirement.) Already the possessor of Senior Railcards in Germany, Austria and the Brexit Islands (formerly known as 'Great Britain') and eligible now for a cheaper annual ticket in Berlin and Brandenburg, it would appear that for me the heavens are opening.... Of course this is at the same time a reminder that all of us in what I could loosely call the 'Harakevet team' – myself, Steve who does the donkey work, Jeremy who proof-reads, Sybil and Aharon who keep us up-to-date with information from Israel, plus many other regular and less-regular correspondents from elsewhere...) are slowly getting a little older. A little rusty at the edges, a little chipped at corners, the paintwork a little faded or wrinkled, requiring more frequent and often heavier maintenance...

The question begins vaguely to form: How much longer can we keep going* To which the answer (as a Rabbi) is – God alone knows how long we CAN, and we alone decide how long we WILL keep going. I never ever dreamed when, back in Leeds in the early days sitting at a typewriter, then cutting and glueing items to bits of A4 paper for copying, that the magazine would grow the way it has and essentially this is not due to me – I have remained the guy sitting at the keyboard – but to all those others who found new technologies we could afford, to enable so many colour photos, to enable online versions, and more. Whilst many publications are now going digital-only, and this does have short-term advantages in terms of distribution, I remain a believer in paper printed, folded, stapled and on the shelf. Costs are higher this way, with printing and postage and, once more, we find that subscriptions basically cover the first three issues of each Series and I subsidise the fourth but, what the heck! It is a good feeling to see what information we have been able to publish and how we are now cited by researchers (though we cannot promise many more such large issues and supplements as last time). So – Let us look forward to more issues and an active 'non-retirement' for as long as we can and maybe some more means of delegating, dividing the labour and ensuring some further continuity in due course.

Once again the sheer amount of current news fills the pages available and makes it hard to find space for historical items.

Enjoy! The Editor.

124:03.

- *: A view of Lod and - on right - electric locos and trains stabled near the new electric depot. (Photo: Aharon Gazit)*

124:04.

NEWS FROM THE LINE.

(i). PLANS FOR NEW TRANSVERSAL LINE.

From a press release of 02.12.2018 by Israel Railways Ltd:

"The railways are progressing into the near future, and published recently the first two large infrastructure tenders 41739 & 41741 as part of the "Sorek Line" or '431 line', called so after the highway with the same number, in the median of which it runs along part of the alignment.

These tenders refer to the first two sections:

The first 5.5km long section is from Rishon-LeZion HaRishonim station (currently linked with Beer-Ya'akov and Lod) and the planned station of Ramla South which is to be built under the road interchange between roads Nos. 40 & 431 carrying the same name; it includes two railway bridges, two tunnels of 450m and 250m tunnel and a control & command building.

The second 4.5km long section is between Ramla South and Eagles' Interchanges (east of Ramla) and include four railway bridges.

The length of the whole new line is 30km between Anava Junction (west of Modi'in Outskirts station) and Rishon-LeZion Moshe Dayan (West) which is on the Tel-Aviv – Holon – Bat-Yam -Yavne West – Ashdod – Ashkelon - Beer-Sheva line.

Large infrastructure tenders for the section between Rishon-LeZion HaRishonim and Rishon-LeZion Moshe Dayan (West) stations will be published during 2019 and include underground passages and a 3.5km railway bridge (to be the longest bridge of any sort in Israel) parallel to highway 431 (due to lack of space for the railway line in the median of the highway).

Also to be tendered is the 5km line section between the Eagles' Interchange and Anava Junction.

Two new stations will be built; one - Ramla South mentioned above - and Sorek Rhombus to be located south of Rishon-LeZion Moshe Dayan (West); it is not certain at the moment that this last station is to be built.

The Anava junction, which is the point from where the line to Modi'in deviates from the A1, is to become more complex when the link to the "Sorek Line" is completed; traffic control will have to cope with the A1 Tel-Aviv - Jerusalem trains, Modi'in - Tel-Aviv trains, Jerusalem - Rishon-LeZion and Modi'in - Rishon-LeZion trains; As if this is not enough, the Modi'in curve currently under construction which link the city with the A1 line will add trains between Modi'in and Jerusalem in both directions.

The forecast for completion of the "Sorek Line" is 2025; it will create the southern edge of the Greater Tel-Aviv Area circle line; the northern edge being the Sharon or 'No. 531 line' opened in July 2018 with the two new stations of Ra'anana.

- *From a press release of 02.12.2018 by Israel Railways Ltd:*
- *Attached herewith are 4 computer generated simulations provided by courtesy of Mrs. Yael Weitzman from the railways' spokesman office; credit for the simulations:*
- *Picture 1 KB shows the line at Gan Rave road interchange; the line and highway #431 run westwards, while highway #4 runs southwest to Yavne and Ashdod; the building with orange letters is the planned Sorek Rhombus station seen here much clearer.*
- *Picture 2 shows the line further west at Rishon Le-Zion Ein Hakore road interchange; the city on the right is Rishon Le-Zion West; road #42 runs north/south*
- *.Picture of3 shows the line at Rishon Le-Zion West (on the left); on the right can be seen oxygenation pools; the white building near the green road number 431, is the planned Sorek Rhombus station.*
- *Picture 4 shows the line just west of Rishon Le-Zion Harishonim station where the 3.5 km railway bridge starts; the general direction is westwards; the city on the right is Rishon Le-Zion; the numbers in green are road numbers.*
- *D.E.L. Engineering Co. of Tel-Aviv & AmarCuriel of Haifa architects' offices.*

(ii). FRUIT MARKET AT TEL AVIV STATION.

From a press release of 11.12.2018 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways are connecting the public with local agricultural products: After a successful pilot, the "Market on the Way" returns; every Wednesday & Thursday between 08:00 and 20:00 the 50,000 daily or 1 million passengers monthly using Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station enjoy products from a fresh fruit and vegetable market at much reduced prices."

(iii). SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS.

IR announced on their website that from Saturday night 22.12.2018 the following trains would be added:

On the line between Ra'anana stations and Rishon-LeZion Moshe Dayan (West) stations; the train will depart from Ra'anana West at 22:00 and call at Ra'anana South, Hod HaSharon/Sokolov, Kfar-Sava Nordau, Rosh HaAyin North, Petakh-Tikva stations, B'nei-Brak, all Tel-Aviv stations and the stations of Holon and Bat-Yam, terminating at Rishon-LeZion Moshe Dayan (West).

On the Carmiel line; the train of 19:06 from Carmiel and so far terminating at Haifa Central will instead terminate at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central, calling at Kiryat-Motzkin, Kiryat-Hayim, Hutzot HaMifratz, Merkazit HaMifratz, all Haifa stations, Binyamina, Caesarea/Pardes-Hanna, Hadera West, Netanya stations, Beit-Yehoshua, Herzliyya, Tel-Aviv University and terminating at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central.

- *Map showing the lines in the Greater Tel-Aviv Area with emphasis on the 431 Sorek line between Modi'in Outskirts (called on the map Pa'ate Modi'in) and Rishon-LeZion HaRishonim stations as a black dotted line; the section between Rishon-LeZion HaRishonim and Rishon LeZion Moshe Dayan (West), shown on the map as just Rishon-LeZion in a gray dotted line, is soon to be tendered.*

(iv). CHANUKAH TRAFFIC STATISTICS: A GREAT MIRACLE HAPPENED THERE.....

From a press release of 13.12.2018 by Israeli Railways Ltd.:

"The railways have summarized passenger traffic during the Chanukah festival (of lights and candles) which lasted from 03.-10.12.2018; there are many shows, concerts, etc. during these days.

An all-time record was achieved on Sunday 09.12.2018 with 318,768 passenger carried; this overshadowed the former daily record of 298,806 passengers carried on 03.05.2018; up by 6.7%.

During Chanukah the railways carried more than 2 Million passengers with a daily average of 281,000 compared with a regular daily average of 250,000; up by 12.4%.

The rise in traffic as per stations was as follows:

Tel-Aviv University station:

Was used by 276,452 passengers with a daily average of 37,500; up by 40% over regular days.

This station is located adjacent to Hayarkon Park and the exhibition park where a lot of events for children took place. At the entrance of the station there was a huge security checking tent, the management teams, stewardesses and security staff were strengthened and special additional trains to/from the station were operated.

Jerusalem Navon station:

Was used by 77,802 passengers with a daily average of 10,750; up by 70%; the highest rise over regular days at any station.

Many used the free travel offer from Ben-Gurion Airport station as well as from Navon station to all over the network, hence the significant rise.

Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station:

Was used by 400,000 passengers with a daily average of 63,000; up by 5.5% over regular days. This second-busiest station was working 24 hours/day giving a solution for all those who arrived in order to continue to the shopping and entertainment areas in the centre of Tel-Aviv; the new $8.5M (NIS 31.8M) northern 1000 sq.m. terminal which opened recently helped a lot with the traffic flow.

Tel-Aviv HaShalom station:

Was used by the highest number of 463,000 passengers with a daily average of 52,000; here the rise was modest - by 1% only; this station is the nearest one to the shopping and entertainment areas in the centre of Tel-Aviv and is therefore heavily used all through the year.

The station is undergoing a $13M (NIS 50M) upgrading and extension work which includes an additional entrance at its southern end with an entrance hall, vending machines, security check position, escalator and lift, and which will be fully accessible for people with limited capabilities.

It should be mentioned that Ben-Gurion Airport station, although not mentioned in the report, became also very attractive and busy; many arriving from abroad and or/travelling abroad use it to/from Jerusalem due to the 22-minute journey, the shortest of any sort of land transport.

(v). INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS.

a). HAIFA AREA WORKS. The railways announced on their website that due to track infrastructure works the northern lines to Haifa Central the 8 from Beit-Shean, Nahariyya and Carmiel would be closed between Thursday night 20.12.2018 at 00:01 and Friday afternoon 21.12.2018 at 16:00.

All trains from/to the south to start/terminate at Haifa Central the 8. Alternative bus services would be provided.

b). TEL AVIV AREA. From a press release of 24.12.2018 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Due to progress on electrification works as well as on infrastructure works between Tel-Aviv HaHagana and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central stations, the following changes to traffic will take place from 06.01.2019 and until further notice:

On Sunday to Thursday between 21:00 and 04:00 the following changes will affect the Negev Line (Western Line) Beer-Sheva - Rananana:

From the south, trains will start/terminate at Tel-Aviv HaHagana station.

From the north, trains will start/terminate at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station.

Passengers on the Negev Line wanting to reach either HaHagana or Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central stations should change trains and use other lines' trains operating as usual; there will be also free bus shuttle services southwards between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Rishon-LeZion Moshe Dayan (West), and northwards between Tel-Aviv HaHagana and Ra'anana West stations."

During other parts of the days (Sunday to Thursday) traffic will run on the Negev Line as usual.

On Friday: Starting from 11.01.2018, between 00:01 (the night between Thursday and Friday) and until service ends on each Friday (until further notice) the section between Tel-Aviv HaHagana and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central stations will be closed for traffic. Consequently trains on all lines from the south - excluding on the Negev line - will start/terminate at Lod; trains on all lines - excluding on the Negev line - will start/terminate at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station; trains on the Negev line from the south will start/terminate at Tel-Aviv HaHagana station; trains on the Negev line from the north will start/terminate at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station; bus shuttle services will be provided between Lod, Tel-Aviv HaHagana and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central stations in both directions; between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central, Ben-Gurion Airport and Modi'in Central in both directions.

The Transport Ministry will also strengthen regular bus services on these routes."

(c). WORKS AT DIMONA.

From a press release of 24.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.: "The railways continue to upgrade the track infrastructure all over the network and as an integral part of the annual maintenance programme works of upgrading and replacing track components will take place in the Dimona area, as a result of which Dimona station will be closed between Wednesday night 20.03.2019 at 00:01 and about 17:00 on Friday 22.03.2019 and on Saturday night 23.03.2019; traffic will resume on Sunday 24.03.2019 at 05:00; alternative bus services will be provided free of charge between Beer-Sheva North/University and Dimona stations in both directions."

(d). WORKS AT BEN-GURION AIRPORT.

From a press release of 25.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.: "Works of upgrading and replacing track components will take place at Ben-Gurion Airport station area, as a result of which the stations of Modi'in Central, Modi'in Outskirts and Jerusalem Navon will be closed - as will be the line sections between Ben-Gurion airport, Modi'in and A1 - between Wednesday 13.03.2019 at 22:00 and Friday 15.03.2019 at about 17:00; the following traffic changes will take place: On Thursday 14.03.2019 trains between Modi'in Central and Nahariyya will start/terminate at Ben-Gurion Airport station instead of Modi'in Central and Modi'in Outskirts stations. There will be no trains on that date between Ben-Gurion Airport and Jerusalem Navon stations. The trains run on Fridays between Lod and Haifa Central by-passing Tel-Aviv will not operate on Friday 15.03.2019.

Alternative bus services will be provided free of charge between Modi'in stations and Ben-Gurion Airport station, and between Ben-Gurion Airport and Jerusalem Navon stations in both directions. Traffic will resume on Sunday morning 17.03.2019 at 04:00.

(vi). MORE LOST PROPERTY FOUND AND RETURNED:

From a press release of 26.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The team of Haifa Central the 8 Station managed by the shift manager Mr. Meir Avarjel are quite experienced at tracing lost belongings and returning them to their owners, but not with such a precious loss: On 25.02.2019 an elderly couple, Parisian citizens, came in panic to the shift manager's office telling him that they had lost on the train from the Krayot (Haifa satellite towns) en route to visit their daughter - a new immigrant from France, living in Netanya - a bag containing EURO 4,200; they had brought it to the wedding of their grandson to take place within a matter of days.

Mr. Avarjel immediately started a tracing operation by calling all shift managers at stations north and east of Haifa and after few minutes it was found on the platform of Haifa Hutzot HaMifratz station, and shortly after brought to Haifa Central station where it was returned to its owners.

Mr. Abraham Turgeman explained: "We're Parisian citizens who come every few months to Israel and stay at Kiryat-Ata (a city north/east of Haifa); this morning we went to Netanya to bring

the wedding present to our grandson, himself a new immigrant from France, but suddenly found that we had lost it; We alighted at Haifa Central the 8 station, and immediately went to the shift manager who did all he could and beyond to return it to us; we're more than grateful to the railways employees and particularly to Mr. Avarjel who saved the wedding present".

Mr. Avarjel himself said: "I'm happy that I managed to trace the precious lost item, but particularly from the special blessing in Morocco's Arabic I received from the couple which - translated to English - means: "Be Healthy and may all your wishes be fulfilled". (Note: No doubt that the fact that Mr. Avarjel's country of origin is Morocco and so he speaks both French and Moroccan Arabic, helped a lot in communicating with the Turgeman couple who speak the same languages!)

(vii). BY-PASS TRAINS OVER THE OLD LINE.

From a press release of 09.01.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Due to electrification works being carried out on Fridays along the Ayalon Railway line, and in order to make travelling north/south and vice-versa available, the railways will strengthen services on those days by three additional trains each way as following:

From the north: trains will depart from Haifa Central the 8 at 07:49, 09:49 and 12:49 and call at: Haifa Bat-Galim, Haifa Hof HaCarmel, Binyamina, Caesarea-Pardes-Hanna, Hadera West, Netanya and Netanya Sapir, Beit-Yehoshua, Herzliyya, B'nei-Brak, Petakh-Tikva Kiryat-Arie and Petakh-Tikva Sgula, terminating at Lod, where passengers will be able to change trains and continue southwards.

From the south: trains will depart from Lod at 07:20, 10:20 and 12:20 and call at: Petakh-Tikva Sgula, Petakh-Tikva Kiryat-Arie, B'nei-Brak, Herzliyya, Beit-Yehoshua, Netanya and Netanya Sapir, Hadera West, Caesarea-Pardes-Hanna, Binyamina, Haifa Hof HaCarmel, Haifa Bat-Galim, terminating at Haifa Central the 8, where passengers will be able to change trains and continue northwards." (These trains bypass the Greater Tel-Aviv Area, saving a lot of time; They will use the normally freight-only west-to-south curve at Rosh HaAyin.)

(viii). 'A1' JERUSALEM LINE NEWS AND BLUES.

These continue for the obvious reason that there are only two trainsets active stabled on what is, operationally, an island – still cut off from through access to depots for electric traction maintenance.

(a). Here from 16.12.2018 'Times of Israel':

"Passengers waiting to board the Jerusalem - Ben-Gurion Airport fast train watched in dismay Sunday as services were reduced by half, to once an hour instead of twice, just as rush hour was about to start. Israel Railways said that the change was due to a faulty electric locomotive.

Although the media was notified about the change in schedule, there was no explanation given to the passengers on the platform, reports said. Regular service was restored after about two hours. A Facebook group that keeps track of train services and reports problems tweeted a photo of an electronic timetable on one platform showing a cancelled train.

Passengers have suffered through numerous hiccups and delays since the new electric line opened in September, including last week, when all services were stopped for an hour due to technical issues. In another incident, travellers reported being stuck in a tunnel for 25 minutes shortly after leaving the capital's new Yitzhak Navon Station.

The original estimated completion date for the line passed years ago. Then the opening was delayed by five months. Plans were for the trains to run directly from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, but due to delays in electrifying the line from Ben-Gurion Airport to Tel Aviv, passengers can only travel between Jerusalem and the airport at present. The hilly section from Jerusalem to Latrun has five tunnels and several miles of bridges, which afford dramatic views of the Jerusalem hills.

In the coming months the line will be extended, first to Tel Aviv's stations and eventually to Herzliyya. Depending on the time of day, up to four trains will run each hour in both directions, traveling at up to 160 kilometres (100 miles) per hour.

The project was conceived in 2001, at an estimated cost of around NIS 3.5 Billion ($978M). Work began in 2005, only to be halted by environmentalist opposition until 2009. Tunnelling recommenced in 2012. The final cost amounts to around NIS 6.5 Bn. ($1.8 Bn).

The fast train to Tel Aviv has been long awaited by travellers who until now have had only a slow rail ride that meandered through the Jerusalem hills on an old Ottoman-era track and took over an hour."

(b). Then next day, Monday 17.12.2018:

"The Jerusalem to Ben-Gurion Airport fast train service, rolled out as the first stage in a high-speed connection between the capital and the coast, was brought to a standstill Monday morning in the latest of recurring problems afflicting the line.

The hold-up was caused by a technical fault, Hebrew media reported. Services were resumed after a delay of two hours.....

(c). On 25.12.2018: From a press release of 24.12.2018 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry: "Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz and Finance Minister Mr. Moshe Kakhlon decided today to extend the free travel arrangement between Jerusalem HaUma and Ben-Gurion stations by an additional three months (between 01.01.2019 and 31.03.2019 inclusive) when the test runs will be completed; during the coming weeks (until 31.12.2019 inclusive) passengers will enjoy a 50% fare reduction. During the first three months of test running, more than 420,000 passengers used the line." (The cynics call this a General Elections economy since the elections will now take place at the beginning of April 2019).

(d). On 30.01.2019: 'Times of Israel': "The fast train service between Jerusalem and Ben Gurion Airport was halted Wednesday due to a technical malfunction in a locomotive that was being tested near the Daniel Interchange. The locomotive's pantograph, which connects the car to the power cables overhead, was dislodged, incapacitating it. In order to tow the engine from the scene, maintenance teams were forced to power down the cables, stopping all trains along the line. Buses were sent to take the passengers on the stalled trains to their destinations.

The new high-speed line from Jerusalem to Ben Gurion Airport was inaugurated with much fanfare in September, but has since seen numerous malfunctions, delays and shutdowns. In December it was announced that Israel Railways CEO Shahar Ayalon would step down following recent quarterly losses of hundreds of millions of shekels, as well as the ongoing problems with services. The original estimated completion date for the line passed years ago. Then the opening was delayed by another five months. Plans were for the trains to run directly from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv, but due to delays in electrifying the line from Ben-Gurion Airport to Tel Aviv, passengers can only travel between Jerusalem and the airport at present. There they must change trains for the remainder of the journey."

(e). On 30.01.2019 at about 13:05 during testing one of the electrical locomotives (not with a train) on the A1, a component of the pantograph fell apart; in order to repair the locomotive the line was closed for two hours in order to bring it to the depot of Lod; but for safety reasons the electric power supply was shut down until a diesel loco did the mission and brought the defective loco to the depot. The result was: 8 trains cancelled and hundreds of

- *Electric trains on the A1 line. Photos by Martin Frey.*

angry passengers; it should be noted that the A1 can be reached from Lod only by a side track, neither the Lod depot nor the siding are electrified as yet. Traffic resumed at 15:30.

(ix). GENERAL MANAGER 'RESIGNS'.

Breaking news: "Today, 17.12.2018, the Chairman of the Israel Railways Ltd. Directorate Brigadier-General (Reserve) Dan Harel informed the current General Manager Mr. Shahar Ayalon that he is terminating his job.

This did not surprise anybody; the growing deficit particularly from freight haulage and particularly the frequent failures on the A1 and other lines, as well as slow progress on electrification and the slow delivery of rolling stock, which causes severe overcrowding on trunk lines, brought this step which was apparently instructed by Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz today." [Ed. Notes: But the Minister should be the one to take responsibility....*]

The 'Times of Israel' on 17.12. worded it differently:

"The CEO of Israel Railways, Shahar Ayalon, will step down following a string of problems with services and recently quarterly losses of hundreds of millions of shekels. “Yesterday, the Israel Railways chairman of the board spoke with the CEO regarding the end of his position,” the state-owned company said in a statement Monday. “The Israel Railways directorate will meet this evening to discuss the matter.” Ayalon, a former Fire and Rescue Commissioner and Tel Aviv region police commander, took up the job a year and a half ago. A recent financial report from Israel Railways showed a NIS 273 million ($72.4m) quarterly loss. There have also been numerous problems with services, in particular on the new high-speed line from Jerusalem to Ben Gurion Airport. On Monday service was halted for two hours due to technical faults and on Sunday the number of trains per hour was halved to just one as a result of a problem with an electric locomotive. Passengers have suffered through numerous hiccups and delays since the new electric line opened in September, including last week, when all services were stopped for an hour due to technical issues...."

Sybil states that by this date there had been 33 cases of delay or interruption on the A1 line and there has even been talk of sabotage of the service by employees – something the unions, of course, find unthinkable.

The next day the media were already full of conspiracy therories.

"Some say that he is a fall guy or a scapegoat for Minister Katz and that it is not fair to blame him only on the failures; they add that he was- and is -considered to be a nice person who wanted very much to be in good relations with the employees including their problematic union; other claim that he was not strong enough to withstand the pressure of Minister Katz to open the A1 on September 2018 despite the fact that works were not yet completed. As one said: "To be only a nice guy in such a sort of organization is not professional."

One of the candidates as successor was Mr. Nissim Peretz, the General Manger of Israel Ways Ltd. which is already responsible on the railways' infrastructure projects.

On 25.12.2018 Aharon wrote: "Today, the committee for selecting senior personalities is supposed to discuss the future of Israel Railways General Manager Mr. Ayalon; despite previous information he is not going to give up but to fight on his reputation; I'll update."

Then on 27.12.2018 it was announced: "The Transport Ministry and Israel Railways Ltd. Directorate have reached an agreement with IR Ltd. General Manager Mr. Shahar Ayalon, according to which he will end his job on 31.03.2019, very close to the general elections to take place on 09.04.2019; On 31.03.2019 the test runs on the A1 are supposed to be completed and hopefully an electric service between Jerusalem Navon and Tel-Aviv HaHagana stations will start; meanwhile, the governmental committee for finding senior managers has started its work."

(x). MORE DOUBLE-DECKERS IN OPERATION.

From a press release of 08.01.2018 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Further to former reports by the railways regarding the arrival of new additional double-deck cars, the railways now will start operation of three trains with 8-car formation instead of 7; This applies to 15 trains daily on the Nahariyya - Modi'in and Binyamina - Rehovot lines, considered as the most congested.

Each such car adds 142 seats which means an additional 852 seats on the Nahariyya - Modi'in line and 1,278 seats on the Binyamina - Rehovot line, bringing the total number of additional seats to 2,130 daily on these lines."

Aharon adds: "So far so good; but the real picture is different; In order to reduce the operational deficit, the railways have drastically reduced the number of security check personal at station entrances; this has caused much longer times at the check points; If we add to this the frequent failures of checking machines and ticket vending machines, which cause passengers to miss trains in the mornings en-route to work or afternoons after work, the complaints and anger are quite understandable; also failures on the A1 line do not add to the picture; but above all, the responses from the railways are unsatisfactory."

(xi). LEVEL CROSSING INCIDENT – NEAR MISS.

A driver of a private car violated the law at a protected level crossing near Kfar-Yehoshua (on the Valley Line) and was slightly hit by a passing train, the driver of which managed to stop the train by applying the emergency brakes. This happened at about 12:30; as a result, trains from/to Beit-She'an started/terminated at Kfar-Yehoshua; trains to/from Atlit (south of Haifa) started/terminated at Haifa Central the 8. Alternative bus services ran between Kfar-Yehoshua and Haifa Central the 8. Traffic resumed at about 15:15.

(xii). MUSEUM NEWS.

From a press release of 10.01.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"This week there was an historic event for the railways: On Sunday 06.01.2019 four historical railway items were taken out from the Eretz Yisrael Museum (the Museum of the Land of Israel) located in the Ramat-Aviv neighbourhood of Tel-Aviv (not far from the university) and in the night between Sunday and Monday 07.01.2019 were loaded onto special flatbed trucks using a 300-ton capacity crane and transferred to their new destinations.

The items include: a 1955-built Esslingen driving trailer from a 3-car railcar train set; a 1958 Deutz small shunting loco; a Ruston-Hornsby 4wD and a track inspection trolley from the 1950's; these have been transferred to the railway museum at Haifa East.

An additional item - a 1942 US-built 35-ton box car has been transferred to the preserved Turkish station of Beer-Sheva alongside a former Turkish 2-8-0 8F steam locomotive which carries the number 70414 of a famous loco scrapped around 1958.

The whole operation was followed up by the Manager of the railway museum Mr. Chen Melling while the credit for the attached pictures is for Mr. Yaron Dozetas, head of Israeli Rail Enthusiast Group."

- *Esslingen (former Maybach driving cab power car) coach being transferred from Museon HaAretz to Israel Railwwys Museum. (All Photos Yaron Dozetas.)*

- *Deutz 0-4-0D on a low loader on its way from Ramat Aviv to Haifa.*

- *40 ton WD box wagon 35010 -will be near 70414 in Beer Sheva*

Aharon Gazit adds: "Some background: the Tel-Aviv museum was inaugurated in 1962, 70 years after the opening of the Jaffa - Jerusalem line (on 26.09.1892); since the railways did not have then the intention either to create a museum nor to preserve any item, and as the Tel-Aviv museum wanted some items, the railways donated an ex-Hedjaz 0-6-0T Krauss steam locomotive to the museum where it was until about 20 years ago. This is of course now also at Haifa, the only HR loco left in Israel.

• Photos Aharon Gazit

The other items were transferred last week at the request of the Tel-Aviv museum manager due to enlarging this museum; the railway museum had just waited for this moment and has its own programme for rebuilding and enlargement. N.B.: I'm one of the surviving participants of the 1962 ceremony at the Tel-Aviv museum!"

(xiii). LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW, LET IT SNOW.

From a press release of 15.01.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways are preparing for snow in Jerusalem. On 16.01.2019 afternoon the following arrangements for trains and traffic to/from Jerusalem will take place on both the A1 (the first time this would be operated under snow) and the old line between Beit-Shemesh and Jerusalem:

On the A1 trains will operate until midnight rather than until 19:30 on regular days; trains will operate at a frequency of 2 trains/hour each direction as usual, but there will be strengthening of services from the north and from Tel-Aviv to/from Ben-Gurion Airport where passengers change trains; they will have shorter waits changing.

On the old line, trains will run every two hours in each direction as usual.

Additionally the railways have completed several precautions against snow including: heating elements at Beit-Shemesh, placing heavy engineering equipment, de-icing, salt, ditches and clearance of access roads, etc.

There is a big "If" regarding the snow, but nobody takes risks."

(xiv). LIFE-SAVER.

The railways announced on their website on 16.01.2019 that a passenger who was at Tel-Aviv HaShalom station that afternoon owes her life to the station staff, a paramedic and a doctor who were on the platform, and the defibrillator which is installed at each of the 68 stations and other operational sites; the 30-year-old woman suddenly collapsed and the fast resuscitation activities stabilized her situation, following which she was brought to hospital.

(xv). SIMULATORS FOR DRIVER TRAINING.

From a press release of 20.01.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Israel Railways Ltd. are building a $5.95 Million (NIS 22M) ultra-modern drivers' simulators site at the city of Ofakim (on the Negev line near Beer-Sheva); it is the first site of its kind and will include 8 advanced simulators purchased from Corys and the Israeli company Elbit Systems Ltd. who cooperated in this project. The site will have an area of 1,500 sq.m.

There will be two simulators type FMS (Full Mission Simulator), one will simulate the Vossloh diesel locomotives types EURO 3200 & EURO 4000, while the other one will simulate the Bombardier electric locomotives type TRAXX currently operated on the A1 only.

There will be additional desk simulators type PTT (Part Task Trainer).

The simulators will enable the teams to be trained on the ETCS Level 2 and ERTMS systems being installed.

The IR management said: "The railways are undergoing many revolutionary processes including the simulators site which will significantly raise the teams' professional levels."

See photos on next page.....

(xvi). SIGNALLING DISRUPTIONS.

On 22.01.2019 at about 15:30 a signalling failure at Binyamina, caused probably by a damaged communication cable, brought the following disruptions to train traffic: Trains between Beit-Shemesh and Netanya started/terminated at Herzliyya; trains between Beer-Sheva and Herzliyya started/terminated at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central, suburban trains between Ashkelon and Netanya started/terminated at Herzliyya; trains between Rehovot and Binyamina started/terminated at Netanya; on some trains between Tel-Aviv and Haifa the railways strengthened services. The failure was over after about two hours and traffic resumed gradually, but by 20:05 punctuality was only 84.5%.

On 05.02.2019 at about 07:30 a signalling failure on colour light signal masts at Shefayim area (north of Herzliyya) caused delays and traffic chaos; trains from the south between Beer-Sheva and Herzliyya started/terminated at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central; trains between Beit-Shemesh and Netanya and between Ashkelon and Netanya started/terminated at Herzliyya. Traffic resumed gradually at 09:30.

Due to the latest reported failures punctuality moved like a pendulum from as low as 85% to as high as 98%. Just after this event the railways have announced on their website that multi-liner smart cards holders will be compensated automatically in case of delays of more than 30 minutes by receiving a free ticket for the same journey; in case of a delay of more than 60 minutes they will receive 2 tickets; this will be done no later than 48 hours from the event; this innovation comes after developing a special technology for that purpose.

Recently there have been a lot of complaints regarding overcrowded stations and trains;

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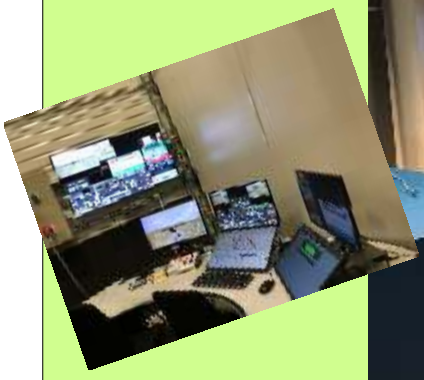
- *Pictures of the simulators (provided by courtesy of Mr. Matan Berkovich from the Railways' spokesman office.)*



(xvii). WORKS ON OLD JERUSALEM LINE.

The railways announced on their website that due to track works to be carried out, the Beit-Shemesh - Jerusalem Malkha section (old line) would be closed for traffic between Wednesday 30.01.2019 at 17:30 and Saturday night 02.02.2019 at 23:59.

(xviii). NEED FOR LINKS TO ARAB CITIES.

Thanks to David Ehrlich for this excerpt from 'Ha'aretz' 08.02.2019 which just shows how far things have changed, that communities now DEMAND railway connections rather than complaining about them!

"Wiped Off the Map: Railway Plan Skips Arab Towns, Leaves 180,000 Without Transport Solution. The plan excludes residents of Wadi Ara, most of whom work in other cities and commute daily through heavy traffic. By Osnat Nir"

"The plan to run a railway line through Wadi Ara, linking communities along that valley to the national railway system, has been shelved, with an alternative plan being presented by the Transportation Ministry. People living in the mainly Arab communities along the valley, with its population of 180,000, are worried that by being cut off from the railway system they will have no suitable solution to their dire transportation problems.

The disputed stretch lies northeast of Hadera. It was supposed to link the coastal train line from Lod to Hadera, expected to open in eight years, with the Jezreel Valley line. According to the plan that was shelved, the line would have passed from the 'Iron Junction to towns in Wadi Ara – Umm al Fahm and Ar'ara – before reaching Megiddo, west of Afula, where it would link up with the Jezreel Valley line. The committee dealing with overland transportation, which plans railway routes, cancelled the plan two weeks ago, to the dismay of local councils in the area.

The new proposed route will lie further north, going through a tunnel before joining the Jezreel Valley line between Kfar Yehoshua and Kfar Baruch. This decision still needs final approval by the National Planning and Building Council, which will probably be given in a few weeks. Representatives from towns in the area argue that the decision will perpetuate the break between the area and the coast, and thus, too, with the centre, Haifa and Afula.

The Wadi Ara area has been suffering from heavy congestion for years, especially at its entry and exit points. There is also insufficient public transportation to meet the needs of people living there. According to an earlier decision, cancelling the railway line requires presentation of an alternative solution to the area's problems. Such a document was indeed presented at the committee meeting two weeks ago, but it was vague and very preliminary and theoretical, with no information regarding what it would actually look like on the ground, or whether there would be new bus lanes, a light rail system or express buses.

"A train is a significant source of life" says Mudar Younis, the head of Ar'ara's local council. "There were deliberations around the exact route, since it

passed close to some houses, with concerns about the transport of hazardous materials as well. Alternate plans relying on buses won't solve the problem – congestion is high and fast buses won't stop inside towns along the way."

The area is populated by relatively poor communities, with a critical need to link it to public transportation in order to develop the area and allow people living there to escape their dire situation.

According to Central Bureau of Statistics numbers from 2008 (the latest available), 25 percent of the area's residents work in central Israel, 19 percent work in the north, and 18 percent in the Hadera-Pardes Hanna area, meaning that 60 percent of breadwinners need daily transportation outside the area. "The shortage is suffocating, with implications for all areas of life" says a social activist.

Local authorities and the 'Iron local council believe that the solution offered by the transportation ministry is ineffective, and that train service is vital. Such service will also be an economic resource, affecting the area's image, industry and development, in addition to solving transportation needs.

Residents are open to alternatives such as a light rail system, with its higher frequency and increased number of stations. However, this is not yet on the table, despite the previous plan's cancellation.

Planning the railway line through the valley began two decades ago, and was approved by the relevant authorities. Some sections were planned as elevated lines, others going through tunnels. The committee says the new plan calls for a more direct line, easier to build. Topographical problems, which would have required deep underground stations, were cited as one reason for the change in plan. The proximity to built-up areas or private plots was another reason, since residents' opposition would have caused delays and high costs.

Some sources said that the plan would have not solved the problems in the area in any case, since it included only two stations, which would not have met the needs of local residents. Due to traffic congestion more stations, situated closer to the towns along the route, would have been required.

The Transportation Ministry said that "since Yisrael Katz assumed his post as transportation minister, the plan was to build the more northerly route. Other solutions will be found for Wadi Ara, other than a heavy train which is unsuitable for the densely-populated area."

The Planning Authority at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development said that it recognizes the importance of developing public transportation through the area. "We've seen plans for a designated bus lane along the main highway there, and for a future light rail system. A regular train line would not solve the problem, with its underground route, few stations and low accessibility. Approving the new plan will be conditional on creating a fast bus lane through Wadi Ara."

(xix). ACCIDENT AVOIDED.

From the Israel Railways Ltd. report of 07.02.2019:

"A real disaster was avoided this afternoon when a person with limited ability drove his electric scooter onto the Kiryat-Motzkin level crossing near the railway station, ignoring the red flashing lights, the ringing bell, and the barriers! Loco driver Eli Ben Simon, running at 100 km/h, saw the person only from a distance of 100m and by applying the emergency brakes stopped the train just 10m before the electric scooter; he really deserves a reward!"

- *Picture of the scooter and driver, taken from a video film provided by the security cameras system*

(xx). LOD STATION TRANSFORMATION.

One cannot say that the historic Lod station is being 'redeveloped', it is in fact to be totally replaced by a new one slightly to the north, as this report of 07.02.2019 indicates:

"Construction works on the combined transportation complex at Lod have recently started. The $105 Million (NIS 380M) project will be built on an area of 51 Dunam (Hectares) and will include a new railway station with an area of 36 Ha, a Park-and-Ride facility, a business area, a complex of two office towers, the enlarged and upgraded Training Centre adjacent to the veteran depot and recently the first Israeli depot for electric locomotives, and a new Central Bus Station currently under construction.

Lod railway station has been the main network junction for 126 years, as part of the 1892 Jaffa-Jerusalem line which was crossed by the British 1917 military line and later during the British mandate (1917-1948) and the state of Israel since, but within a few years, with the huge increase of the network, the rise of traffic and new stations being opened at the area, the forecast for 2040 is for 5.5M passengers/year to use the station, while traffic will reach 320 trains/day.

The project is being carried out in two stages:

In the first stage, the railways' implementation department, through the winning contractor Danya Cebus – one of Israel's veteran and most experienced construction companies - started building the Lod new railway station which will include three island platforms of 350m each and with three large elevators (one on each platform), three pairs of escalators (one pair on each platform), a roofed area of 3.5 Ha., a business site at the station level to include restaurants, shops and various services, and a multi-storey park-and-ride facility for 760 cars. As an integral part of the project an overhead pedestrian roof over the complex of 15 tracks is almost completed.

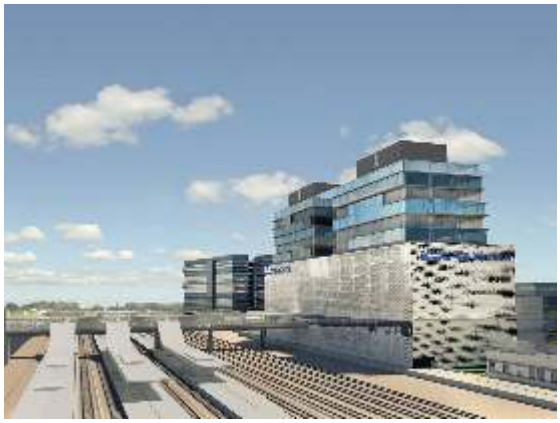
Between the street levels, the platforms and the parking facilities there will be six elevators and a pair of escalators as well as four service elevators. The forecast for completion of the station is the beginning of 2021.

In the second stage, two office and business towers of five stories each at an overall area of 15 Ha. will be built adjacent to the new station with a forecast for completion at the end of 2022. This stage, still to be tendered is performed by the Israel Railways Ltd. subsidiary for railway sites created for the purpose of developing areas adjacent to stations in order to utilize their economic potential; such projects are also promoted at the station sites of Carmiel, Modi'in and Kiryat-Motzkin.

Next page..

4 computer images of the project provided by courtesy of Mr. Matan Berkovich from the railways' spokesman office; credit for the images: Peleg Architects Ltd.:

(Photos 28-31.)



(xxii). HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EXERCISE.

From a press release of 29.01.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Hundreds of railways' workers, policemen, rescue teams, using security and emergency vehicles and special equipment for treating a hazardous materials disaster, performed this morning a wide scale exercise and training to improve preparedness and awareness towards the start of shipment of ammonia by rail.

As an integral part, a disaster scenario was performed, in which a car loaded with ammonia had been derailed, its valves damaged and the hazardous material started leaking; the railways' control centre was immediately informed and all the teams started their activities; also involved was Haifa Chemicals Ltd. - the material supplier; the whole area was isolated.

The railways management stated: "The railways carrying each year 10 million tons of cargo in which are hundreds of thousands tons of hazardous materials; after the exercise a comprehensive debriefing will be made and as a result we forecast 60,000 tons of ammonia to be shipped by rail, thus replacing lorries and reducing the danger on roads; the exercise was managed by Mr. Uri Morozov - Israel Railways Ltd. Manager of Cargo Shipment.

- *Pictures of the exercise, (provided by courtesy of Mr. Matan Berkovich from IR Press office.)*

(xxi). NEW RAILS.

From a press release of 28.01.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"At present 3000 rails with a total weight of 3,240 tons, manufactured by the Czech company Trinecke Zeleznary Moravia Steel Group, with an overall length of 26km and value of $2.7M (NIS 10M) are being unloaded at the port of Haifa.

The shipment includes 18m long rails of types UIC 54, UIC 60 and heavier rails; they will be used for new lines, upgrading existing lines and new bridges where the heavier rails will be laid.

Among the lines to enjoy the UIC 60 are the link to Ra'anana West from the coast line, and sections to be replaced on the Tel-Aviv - Haifa line, while the UIC 54 will be used - among others - for the new depot for electric trains being built adjacent to the Ashkelon railway station."

- *Rails being loaded at Haifa. (Courtesy Matan Berkovich of IR.)*

(xxiii). MARATHON SERVICES.

From a press release of 27.01.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways are preparing to carry tens of thousands (estimated at least 25,000) of passengers to/from the Tel-Aviv Marathon Race to take place on Friday 22.02.2019 with the starting line being near the University station.

As a result, all the electrification works along the Ayalon railway will be put on hold on this Friday; such a complex coordination with the Tel-Aviv municipality took place already two years ago. During the event, there will be 16 special trains from/to all over Israel prior to and after the race; there will be team enforcement and 50 stations will open at 05:00; there will be also strengthening of regular trains.

The railways management stated: "We're pleased to provide our best services to hundreds of cultural, entertainment and sport

events all over Israel according to their requests, but also according to demand and operational, infrastructural, and development constraints; we wish the participants a pleasant and safe journey as well as a pleasant race."

(xxiv). SOLAR ENERGY.

From a press release of 10.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways are joining the revolution of producing electricity through green sustainable energies. Recently the railways published a tender for design, building, installation and maintenance of photovoltaic cell systems to produce 'green' electricity by solar energy. The cells will be installed on about 40 roofs of stations and operating sites all over the network; before publishing the tender, the consulting company Green Energy-Consulting and Follow Up Ltd. completed the mapping and estimation procedure on the railways. In the first stage the systems will be installed on the roofs of four depots of the rolling stock department: Beer-Sheva, Lod, Kishon workshops and Shemen Beach at Haifa (near Haifa East, treating the IC3 dmus).

The solar systems will serve the four sites by providing self-production of electricity, a significant reduction of air pollution, with annual savings of up to $544,400 (NIS 2M) as part of what is called "Net Counter" of the Electrical Authority.

In the second stage the systems will be installed on the rest of the roofs; they will enable the railways to produce and sell electricity to the Electrical Authority according to the arrangement between the two; it will bring the railways an annual income of around $408,000 (NIS 1.5M). The total annual output is estimated at 5 MW and it is expected to complete works during 2019."

(xxv). SHORTAGE OF SKILLED RAIL WORKERS.

From a press release of 03.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Israel Railways Ltd. suffer a severe staff shortage, requiring dozens of track engineers needed for implementation of mega rail projects, both heavy rail and LRV and metro in the coming decades. These projects are nationally crucial for the transportation web and include: quadrupling the coast line, adding fifth and sixth tracks on the Ayalon corridor, a new 18km line between Peleshet Junction (on the Yavne West - Ashdod coast line) and Nahal Sorek station (on the old line to Beit-Shemesh and Jerusalem), a Lod by-pass line, the Eastern Line with extensions to the Valley Line, etc.

A new programme - an initiative of both the Transport Ministry and Israel Railways Ltd. - with collaboration with the 'Technion' (Technical Institute) Department for Continuing Education, which has been developed by the Technion Institute for Transportation Research, will try to catch up with the growing demand in the coming years.

The first programme to start in May 2019 under direction of Prof. Tomer Toledo from the Faculty of Civil & Environmental Engineering and Head of the Technion's Institute for transportation research will be Israel's first and only academic programme which will provide the graduates of BA in Civil and Mechanical Engineering with the title of Experts in Track Engineering.

The programme will last a year and lectures will be given by lecturers from the Technion as well as from The Railroad Engineering and Safety Programme at the University of Delaware, one of today's world's most important schools for track engineering.

The programme is multidisciplinary and includes: acquaintance with rail transportation, track engineering, track design, technologies of track laying, maintenance and control, etc.

The network is to grow from current 1,700 km to 2,500 km by 2040, the number of stations will nearly be doubled from current 68 to 120 in 2040, while the passenger traffic growth forecast is from current around 70 Million to 300 Million in 2040.

Both Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz and Prof. Tomer Toledo said that only such an academic programme can fill up the gap of shortage of engineers and is essential to implementation and success of the mega projects.

The railways management explained the shortage from another point of view: "Until recently, the railways were able to recruit many skilled track engineers who emigrated from the ex-Soviet Union during the 1990's and contributed a lot to raising the railways' professional level, but these are now approaching retirement; this and the unprecedented growth of the network, create a crucial need for an academic route to create skilled track engineers; we're happy for the positive response of both the Transport Ministry and the Technion which will hopefully close the gap."

(xxvi). PLAYING POLITICS WITH THE VALLEY LINE.

From a press release of 04.02.2019 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry:

"The passengers on the Valley Line, opened about 30 months ago, enjoyed three months of free travel and then two years of 50% reduced prices; this terminates tomorrow - 05.02.2019.

The Finance Ministry insists on not continuing this 50% arrangement. Angry responses from passengers convinced Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz to ask Prime Minister Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu to extend the arrangement even though it is against the position of Finance Minister Mr. Moshe Kakhlon.

Mr. Katz said: *"Despite pessimistic forecasts the Valley Line carried almost 4M passengers since its opening with an average of 1.7M annually and 140,000 monthly; cancelling the reduced-price arrangement will cause users to think twice because they are earning even less than the citizens of Haifa and of course much less than those of Greater Tel-Aviv Area; it will also cause more road congestion."*

(xxvii). FURTHER PROBLEMS.

On 03.02.2019 at about 16:20 a failure on a turnout switch at Lehavim/Rahat station (north of Beer-Sheva University station) caused closing the line from Beer-Sheva northwards for more than an hour; on the same day, a failure of a signalling component on a Bombardier TRAXX electric locomotive caused a delay of 15 minutes for the train of 17:01 from Ben-Gurion airport station, but as a result, also to the train of 17:30 from Jerusalem Navon and of 18:01 from Ben-Gurion airport; traffic resumed at 18:30 in both directions.

And as if this is not enough, the railways have decided to reduce the security teams at stations entrances by 200; This is causing a huge chaos and congestions; despite the instruction of Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz to bring back all the 200, it seems not to be implemented as yet; the reason, however, is to cut costs and particularly the deficit now reaching $54 Million (NIS 200M).

(xxviii) MORE LOST AND FOUND....

(a). From a press release of 13.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Several days ago a woman passenger came to Nahariyya station with a suspicious handbag containing several thousand dollars; the police had been informed that this money had been stolen from an elderly woman; it was her monthly pension. *[sic. - presumably for more than one month!!]*

When the woman with the bag came to the station, employees shift manager Mr. Benzi Bublil and cashier Mrs. Paz Bar-Lev immediately identified the thief; the police were called and the thief arrested; the money was returned to the owner."

(b). From a press release of 12.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The team at Jerusalem Navon station is used to assisting passengers who lost their belongings on train, but the loss on Tuesday 05.02.2019 left even them open-mouthed; during her regular patrol at the station entrance a stewardess saw a one-year-old baby girl walking around alone in the huge station among hundreds of passengers at the 16:00 rush hour. The stewardess immediately took the baby to the station's senior shift manager Mr. Morris Barda who first assured that she was not hurt, then took her under his custody to his office, from where he used the public announcement system to the passengers in the station, while simultaneously he contacted the central command sending messages to all the teams all over the network.

Mr. Barda said: "I was worried that the baby's mother was on the train which had already left the station, and as a father to three children I imagined myself how anxious and horrified her parents could be; we now added a baby-sitting service!"

After a stressful 30 minutes, the horrified mother came to his office and told the following tale: *"I took my baby together with my elder boys for our first journey on the A1; they decided to try the escalators while I myself used the elevator being sure that the baby was with them; only a moment prior to the departure I became horrified to find that she was not; I alighted from the train to look for her while an angel in the form of a team member told me that she was safe with the senior shift manager; I'm most thankful to them!"*

(xxix). REHOVOT REBUILDING AND UPGRADE.

From a press release of 12.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways will start next week works of upgrading the Rehovot railway station; This dates from 1920, shortly after WW1, and was originally built by the British Mandate government and was important as located on the Cairo – Lydda - Haifa international line. (It was also one of numerous stations to contain a citrus fruit package house; it was an important export item for years and was hauled exclusively by rail; its record was 15M boxes in around 1945; the railways hauled this traffic until 1964 when the government surrendered to pressure from road haulers; this agricultural branch has in any case almost ceased to exist for economic reasons. Rehovot was once surrounded by orchards which have now almost disappeared in favour of houses, offices and research institutes!)

The station ceased to be used for passengers from 1948 - the foundation of Israel - but was reopened in 1990 when the public "discovered" rail service, and was upgraded for the first time in 2000 as part of upgrading and double-tracking the Lod – Rehovot - Yavne East – Ashdod - Ashkelon line.

The station is today in fourth place in Israel regarding passenger traffic; during the three quarters of 2018, 4.25 Million passengers used the station in more than 23,000 trains, which is an average of 472,222/month or 15,740/day.

Although located a little out of the city centre, it has a large adjacent high-tech area as well as world-known academic institutes, particularly The Weizmann Institute of Science which is one of the world's leading multidisciplinary basic research institutions in the natural and exact sciences, named after Dr. Chaim Weizmann, Israel's first president and a world-known chemist who contributed a lot to the allies in WW2; there is also a branch of the Hebrew University in the area.

Also contributing to the rise is the city's growing population; while it was around 137,500 in 2015, it reached 150,000 in 2018 and will grow to 175,000 in 2025.

The upgrading works will include the following: Renewing the waiting hall, an additional northern exit and security check positions, building an overhead pedestrian bridge which will include lifts and escalators to enable direct exit from the platforms, and the main work will be adding a fourth track in favour of a fourth platform at its southern side (near The Weizmann Institute of Science) to be completed in 2022.

As preparatory works a section of 350m will be realigned; work is to be performed in two sites simultaneously 24 hours/day with all the necessary track machinery.

Consequently there will be no train traffic between Rehovot and Yavne East and both stations will be closed between Tuesday night 26.02.2019 at 22:00 and Friday 01.03.2019 at about 17:00; traffic will resume on Saturday night 02.03.2019 at about 18:30.

- *The so called 'German Platoon' of the Jewish Brigade, soldiers of British Army, boarding the train to Egypt at Rehovot during WW2.*
- *A general view of the station from an overhead road bridge; the empty area right of the train is the place for the 4th track to be laid and the 4th platform to be buil*

The following traffic changes will take place regarding the suburban trains between Rehovot and Binyamina:

These will start/terminate at Rishon Le-Zion HaRishonim and will call also at Beer-Ya'akov (between Rehovot and Lod); trains between Ashkelon, Netanya and Binyamina will start/terminate at Lod; Passengers from Ashkelon will enjoy the service of the Western Negev line (Beer-Sheva - Ra'anana) which will operate regularly; the railways will operate free of charge bus services between Rehovot and Lod stations twice/hour in each direction.

There will be also a depot for rolling stock and freight facilities.

(xxx). CHARGING POINTS FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES.

From a press release of 17.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The railways are promoting the green transportation revolution and have published a request for information on installation of charging points for electrical vehicles at railway station parking areas. This aims to encourage those who arrive at railway stations to do so by electric cars; it is a natural connection with the electrification project.

This is the second attempt to deploy such facilities; the first one was in 2008, when the railways signed an agreement of understanding with the then-Israeli company Better Place which used Renault Fluence private cars for this purpose; it failed (not the railways' fault) and the company went bankrupt.

- *Showing just how many cars can be sucked off the roads into station car parks and removed from city centres, if the facilities are there! Rosh HaAyin North station, in the foreground the new area where electric charging points are to be installed. (Photo IR*

The railways hope that now it will succeed due to technological progress and the penetration of electrical cars to the Israeli market. According to research by the Ministry of Energy, in 2025 the market share of electrical cars will reach an average of 16%; there will be about 180,000 electrical cars with a share of 5% of car fleets (company cars, etc.); the present Energy Minister Mr. Yuval Steinitz said recently that from 2030 onward the import of gasoline and diesel private cars will be forbidden.

The railway network has today 68 railway stations; soon the 69th. station of Mazkeret Batya (on the line to Beer-Sheva south of Na'an junction) will be added. At most of the stations, the railways built and maintain parking areas containing altogether tens of thousands of parking spaces at no charge; a high share of passengers arriving by their private cars leave them for the whole day; it is now hoped that deploying the charging points will encourage passenger to move to electric cars which, in turn, will be charged during the day.

The railways are now checking economic models for deployment of the charging points being assisted by world precedents.

(xxxi). AMMONIA TRAFFIC.

From a press release of 19.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"On Tuesday, 19.02.2019 the railways cargo department commenced hauling Ammonia by rail. The first train left the port of Haifa to the Tzefa cargo terminal near Dimona; the shipment contained 44 containers of Ammonia, each of 20 tons plus two cars of dedicated tanks with neutralizing materials to be used in case of Ammonia leaking. The total weight reached 821 tons; each such train will replace 44 lorries while the railway line is separated from the busy roads and less dangerous than hauling the materials by road. The railways hope to operate such trains weekly and to reach haulage of 60,000 tons of Ammonia already in the first year of operation."

This traffic is the result of the ammonia storage tank near Haifa being closed, due to concern about the safety hazard this tank represented.

- *The first Ammonia tank train about to depart (Photo courtesy of IR)*

(xxxii). OVERTIME SICKNESS SYNDROME.

On 20.02.2019 Israel Railways Ltd. announced that the train drivers have started sanctions by malingering, meaning staying absent from work on health grounds. This is not happening for the first time, but it is felt much stronger due to increased usage of rail mode for passenger services.

The discussion is around overtime payments and a result of the management decision to add less than 30 minutes instead of 3.5 regular overtime hours; drivers claim that the agreement permits 6 hours. As a result of the sanctions, severe disruptions to train services occurred:

Trains between Carmiel and Haifa Hof Ha-Carmel cancelled.

The 06:01 from Beit-She'an cancelled.

The 05:49 from Beit-Shemesh to Netanya started instead at Ramla.

The 06:21 from Netanya to Beit-Shemesh started at Herzliyya.

The 05:04 from Haifa to Ashkelon terminated at Savidor Central.

The 06:59 between Ra'anana and Beer-Sheva started at Rosh HaAyin.

At about 14:00, after the intervention of the labour union, the railway management agreed to delay the start of the new timetable by one week during which discussions will take place. As of 14:45 local time the drivers' return to work was slow and punctuality around 86.8%.

(xxxiii). THE STATION CAT.

A new twist on an old poem: From a press release of 24.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Under the headlines "The Queen of the Station looks for a loving warm home" the railways announced the following: "The most famous Israeli and worldwide pet - in this case a cat called Mitzi - has adopted during the last couple of years the

Petakh-Tikva Kiryat-Arie station as its home and is beloved by the employees and passengers.

Mitzi became famous worldwide in recent weeks thanks to a viral photo taken by passengers one evening, sitting on one of the validators and "assisting" the teams to manage and regulate passenger flow at rush hours; it was also shown on TV networks. The station teams fell so much in love with Mitzi that they financed her vaccination and sterilization and the implantation of an electronic chip in her body, as well as feeding her all the time.

The station is soon to undergo massive upgrading works as part of linking it to the NTA Red Line northern end station thus creating a transportation centre; the teams are worried that these works will restrict her living space and therefore have opened an e-mail address for those wishing to adopt her.

Station master Mr. Eilyahu Yifrakh who has accompanied her for two years said: "It will be heart-breaking for us to say Good Bye to the beloved cat; she will be given for adoption after a strict selection of the candidates."

(xxxiv). PUNCTUALITY STATISTICS.

From a press release of 27.02.2019 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Instructed by its General Manager Mr. Shahar Ayalon, Israel Railways Ltd. will become in the coming weeks one of the world's most transparent networks and will show the passengers an enlarged and updated punctuality level.

The punctuality level will include the planned arrival time at destined station, also punctuality level regarding arrivals at intermediate stations, the number of trains arrived on time and daily data regarding late and cancelled trains.

The system of measuring punctuality on Israel Railways Ltd. is identical to that of the U.I.C.-arrival of up to 5 minutes late at the destined station. The U.I.C. publishes the punctuality data each quarter and on each hour at the company's internet site; it shows the calculation from 00:01 until the time of publishing; Israel Railways Ltd. are among the few OECD members publishing those results.

Now, by publishing the punctuality of arrivals at intermediate stations, number of trains arrived on time and daily data regarding late and cancelled trains for various operational or other reasons, Israel Railways Ltd. will become one of the world most transparent networks, among the few providing these data publically and accessible for all.

The railway management said: "Aside from the enormous development of the railways in recent last years regarding lines, stations, tracks and technologies, we have to cope with serious challenges such as overcrowding, shortage of rolling stock, track length constraints and saturated track time; we see it as very important to be transparent for customers and to dialogue with the passengers who are our full partners all the way long; we'll keep making efforts to provide the best service under the current constraints; the updated punctuality level along with the automatic delay compensation are the first steps and we'll soon promote additional steps".

(xxxv). DEVEGETATION.

In the 'OSJD Bulletin' magazine 5-6/2018 pp.87f is an article on the Russian firm 'TVEMA' which provides railway diagnostic and measuring equipment vehicles – searching for defects and rail flaws etc. The report states that some 400 of such varied products are currently in use on various railways and a photograph shows Devegetation Vehicle (i.e. weed killer) IR No. 963 in Israel.

(Thanks to Reinhold Dietrich).

124:05.

TENDERS.

A. TENDERS ISSUED.

(i). ROLLING STOCK MAINTENANCE TRAINING. Request for Information: (17.12.2018)

"Israel Railways Ltd. hereby requests information regarding technical training courses for rolling stock maintenance staff and technical training aids for demonstration and practical training.

ISR seeks such information from suppliers of such solutions, including information regarding the solution design, contents and required infrastructure, all as generally defined in Appendix A ...and as further described below....

2. Objective of RFI

The objective of this RFI is to enable ISR to explore the option of purchasing the proposed solution, as well as to review and estimate the costs involved and the infrastructure required for the proposed solution.....

Should Respondent require clarifications relating to this RFI, or if any questions arise with respect thereto, Respondent may contact, in writing only, Ms. Chen Gevirtz International Procurement Coordinator, via e-mail: cheng@rail.co.il

Appendix A

General

ISR intends to create a training centre and form a training program for rolling stock maintenance staff, and is checking the possibility to purchase consulting and training services as follows:

* Purchasing technical courses to be translated and conducted by ISR instructors

* Purchasing training aids

* Consulting services for designing a practical training centre

This technical specification outlines the main ISR requirements for the supply of:

* Technical training courses for rolling stock maintenance staff in professional matters such as bogies, passenger wagon doors, passenger wagon toilets, braking system etc.

The courses shall include the following topics, amongst others:

o System design, construction, main parts, location.

o System components

o System operation

o Maintenance, testing, parts removal and installation, overhaul.

o Technical training aids for main rolling stock systems (e.g. diesel engine, generator, electrical motor, air compressor, door system, toilet system and others).

The training aids proposed by the respondents may include one or more of the followings:

* System instructional model and section

* Any other technology or method proposed by the respondents for the teaching of the subject in matter.

The solution must have a proven track record of success in the railway industry. ..."

(ii). Tender No.1171: Providing Consulting Services for the railways regarding various sorts of Insurance: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 16.01.2019.

(iii). Tender No. 2183: Design, installation, handover, guarantee, performance assurance and maintenance services of PV (Photo- Voltaic) facilities for supplying electricity to roof-mounted panels on 39 buildings and structures all over the network:

Requirements: The panels can be supplied from one (or more) of the following manufacturers: Canadian Solar, GCL, Hanwha, JA Solar, JincoSolar, LONGI Solar, and Trina Solar. The technology will be Mono-crystal (Mono/Perc) or Multi-crystal (Polycrystalline). The output will be between 150 kW and 380 kW per building with an estimated total output of 5 MW

[an average*] for the all the panels to be installed. The contract is to be performed in the Fixed-Price Turnkey Project system. The railways intend to select one winning bidder only. The contract is for 60 months with optional extensions of up to additional 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 24.01.2019.

(iv). Tender No. 11833: Invitation to manufacture, supply and install moveable ergonomic furniture for control positions at the Railways' "Masua" control centre under construction at Lod Railways Management Complex: The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 31.01.2019.

(v). Tender No. 11785: Providing Calibration and Adjustment services for railways' various devices at depots and workshops: The intention is to select up to 2 winning bidders. The winner will commit to perform works both on site and/or at his lab according to circumstances and requirements. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 04.02.2019.

(vi). Tender No. 190101: Operating taxi service from/to Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station: The contract is for 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 21.01.2019.

(vii). Tender No. 21744: Providing services of statutory design and licensing consulting for the railways: The required services: promoting the statutory process in the most efficient way, follow-up, representing the railways at discussions with government offices and various committees, providing continuous consulting, and assistance against various sorts of appeals. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 31.01.2019.

(viii). Tender No. 1174: Providing Data Entry Services for Bonus Calculations: The requirements are for employees' output documents, as well as sorting them out according to the various methods of the organization, data entry to related system for salary calculation, etc. The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 60 months.

(ix). Tender No. 31901: An annual frame agreement for providing Refreshment Services to all the railways sections: The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 05.03.2019.

(x). Call for providing permission for installation of Charging Poles for electric vehicles at railway stations: Latest date for submission of proposals: 15.05.2019.

(xi). Tender No. 21748: Building grade separation to replace level crossing No. 14 over the Tel-Aviv - Haifa main line near the Dor/Nakhsholim settlements:

Note: the road crossing the line leads to one of Israel's most popular beaches on the Mediterranean Sea and is very busy particularly in summer; but the railway line is also busy with both passenger and freight traffic; being double-track, the danger for car drivers who often tend to ignore red lights and barriers is great; the grade separation will at last solve the problem. Latest date for submission of proposals: 10.03.2019.

(xii). International RFI-General Information and an Overall Analysis of the implementation of Safety Measures On Israel Railways' station platforms

A. Background:

One of Israel Railways' goals is to maintain a high level of safety regarding its operational work on the rail network, passenger stations and all railway sites.

Israel Railways wishes to examine safety products and accessories currently on the market, which will help enhance the safety on passenger platforms throughout all the railway stations in Israel, thereby minimizing core risks, such as, injury to passengers, injury to Israel Railway staff and damage to rolling stock - while using a proactive positive approach promoting cautious behavior with the train's passengers. Additionally, creating an alert shield and timely identification of possible risks in order to deal with hazards likely to cause an accident, before they occur.

B. Definitions:

1. Train Station – A train station is a facility or building enabling trains to safely stop for the purpose of boarding and disembarking passengers (as well as unloading and loading goods); the building serves as a combined transportation site, including areas with different types of use – offices, stores and commercial areas, public waiting spaces, walkways - such as bridges – as well as train platforms and tracks passing through the site.

2. Train Platform – a space dedicated to the movement of passengers along tracks at a train station, from which passengers can board a train or disembark from it, day and night. Almost every station has some kind of platform and large stations have many platforms within a single station. A single "platform" can include a number of platforms in the sense of different points where trains stop. The term "platform" might also describe a cargo platform – an area in close proximity to the tracks where goods are being loaded to or being unloaded from a freight train.

3. Rolling Stock – a vehicle moving on the railway, including freight trains, passenger trains and various engineering vehicles.

4. Yellow Line – a visual sign in yellow, marked close to the platform edge indicating the distance to be kept. This sign is marked today in the Israel Railways by means of a stripe that is painted or paved, or paved differently than the other platform stones.

C. Characteristics of the Platforms in Israel Railways:

The platforms in the Israel Railways stations serve all passenger types: adults, elderly, children, disabled individuals (individuals using wheelchairs and those with hearing and visual impairments etc.), passengers with suitcases, bicycle riders and similar. For the purpose of reaching an island type platform - or exiting such a platform - there usually exists a bridge or an underground passage, allowing for a safe and secure crossing of the tracks. The access to the bridge or the underground passage is via stairs, escalators or elevators. The station crew operating day and night on the platforms, consists of a cleaning staff, stewards directing passengers, and the station personnel (manager, shift manager etc.). In addition, maintenance work and contractors work are also conducted on the platform. Furthermore, some of the platforms are either fully or partially under a roof (at different heights and made from different materials – aluminum, fiberglass, metal, concrete) and a small number of stations are underground stations.

Platforms usually include rain and sun shelter roofs, benches, lighting, dustbins, publicity signs, ornamental flowerpots, snack and drink vending machines, timetables or a dynamic display indicating the next trains, traffic signs and a public announcement system. The Israel Railways stations (except for a small number of underground stations) today are built according to the "open platform" or "partially open platform" models, rather than being confined to a closed building. Additionally, the platforms include warning and signpost measures, designed to prevent passengers from getting too close to the tracks and to trains passing at high speed through the station. The platform numbering will usually be the numbering of the boarding and alighting areas, and therefore an island type platform will have two different platform numbers. At times, numbering will include tracks that do not have a platform and serve for the passage of trains that do not stop at the station.

Sometimes a motion test ("braking efficiency test") is executed on a train staying at a platform, resulting in a train stopping at the platform, then moving a few metres before leaving the station again.

Usually, at the ends of the platforms there is a fence preventing further passage from the platform, or alternatively an operational gate leading to stairs or an inclined access ramp intended for train staff on their way to an operational zone, or to access the tracks. The inclined path at the end of the platform is restricted to passengers and is equipped with suitable clear signs.

Currently the separation between platform space and track space is achieved via a "yellow line" with no grooves, positioned at the same level as the rest of the platform, in order to prevent stumbling or mobility difficulties for wheels, inter alia, bicycles, wheelchairs, carts, luggage etc. The line has a pattern (which helps people with a visual impairment identify the marking) and is located about 40 cm from the platform edge. Moreover, unlike other countries around the world where there is space left under the platform edge, so that if a passenger falls from the platform on to the tracks he can use the space as shelter from the oncoming train –such space does not exist in the stations of the Israel Railways.

Additionally, in light of Israel Railways' development plans, the growing demand for rail transportation and the demand for improved level of service it was decided to implement the electrification program for the replacement of the current propulsion method (diesel) by electrical propulsion. The electrical propulsion method is modern, and as part of its implementation an Overhead Contact System (OCS) infrastructure is been installed above the train rails.

The overhead electrification system consists of a high-voltage cable stretched above the rails (and the platforms) which supplies electrical power to the trains in a manner that is relatively safe but has a high potential risk, due to the fact that the overhead cables are installed very high (they cannot be easily reached) and transmit a high electrical voltage (25,000 volt). Additionally, tracks and platform areas include bare electric poles and exposed power cables are located in which passenger equipment (such as helium balloons, antennas, surfboards etc.) may be caught resulting in the risk of a fire or electrocution.

D. Characteristics of the Rolling Stock:

The rolling stock used by Israel Railways have doors that are positioned differently depending on the train model. As the location of these doors varies, they cannot be properly marked on the platform (as of today, Israel Railways' uses 4 different types of rolling stock sets). Additionally, every train has a different stopping place of the locomotive/driving cab on the platform; the stop location is determined by different parameters for every type of rolling stock set – and it cannot be fixed at a permanent location.

Some of the rolling stock sets operated by Israel Railways have a foothold flap that opens in the gap between the rolling stock and the platform "wall" when the train stops at the station.

New rolling stock - locomotives and cars adapted for travelling by means of electrical propulsion - will be purchased as part of the electrification project, and existing rolling stock will be converted to electrical propulsion. In addition, Israel Railways intends to acquire new non-electric equipment in the coming years, the technical details of which are unknown at this stage .

Additional key Risk Factors:

1. Over crowdedness per square metre, resulting in situations of extreme crowding of the passengers, which can lead to the risk of personal bodily injury from an oncoming train entering the station or a passenger falling on to the tracks.

2. Passing trains – fast trains passing through the station (on the track) create an additional safety risk, since the safety distance from the platform edge increases with the speed of the passing trains, and in addition there is the risk that the motion of the fast train (accompanied by wind and vibration) might cause the fall of objects or a person on to the tracks.

3. Platforms length – the platforms of the train stations are of different lengths (150m–350m), even within the same station there are platforms of different length. A platform shorter than the train creates the risk that the doors of a car might open outside the platform. A platform longer than the train creates the risk that passengers will crowd in a certain space in the track area, or will run towards it with the risk of falling from the platform.

4. The presence of objects on the tracks might cause "train slippage" (rolling stock - car, locomotive, train etc. - derails), therefore the throwing of garbage by passengers/contractors, or equipment dropping from the platform to the tracks, might present a risk that must be avoided when operating the platforms. Additionally, platforms have elevator openings with their doors facing the tracks and not along the platform, from which moving equipment (such as a wheelchair) might roll onto the track space. It is for that reason that as a rule, train platforms are built with a small inclination along the platform edge in order to prevent wheeled equipment from rolling over and falling onto the tracks, however, in reality when designing train stations in Israel this rule is not always observed...."

(xiii). Tender No.11817: Providing consulting services regarding a risk management system for the railways: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 28.02.2019.

(xiv). Tender No. 2185: Design, Manufacturing, Supply, guarantee, and maintenance of steel-made Cradles for hauling Steel Coils:

The holders must be suitable for both rail and lorry to occupy a space identical to a 20 feet container; the coils are to be hauled untied; the space is to be 2m wide; coil diameter between 1.0 and 1.5m; each holder is to carry up to 3 coils weighing 5 to 30 tons. The manufacturer is requested to supply 2 coils for test at both the Technion (Technical Institute) and the Israeli Standards Institute; if successful, the railways will order 48 holders with options for more. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 07.03.2019.

(xv). REQUEST FOR INFORMATION. DUAL LOCOS.

Israel Railways Company Ltd. ("ISR") is entering the era of electrification when it would have to operate trains on diesel and electrical train lines alternately.

As a result of ongoing railways network electrification, Israel Railways Company Ltd. ("ISR") hereby requests information concerning the procurement, operation and maintainance of Dual locomotives (the "Project") from Railway Rolling Stock Manufacturers, Railway Companies, Maintenance Companies working for Railway Companies of passenger trains (all together "Respondents").

1. Objectives of RFI

The target is to gather all the required information in order to decide if an existing dual locomotive is compliant with ISR's current and future needs on the electrification's era.

The locomotive must be with a proven operation experience and total compliance to the updated European regulation : TSI – Loc&Pas standards and norms.

2. General requirements

This RFI covers ISR's requirements concerning the characteristics and equipment of new or used Dual-Locos with an electric propulsion system suitable to a new-build 25 kV, 50 Hz catenary system in Israel and existing diesel network.

All articles of this RFI shall be explicitly, definitely, traceably and fully responded to in writing (tabular form preferred) in the same order as in this document. Relevant drawings, sketches, curves or other technical documentation shall be highlighted in the written response and enclosed.

The respondent shall offer a Dual Locomotive which is based on a proven design and meets the specified requirements. The realisation how these requirements are fulfilled shall be explained in the response.

The respondent must fulfil the technical requirements. Nevertheless, the respondent may propose alternative solutions which provides the same level of performance or better.

General Operating Conditions

The dual locomotive (Dual-Loco) shall be designed for universal operation on the electrified tracks of the ISR network and diesel network. The Dual-Loco shall be suitable for operation with ISR's existing coach fleet consisting of single and double deck push-pull coaches, including control cab cars as well as for multiple unit operation with at least two dual-Locos of the same type or two push-pull trains in any arrangement.

The Dual-Loco shall be a full body width concept with driver's cabs at both ends. It shall be a modular design concept for the ease of maintenance

A train speed of 160 km/h shall be reached for passenger service under maximum load conditions. In freight service a maximum operation speed of 120 km/h shall be possible.

The Dual-Loco shall be suitable for daily operation of at least 20 hours with a running performance of 250,000 km/ year with scheduled maintenance according to the manufacturer's instructions.

The Dual-Loco shall be suitable for operation on the ISR railway network under the environmental conditions in Israel.

The Respondent has the sole responsibility to observe and comply with all relevant functions and parameters which are required for safe and reliable operation within ISR.

Operation and monitoring of the Dual-Loco by a single driver shall be warranted.

Single and multiple locomotive compositions shall run in push-pull control mode. The signal transmission shall be realised in the train unit by multi-conductor reversible control lines.

The Dual-Loco shall be equipped with the obligatory interfaces as used in ISR's Rolling Stock. These interfaces are the push-pull-interface including at Appendix H.

The train control line as well the train power supply. Both latter ones are special designs which are not in line with the UIC standard interfaces.

Additional design compatibility shall be provided to operate the Dual-Loco with coaches equipped with UIC-based standard connector interfaces for train heating, EP-brake and train control.

In the RFI offer, operation in the following kinds of trains is to be considered:

* Up to 8 double deck push-pull coaches - Bombardier manufacture

* Up to 10 single deck push-pull coaches (SDPP-trains) - Siemens manufacture

* Up to 3,600 tons freight trains in multiple traction configuration.

Moreover, the dual locomotives shall be featured with multiple-unit operation capabilities (two trains, or up to two locomotives). The following configurations shall be possible without any modification to the existing fleet:

Figure 1; Double-Deck Push-Pull trains up to 8 coaches

Figure 2; Consists of up to two Double-Deck Push-Pull trains

Figure 3; Single-Deck Push Pull train from Siemens up to 10 coaches

Figure 4; Triple traction of up to 2 locomotives with heavy freight trains

The Dual-Loco shall meet all dedicated requirements of TSI SRT for operation in tunnel length up to 20 km. Thus e.g. the emergency brake override function is to be provided.

0.2. General characteristics

0.3. Passenger Service

• Train weight of a loaded train 600 tons (including Dual-Loco)

• Speed 160 km/h

• Up to 10 coaches

• Elevation up to approx. 800 meters

0.4. Freight Trains for

• Train weights up to 3,600 tons in multiple traction configuration.

• Speeds up to 120 km/h;

• Elevation up to approx.800 metres at gradient 1%

0.5. Design Targets

The vehicles Dual-Loco shall be designed according to the current state-of-the-art and fulfil the requested requirements of the Technical Specification for Interoperability for Rolling Stock TSI LOC PAS.

Standards:

EN 12663 "Railway applications – Structural requirements for railway vehicle bodies"

EN 15227 "Railway applications – Crashworthiness requirements for railway vehicle bodies"

EN 13749 "Railway applications – Methods of specifying structural requirements of bogie frames".

Climatic Conditions

For the functionalities of the Dual-Loco and its components and parts, the climatic conditions which are listed below have to be respected (see also Appendix D) Range of ambient temperatures:

-5 °C to +45 °C (with temperature changes of up to 20°C per hour)

Altitude of operations:

-400 m to +800 m above MSL

Cross winds:

5 m/s with gusts of wind of 50 m/s in duration of 1s per gust of wind

Snowfall

no particular requirements

Rainfall

400-800 mm/years

Relative humidity:

10% to 90%

UV radiation

360-600 MJ/m² per year

Sunny hours per year:

3300 h

It is specifically emphasised that no performance degradation shall result from any "worst case" combination of the environmental conditions defined in this specification.

Special attention shall be paid to the local sunlight intensity and resulting heat transfer by radiation...."

B. TENDERS AWARDED.

(i). ETCS CONTRACT AWARDED TO ALSTOM.

From 'R.G.I.' 10.12.2018.

"National railway ISR has awarded Alstom a €45M contract to design, supply, install and commission ETCS Level 2 onboard equipment across its fleet.

The contract announced on December 10 covers 192 vehicles, with an option for a further 34. Design work is scheduled to start in January 2019, with installation taking around two years.

Alstom is to supply its Atlas platform, which is intended to support the operation of faster and more frequent services while providing a flexible and upgradeable design offering compatibility with energy-saving driving profiles.

This is expected to increase capacity on the congested Ayalon line from 14 to 17 trains/h in each direction without the need to add more tracks.

The contract has been awarded as part of a signalling renewal programme planned for completion in 2022. This is being procured through three main contracts covering lineside equipment, onboard equipment and GSM-R communications.

(ii) ISR has awarded Bonatrans a €3·6m contract to supply monoblock wheels."

(iii). The company COMMECIALIZADORAE IMPORTADORA DE MADREAS DECCO SA won international tender No. 41806 for the Manufacture and Supply of Various Types of Wooden Sleepers at EURO 154,260.00.

(iv). Israel Railways Ltd. have announced on their website that the Israeli company K.S.M.G. Contractors for Infrastructure & Development Works Ltd., won Tender No. 21797 for building grade separation No.24 at Avihayil (on the coast line north of Netanya) replacing a level crossing dating from 1953.

A. TEL AVIV.

(i). On 11.12.2018 an 89-page Tender Document 237.201 was circulated: "For the Design, Build of Two Bored (TBM) Single Track Tunnels, Portals and Station Outer Boxes for the Green Line Project." Here are excerpts (pp.14f.):

"1.4. General Description of the Red Line Project1

1.4.1. NTA is responsible for the development of a mass transit system for the Tel Aviv metropolitan area consisting of light rail and metro lines, including the Green Line.

1.4.2. The construction of the Red Line, the first line of the mass transit system, began in August 2015 and it is expected to begin commercial operation in October 2021. This line is expected to serve approximately 70 million passengers annually, in one of the most heavily used traffic corridors in the Tel Aviv Metropolitan Area. The Red Line civil engineering works consist of the concurrent construction of 10 underground stations and the boring of 12 km. of TBM tunnels. The successful advancement of the Red Line project is now a fact and the project has the full support of the Ministry of Transportation, the Ministry of Finance and the Tel-Aviv municipality – the same authorities that have already pledged their full support to the Green Line project. The tunnel construction work in Tel Aviv ended ahead of time with the full cooperation of the municipality.

1.5. General Description of the Green Line Project

1.5.1. The Green Line will be implemented pursuant to three statutory plans (NIP 701A, NIP 71B and NIP 71C). The route of the Green Line was approved by the authorized planning committee in August 2017.

1.5.2. The Green Line will connect the southern parts (Rishon-LeZion and Holon) and northern parts (Herzliyya and Kiryat Atidim) of the Tel-Aviv metropolitan area, to Tel-Aviv city centre.

1.5.3. The Green Line will run mostly at street level (34 km of "at-grade" tracks) and partly underground (4.5 km of underground twin tracks) including 58 stops "at-grade"(submerged or on bridges) and four underground stations. The Green Line is divided into five sections: G1-G5.

1.6. General Description of the Works

The Works with respect to which the Bidders are invited to submit their Bids consist of civil engineering infrastructure works in G3-2, the underground sub-section of section G3, TBM works, Cut & Cover sections, portals, outer boxes of underground stations and infrastructure for a

partially submerged station (all as detailed in the Scope of Works contained in Volume 4), and will be executed in accordance with the requirements and specifications as set forth under Volume 2, Volume 3 and Volume 4.

The main elements of the Works include approximately 4.5 km. of TBM tunneling, 2 portals, 1 submerged stop (Levinsky) and 3 underground stations (Kaplan, Rabin and Arlozorov West).

(Kaplan Station was until recently known as Dizengoff Station; Therefore, any reference which may have remained in the Tender Documents to Dizengoff Station is deemed to have been corrected to Kaplan)."

In 'R.G.I.' 08.02.2019 was advertised: "Public Tender 237/2018 For the Design & Build of Two Bored (TBM) Single Track Tunnels, Portals and Station Outer Boxes for the Green Line Project.

NTA - Metropolitan Mass Transit System Ltd. hereby announces that a Non-Mandatory Bidders' Conference will be held by NTA on February 20th, 2019 at the Crowne Plaza Tel-Aviv City Center hotel in Tel-Aviv (136 Menachem Begin Road, Tel-Aviv - Azrieli Center, square building, 11th floor) followed by a Non-Mandatory Site Visit.

Parties who wish to participate in the Bidders' Conference and Site Visit are kindly requested to notify NTA of such intention (indicating the number of participants - up to 5 participants per company) by no later than January 23rd, 2019 to Tender Mailbox: ntatender2372018(at)nta.co.il

- *NTA works on the Red Line along Jabotinsky Road at Petakh-Tikva 2no January 201. (Photos Aharon Gazit) :*

Interested parties are required to check NTA's website and FTP server on a regular basis for any notices, clarifications, Addenda, updates, changes or modifications during the tender process and NTA shall have no responsibility to inform participants of any such publications."

(ii). NEW METRO NETWORK PLANS.

From an announcement of 12.12.2018 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry:

"Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz today introduced - for the first time - to the National Infrastructures Committee the ministry's flagship programme of design and implementation of three Metro lines in the Greater Tel-Aviv Area, this parallel to the three LRV lines which are currently in various stages of implementation.

Mr. Katz further explained that the Metro lines will complement the LRV lines network, which when completed will carry 300 million passengers/year.

NTA has recently completed the preliminary design of the three Metro lines; Minister Katz said that he intends to extend the network to additional areas; this will be discussed with the relevant factors soon.

The initial cost of the Metro lines is estimated between $26Bn and $40Bn (NIS 100-150 Billion); it includes underground lines with a total length of 130km, more than 100 stations available to handle 1.5 Million passengers/day and 450M passengers/year; the alignments will run through 22 local authorities at the centre of Israel and service frequencies will be every 3-4 minutes.

According to the plan, the first Metro line will be 73km and will run north-south and serve Ra'anana, Herzliyya, Ramat HaSharon, Kfar-Sava, Hod HaSharon, Tel-Aviv, Bat-Yam, Holon, Rishon-LeZion, Nes Ziona, Rehovot, Beer Ya'akov, Ramla, Lod and future development areas including I.M.I. HaSharon, Gelilot interchange and Tzrifin.

The second Metro line will be 25km long, will run east-west and will serve Rosh HaAyin, Petakh-Tikva, Ramat-Gan, Givatayim and Tel-Aviv and a future development area, including Sirkin (east of Petakh-Tikva).

The third Metro line will be 32km long and will form a half circle line linking between the other metro lines. It will serve Bat-Yam, Holon, Azur, Or-Yehuda, Givat-Shmuel, Petakh-Tikva, Tel-Aviv, Ramat HaSharon and Herzliyya and future development areas, including Glil Yam, Western Ramat HaSharon and Tel Hashomer.

NTA METRO CONFERENCE to introduce the main points of the 3 Metro lines' preliminary design:

The conference took place on 13.02.2019 at Rishon-LeZion; Here is a summary of main points by courtesy of NTA spokesman Mrs. Galit Porat:

NTA Deputy General Manager for Design Mr. Nir Kugel said: "The metro trains will be automatic and driverless and will provide 3-minute intervals and even shorter."

Finance Minister Mr. Moshe Kakhlon said: "Transportation, particularly in the Greater Tel-Aviv Area is in a crisis; it should be treated as emergency; if we needed for example around $41 Billion (NIS 150 Bn) - the money needed for the Metro - for defence costs we would have to allocate this from somewhere; so we have to do just the same with the Metro project - and we will!"

Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz said: "The Metro lines network will complement the LRV lines under way; these are the biggest projects performed by the ministry since the foundation of Israel in 1948, and will give a solution to the metropolitan outer ring."

The Finance Ministry's Accountant General Mr. Rony Khizkiyahu and head of budgets Mr. Shaul Meridor disagreed between themselves regarding the source of financing the project, but both agreed that it is essential to the economy.

NTA General Manager Mr. Yehuda Bar-On said: "The aim of the Metro is to create for the public an alternative to the private car and thus to save time and money rather than reducing bottle necks; the main challenge is not the engineering implementation but the difficulty to come to agreements with the bodies involved; the railway station in Modi'in for example was built 10 years after the city was already inhabited; we learned a lesson from the Red Line works and we'll not repeat this mistake; Metro lines will be built prior to building many new neigbourhoods".

Map of Metro proposals on page 23

(iii). NTA Tender No.046/2018: Providing services of Architectural Design and preparing statutory plans for NTA: The intention is to select up to 3 winning bidders. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 27.01.2019.

(iv). NTA/Tender No.257/2018: For Construction of Fitting-Out works and Management of Nominated Contractors in the Underground Stations of the Red Line. Bids by 12.03.2019.

NTA Tender No. 013/22019: Providing services of laboratory and sampling of soil and water: The contract refers to all the LRV with a total length of 92 km and METRO lines with a total length of 120km as well as for the planned BRT lines. The contract is for 36 months with optional extensions of up to additional 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 19.02.2019.

(v). NTA Tender No. 250/2018: Providing services of connection with the community and sharing with the public: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 07.03.2019.

(vi). NTA Tender No. 110/2018: Supply a CDR (Content Disarm & Reconstruction) system and additional services: The contract is for 36 months with optional extensions of up to 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 06.03.2019.

(vii). ELI COHEN STATION.

From a press release of 15.01.2019 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry:

"Transport Minister Mr. Israel Katz has made today an outstanding gesture; in a ceremony held at the Bat-Yam Municipality with the participation of the mayor Mr. Tzvika Brott, NTA General Manager Mr. Yehuda Bar-On and other VIP's, he gave an award to Mrs. Nadia Cohen, the widow of Mr. Eli Cohen, a hero of the IDF who died on the battlefield; more importantly: the Red Line station under construction at Yosseftal street will be called Eli Cohen; it is one of the 34 stations on the Red Line being built. Minister Katz announced that works are progressing rapidly, tunnel boring is soon to be completed; at the same time infrastructure works towards track laying have started between Tel-Aviv and Jaffa, at Petakh-Tikva, as well as at Jaffa and Bat-Yam."

[Ed. notes: It would of course be highly improper and even irrelevant to think that the fact that Israel is facing an election and Minister Katz has political ambitions might have anything to do with this ceremony!]

(viii). NTA Tender No. 179/2018: Providing Management Services for NTA activities as a local authority for placement of Road Signs: The contract is 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 13.03.2019.

(ix).Magazine Article. In 'Railways & Urban Transit' magazine March 2019 No. 975 is a four-page article pp.100-103 on the 'Tel AVIV LRT DREAM' with many illustrations and maps.

B. JERUSALEM.

(i). The Jerusalem LRV Project:

From 06.02.2019: "At the end of last week the Jerusalem District Committee for Design and Buildings Sub-Committee for Objections decided

- *Map of the alignment. At the top is the historical station site lower with thick letters is Oranim junction.*

that the LRV Blue Line will run through Emek Refaim street in the German Colony, against appeals by some of the area's residents who claimed that the special historical character of the street would be hurt and suggested to run the line instead through an alternative alignment or through a tunnel.

The 1km line will link between Emek Refaim street and Bethlehem Road in the north (near the historical railway station, now a preserved entertainment area) and Oranim junction in the south; the northern part it will be single-tracked in order to enable accessibility by cars for their owners while the other part will be double-tracked; there will be one LRV station in the middle of the street.

- *Computer images of the street with the northern double-track section (Courtesy of the Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan)*

The committee has committed not to touch and damage any building and tree along the alignment and added that the environment will be extremely changed due to significant reduction in emissions; it will also link eventually the street and the city's southern part as far as from Malkha railway station with the Red Line and the city centre.

(ii). SENTENCE FOR MURDER IN TRAM.

In 'Jerusalem Post', Dec. 31st. 2018: "TERRORIST EXPECTED TO GET 18 YEARS FOR LIGHT-RAIL MURDER OF BRITISH STUDENT. By Yonah Jeremy Bob:

57-year-old Jameel Tamimi is expected to be sentenced to 18 years in prison by the Jerusalem District Court in a plea deal for the murder of Hannah Bladon, a 20-year-old British exchange student stabbed to death on April 14, 2017 on the Jerusalem Light Rail.

Monday the prosecution and the defense made arguments regarding the sentence and in light of their plea bargain for a conviction but with a reduced mental state. The court surprised the sides by delaying its decision until January 10, but is still expected to endorse the hard-negotiated deal. Although murder usually carries a life sentence, the expected 18-year sentence would come after extended negotiations over Tamimi's mental state. While there was a finding that Tamimi could tell the differences between right and wrong, there was also a finding that Tamimi was mentally unstable, leading to the expected reduced sentence.

Bladon's family and their lawyer, Maurice Hirsch, have been upset by the expected reduced sentence, but they had been prepared by the state prosecution that there were risks going to trial because of the mental state issue. According to the indictment filed by the Jerusalem District Attorney's Office, the attack took place extremely close to the Old City, where tens of thousands of visitors from across the globe were observing Passover and Easter.

Tamimi, a resident of east Jerusalem's Ras el-Amud neighborhood, purchased a 30.5-cm.-long knife at 10:30 a.m. on the day of the murder. Between noon and 12:30, Tamimi called his two sons to arrange a visit. Both rejected his request and suggested he return to the Kfar Shaul Mental Health Center from where he had recently been discharged. The indictment said the conversations angered Tamimi into making an immediate decision to commit murder with the knife. After convincing a bystander at the Damascus Gate stop to buy a light rail ticket for him, Tamimi boarded a train heading toward the center of town at approximately 1 p.m. Tamimi selected Bladon for being short and unable to resist, then waited until her back was turned to him. He stabbed her repeatedly in her back and chest until he was tackled by a fellow passenger.

"The suspect was taken to Jerusalem's police headquarters for questioning, where it was confirmed that it was a terrorist attack," Police

spokesman Mickey Rosenfeld said at the time. Bladon's family said at the time that they were devastated by her murder, in a statement issued through the British Foreign Office. "Hannah was the most caring, sensitive and compassionate daughter you could ever wish for," the statement said. "She was a talented student, and was studying at Birmingham University for a degree in religion, theology and archaeology."The family noted that Bladon was actively involved in the community and, as part of an exchange program at Hebrew University, had taken part in an archaeological dig on the morning of her death. She began her studies at the Hebrew University in January 2017 and was expected to complete the program in September 2017."

(iii). CONTROVERSIAL CABLE-CAR PLAN.

From 'Times of Israel' 29.01.2019:

"Israel's National Planning Council is formally advancing a controversial plan to build a cable car that will cross over Jerusalem's historic Hinnom Valley and glide along the Old City walls to an area near the Western Wall. The council will publish its approval of the plan in newspapers Friday, kicking off a 60-day public comment period before the scheme is brought for final approval.

The cable car is billed as a tourism attraction as well as a solution to serious traffic congestion and pollution around the Old City walls. Up to 3,000 people will be ferried per hour at peak time in up to 72 10-person cabins between the First Station commercial area and the Old City's Dung Gate, near the Western Wall.

The project is being strongly backed by Tourism Minister Yariv Levin and Jerusalem Mayor Moshe Lion, but is opposed by numerous experts who argue that it is untenably obtrusive and politically irresponsible, and will not solve the traffic and other problems it purports to address.

The government chose last year's Jerusalem Day — which marks the reunification of the east and west portions of the city after the 1967 Six Day War — to announce a NIS 200 million ($55.2 M.) budget for the project, which is due to start operating in 2021. The cable car route is to start next to the popular First Station cultural complex south of the city center, from where it will pass through, but not stop at, a cable car storage depot in the public garden below Ein Rogel Street in the neighborhood of Abu Tor.

From there, the cabins will sail over the Hinnom Valley to a stop at Mount Zion, before continuing over the Palestinian village of Silwan to its final destination — the still-to-be built Kedem Center — a massive, multi-story complex that the right-wing City of David Foundation is planning to build on top of the Givati parking lot, near the Dung Gate, just outside the Old City walls. The foundation – best known for the national archaeological park it runs under the City of David name – seeks to move Jewish families into Silwan, an area which it calls the City of (King) David, and to create parks and tourism projects to expand the Jewish presence in and around the Old City basin.

- *Works under way along the old 1892 alignment in Jaffa on 13th. Jan. 2019. (Photos Aharon Gazit). The third picture is actually a simulation of how this area will look when works are finished; with the new LRT line in tunnel underneath, the former trackbed will be restored as a pedestrian walkaway with rails set symbolically in, similar to the walkway at Jerusalem.*

Despite the fact that the easternmost station will be located in a City of David Foundation building, Aner Ozeri of the Jerusalem Development Authority, which is in charge of implementing the project, has said that the project will also help the mainly Palestinian residents of Silwan, for whom transportation options are inadequate. The whole 1.5 kilometre (one mile) journey will take under five minutes.

Ozeri maintains that the cable car will provide a comfortable, quiet and environmentally friendly solution to congestion around the Old City that requires little land and will meet the challenges of the hilly terrain. He has also said that no homes or roofs will need to be demolished along the route.

However, architects, academics, preservation experts and tour guides have heaped scorn on the scheme. They have called it a poorly-thought-out, Disneyesque idea that will scar the historic landscape with 15 massive pylons, sully unique views of the Old City and its walls — a UNESCO World Heritage Site — and do little to solve the traffic problems.

Tourism Minister Levin (Likud) is pushing for the project at a national level. Indeed, after just one presentation before the Jerusalem planning committee, the scheme was whisked away to the National Planning Council — a fast-track body within the Finance Ministry set up to handle major infrastructure projects such as gas and railway lines that cross local authority boundaries. A 2016 government amendment to the planning law — apparently tailored to this specific project — added "tourist infrastructure" projects to the definition of "national infrastructure" ones, and specifically named tourism transportation systems.

Unlike the regular planning hierarchy of local and district committees to which the public can submit objections, topped by a national committee to which the public can appeal, the National Planning Council

only allows one period for objections, which it calls "reservations."

According to the planners' vision, passengers will get to the First Station via a light rail route currently being planned that will form part of a much bigger, citywide mass transit system of trams, buses and even a train. The Jerusalem-Tel Aviv fast train, which opened just between the capital and Ben Gurion Airport last fall, will also eventually be extended into the city, if all goes to plan.

Parking solutions will still need to be found near the First Station.

Ozeri has said that the plan is for buses to drop tourists off there and then drive to specially built parking lots at Har Homa and Givat Hamatos in the far south of the Jerusalem. Even if this is implemented, however, it remains unclear how so many buses will cram into the narrow road and tight conditions outside the First Station, particularly at peak times.

In a letter read out to a public meeting about the project in September, Moshe Safdie, an internationally renowned Canadian-Israeli architect, said the project would contribute little to solving the problems of access to the Old City, would merely shift traffic and parking problems from the Old City to the First Station, and should be replaced by a parking complex within the Jewish Quarter served by shuttles.

The architects' impressions were "deceptive," Safdie charged, and the cable cars were made to look much smaller than they would be in reality. "To the best of my knowledge, there is no other historic city in the world that has allowed construction of a cable car system within the visual basin of its historical heritage," he said. "A cable car system, running close to the Old City walls …will provide a precedent that, without doubt, will spark international opposition and criticism."

In December, the business daily The Marker reported on the findings of a Tel Aviv traffic planning company hired by the cable car project. That company reportedly failed to find sufficient interest among independent visitors to the city, who make up the bulk of tourists. This was because the obvious and shortest route for such visitors to the Old City runs from the central bus station and new railway station along Jaffa Road to the Old City's Jaffa Gate. Catching public transportation to the cable car station in the south of the city would make the trip considerably longer.

The Haaretz newspaper reported earlier this month that a request to the JDA by Emek Shaveh, an NGO, to see an economic feasibility study carried out for the project was turned down on the grounds that publication could "disrupt the project's progress." Emek Shaveh, a left-wing organization committed to protecting archaeological sites as the shared heritage of all cultures and faiths in the country, has vowed to lodge objections to the project.

A statement from the organization described the plan as "destructive" and charged that it would damage the walls of the Old City and the skyline of the Old City basin. "That, they dare to call tourism."

A statement issued on behalf of Jerusalem's recently elected mayor Lion said, "This project is a high priority for the city, as it will provide all residents and visitors the opportunity to access Jerusalem's most holy sites and will ease traffic and congestion throughout the capital."

C. HAIFA.

HAIFA CABLE CAR.

The Transport Ministry announced on 12.02.2019 that Yefe-Nof of Haifa has recently started erecting the masts for the cable car between Merkazit Ha-Mifratz, the Technion and the Haifa University; the latter two are on the Carmel mountain.

See photo below

D. HAIFA – NAZARETH.

The Haifa-Nazareth tram/train line project:

From a press release of 13.01.2019 by CROSS ISRAEL HIGHWAY LTD. (responsible for the project):

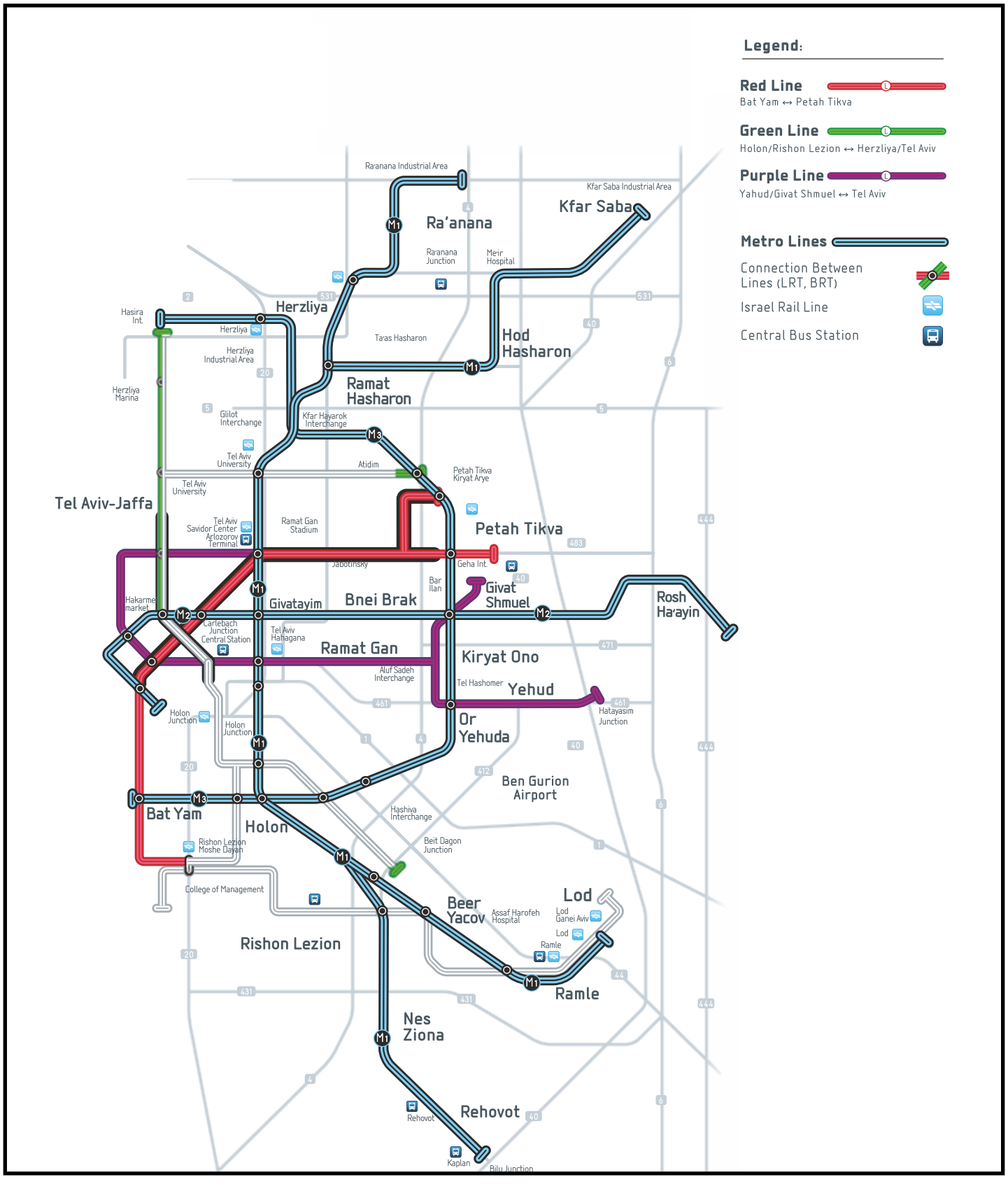
"The company has selected Dana Engineering Ltd. of Israel together with the Spanish infrastructure IDOM won the $43.6 Million (NIS 160M) Tender No. 422/995/17 For selecting the Management Company for The Light Railway Project in the Haifa Metropolitan Area, between Haifa and Nazareth; the cost of the whole project is $1.9 Billion (NIS 7 Billion).

According to the tender requirement for combined international knowledge and experience, the winner Dana Engineering Ltd. of Israel which is one of the leading companies regarding management and control of mega projects in transportation and construction with the Spanish infrastructure IDOM with 60 years of experience in infrastructures in 125 countries all over the world, are fulfilling the requirements.

CROSS ISRAEL HIGHWAY LTD. has so far published three international tenders: for management, for design, and for engineering control; the management tender is the first one in which the winner has been announced; the winner of the tender for design will be announced within a month.

A computer-generated picture of the tram/train and a map of the alignment. (Courtesy of Mrs. Sarit Giladi spokesman of CROSS ISRAEL HIGHWAY LTD.)

The map shows the Tel Aviv area LRT and the Metro lines all planned to be in operation by 2030. (Courtesy of NTA Spokesman Mrs. Galit Porat



OTHER MIDDLE EAST RAILWAYS.

A. SAUDI ARABIA.

(i). RIYADH METRO CHOOSES NAMING RIGHTS PARTNERS.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 05.12.2018: "Riyadh Development Authority has selected partners for the naming rights to eight of the 85 stations on the city's future metro network.

The 10-year contracts are worth a total of 1·05Bn Riyals, which is to be reinvested into metro operations. The sponsors are:

The Saudi British Bank;

Dr Sulaiman Al Habib Medical Group;

Saudi Telecom Co;

Alinma Bank;

Bank Abilad;

Majid Al Futtaim Shopping Malls Co;

Granada Investment Center;

SABIC.

In addition to station names, sponsors are entitled to retail space, advertising and signage within their respective stations.

RDA intends to tender for further non-fare revenue opportunities such as retail, advertising and telecoms."

(ii). RIYADH METRO STOCK IN WIEN.

From Klaus Matzka: "Siemens-built underground trains for Riyadh are now stabled at the third place in Vienna: After the ÖBB wagon-workshop at Jedlersdorf and the former Nordwestbahnhof they now have reached ÖBB's former shunting yard Penzing, along the Westbahn and S45, and alongside abandoned ÖBB „CityShuttle" coaches which are probably to be scrapped, unless a buyer is found. Albeit the red cars for Riyadh aren't visible any more. So they are either delivered (as I believe) or stabled elsewhere.

Pictured today, 4 February."

(iii). HARAMAIN FARES ANNOUNCED.

Slight delay here – from 'R.G.I.' 18.09.2018: "Further confirmation that the Haramain high speed line is about to open for commercial services comes with the publication of ticket prices by local media. The Saudi Gazette reports that services will start on September 24. There are likely to be four return trips a day with more added next year subject to demand. Tourist class fares are reportedly 75 Riyal for the 450km between Makkah and Madinah and 125 Riyal in Business class. Other fares include Makkah – Jeddah for 20 Riyal in Tourist class and Makkah – King Abdullah Economic City for 40 Riyal.

Railway Gazette International understands that services will initially be limited to 200km/h, increasing to the line's design speed of 300km/h in 2019."

TRACK MONITORING SYSTEM.

From 'R.G.I.' 05.02.2019: "Saudi Railway Co has awarded Perpetuum a two-year contract to provide its vibration-based track condition monitoring system for use on the 1,242km north–south route between Al-Qurrayat and Riyadh.

Announcing its first contract win in the Middle East on February 5, Perpetuum said conditions in Saudi Arabia were amongst the most extreme found on the world's railways, with temperatures in the desert environment often exceeding 55°C. Perpetuum is to supply wireless sensors for two of SAR's CAF passenger trainsets, along with its vibration engineering expertise and real-time data analytics capabilities.

As a relatively new operator, SAR is looking to develop its in-house maintenance knowledge, with corrective work prioritised. 'This is a great step for SAR in its journey to implement a condition based maintenance management strategy and we look forward to the exciting opportunities our partnership with Perpetuum will bring', said Head of Rolling Stock Ashrf Al Jabri."

B. TURKEY.

(i). PRIVATE OPERATOR ORDERS GE POWERHAUL LOCOS.

From 'R.G.I.' 19.09.2018: " A contract for the supply of five PowerHaul diesel locomotives was signed by GE Transportation, Tülomsa? and the Korfez Ulastirma rail transport business of oil refiner Tüpra? on September 18. The GE locomotives will be produced by the US company's local partner Tülomsa? in Eskisehir.

Korfez Ulastirma is the first Turkish private operator to purchase new locomotives since the government began issuing licenses to use the national network in 2017. The PowerHaul locomotives are compliant with EU Stage IIIa emissions and TSI interoperability standards. They are equipped with 16 cylinder 3,700hp GE PowerHaul P616 engines with common-rail fuel injection. Korfez Ulastirma currently leases five PowerHaul locomotives that GE previously supplied to national incumbent railway TCDD. It also owns 549 wagons."

(ii). HIGH SPEED TRAIN CRASH AT ANKARA.

First some early reports from the news of the day: On 13:12.2018: "A crash involving a high-speed train at a station in the Turkish capital Ankara has killed at least four people and injured more than 40, local media say. Images from the scene showed emergency services working to rescue people from badly damaged carriages on Thursday morning. Some reports, citing local officials, suggested that the high-speed train had collided with another train.

The accident occurred at about 06:30 local time (03:30 GMT). The train was reportedly beginning a journey from the station in Ankara to the city of Konya in western Turkey. A large number of emergency workers arrived at the scene shortly after the crash, which occurred in snowy conditions.

In July 24 people were killed when a train travelling from the north-western town of Kapikuleen derailed en route to Istanbul."

From 'The Guardian' (based on Reuters): "A Turkish high-speed train has collided with another rail engine and crashed into a pedestrian overpass at a train station in Ankara... killing nine people and injuring 47. ...The governor of Ankara, Vasip Sahin, told reporters the crash was caused by the high-speed train hitting the engine that was checking the tracks at the station. The private NTV television said at least two cars derailed. Parts of the overpass (at Marsandiz station) collapsed onto the train... Rescuers worked to free people trapped under the mangled wreckage at Marsandiz train station, 8km, (5 miles) from central Ankara. It was not clear at which speed the train and locomotive were travelling when the collision occurred. There was light snow on the tracks. … The locomotive which lay battered 20 metres further ahead, carried out track inspections. Three train drivers were among the nine killed in the crash, Transport Minister Cahit Turhan told reporters at the scene. There were 206 passengers on the high-speed train..." From this it seemed initially the train hit a machine checking the permanent way.

A fuller report appeared in 'Today's Railways Europe' 278 (Feb. 2019) p.13 by 'MB': "Six minutes after departure from Ankara at 06.30 on 13 December 2018, bound for Konya, Velaro high-speed train HT 80101, with 206 passengers on board collided head-on with electric locomotive E 68041 in Marsandiz station in the western suburbs of the capital, 8km from Ankara station. It was reported that the Velaro was travelling at between 80 and 90km/h. Initial reports were that all three crew in the two trains and six passengers were killed, and a further 43 (later reported at 84) were injured, most only slightly.

The first two cars of the Velaro were derailed completely. Both E 68041 and the Velaro were travelling on the southernmost of the five tracks, the furthest from the platform. It would appear to be that the maneouvres of E 68041 were the direct cause of the accident. 20 minutes earlier the same

track had been used by a high-speed service bound for Istanbul. On account of the overnight snowfall, E 68041 was running light and acting as a pilot loco, running ahead of an Istanbul-bound train to check the line for any possible obstruction as far as the start of the high-speed line at Sincan. It would then, presumably, have started its return journey eastwards to Ankara.

Blame was immediately laid on the signalling system, or lack of it. BTS, the Turkish Workers' Union, claimed that following the reconstruction of the line between Ankara and Sincan the signalling system had not yet been fully commissioned. Baskentray suburban services run using TMI, under which trains are despatched by traffic controllers and permission is communicated by phone or radio. Such a system is of course open to human error. Following the accident the train dispatcher, the train pathing officer and traffic controller were arrested. The Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects then quoted its Chairman, Yunus Yener, as saying that the line had been troubled by "signalling problems" for some time. The Union claimed "The accident is murder!"

There was a spate of serious accidents on the Turkish rail network during 2018. On 8 July at Corlu, west of Istanbul, a train running between Uzunköprü and Halkah (Istanbul) derailed due to track subsidence caused by heavy rain. Five of the six cars overturned and 24 passengers were killed and 3128 injured. Officials of Turkey's ruling AK party, a keen encourager of mega-projects such as high-speed rail programmes, prevented an investigation from taking place. Then on 26 November at least 15 people were injured in a collision between a local passenger train and a stationary freight at Ulas near Sivas. This appears to have been the result of a mistake made by a train dispatcher."

(iii). TESTING STARTS ON NEXT ANTALYA TRAM.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 06.02.2019: "Testing on the next light rail line in Antalya began on January 25, after the completion of the route's first stage four days earlier. The 11km first phase has been built in 1½ years at a cost of TL700M. It will run from Varsak in the north to Otogar in the west, where interchange will be provided with the existing east-west Antray light rail line.

Work is underway on the second phase. This would take the route further south from Otogar to Müze, which is currently the western terminus of the heritage tramway. This route is to be upgraded to light rail standards and double-tracked to become part of the new light rail line, with through running between Varsak and Zerdalilik in the city centre. This would create a 23km route serving 39 stops.

Antalya Municipality plans to purchase a total of 47 light rail vehicles to operate the route. Of these, 20 would be required for the first phase. The rapid depreciation of the Lira caused the initial tender to be cancelled, and the rolling stock for the first phase has since been retendered. As a result of this delay, testing on the line is taking place using four LRVs borrowed from the east-west route. These were supplied by the Eurotem joint venture of Hyundai Rotem and Tüvasa? in 2016 as part of an order of 18 for the opening of the eastern extension to Expo 2016 and the airport."

C. QATAR.

Not really 'News' but from 'Op de Rails' 01.2010 – translated from the Dutch by the Editor:

"The economic crisis does not pass the DB unnoticed; the dwindling freight traffic has led to a sharp drop, in turnover from €33.5Bn to less than 30Bn, also in profits from 2.4Bn to 1.4Bn. . …. One plaster on the wound is the contract that the DB has concluded with the oil state Qatar. For a fee of 17 Billion Euros the DB is going to set to work to build a rail system. As well as a network for 325km for passenger and freight traffic the capital Doha is also to gain an urban railway. In addition there should be high-speed lines to Bahrein (180km, built for 350km/h) and Saudi Arabia (100km., for 200km/h). DB will then operate these in partnership with Qatar Railways."

D. EGYPT.

(i). CHINESE MULTIPLE UNITS:

From 'R.G.I.'12.12.2018: "CRRC Qingdao Sifang has won an order to supply 22 six-car electric multiple-units to operate on a railway linking Cairo to 10th of Ramadan City.

The 120km/h EMUs will be designed with wind- and sand-resistant components to cope with conditions on the 68km route with eleven stations that is currently under construction. CRRC will provide 12 years of maintenance for the trainsets, which will have a capacity of 2,222 passengers."

(ii). CAIRO METRO GETS MORE KOREAN UNITS.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 03.01.2019: "National Authority for Tunnels has awarded Hyundai Rotem a 150·8bn won contract for the supply of 48 cars to operate on Cairo Metro Line 2. Deliveries are due to be completed in 2021, and the manufacturer will provide maintenance until 2031. The trainsets will have a maximum speed of 80km/h. Hyundai Rotem previously won contracts to supply rolling stock for Line 1 in 2012 and Line 3 in 2017."

(iii). MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR FLEET MODERNISATION.

From 'R.G.I.' 18.09.2018.

"Progress Rail and Egyptian National Railways have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to explore opportunities for the possible supply of new locomotives, as well as terms to modernise, overhaul and maintain a portion of ENR's existing locomotive fleet under a long-term service agreement.

Announcing the MOU on September 18, Progress Rail said its EMD business had powered or supplied the majority of ENR's current locomotive fleet, with more than 1,100 locomotives delivered over more than 60 years. 'We value the strong, collaborative relationship we have with ENR, and look forward to putting a plan in place to modernise their locomotive fleet with highly advanced locomotive electronics, quality components and state-of-the-art technologies', said Progress Rail President & CEO Billy Ainsworth. 'These innovations will work in tandem to take their existing fleet to the next level through optimised performance.'"

(iv). TATRA-YUG DELIVERS TRAM TO ALEXANDRIA.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 12.02.2019: "The first of 15 high-floor trams that Tatra-Yug is supplying to Alexandria Passenger Transportation Authority began test running on February 10, having arrived in Alexandria four days earlier. The tram is expected to enter revenue service on the 32 route-km standard gauge network in late February. It is stabled at the Moharem Bey depot.

The Ukrainian factory signed the contract in February 2017 and rolled out the first tram from its Dnipro factory in mid-2018. All 15 trams are to be delivered this year. The air-conditioned two-section tram is 22m long. It is equipped with a pantograph and a trolley pole so that it can operate on sections not compatible with a pantograph."

(v). DISASTER AT CAIRO MAIN STATION.

On 27.02.2019 a train hauled by a diesel loco hit the buffers at speed at Cairo Main station, rupturing the fuel tank which caused an explosion and fire. Reports indicate much damage and at least 25 killed and many injured.

- *"Illustration taken from the Internet'*

E. LEBANON.

Thanks to Lorenz Degen, this from: 'The Rahnuma Daily', India's oldest Urdu newspaper': 16.01.2019:

"BEIRUT (Rahnuma): Israel's plan to revive the historic Hejaz railway connecting Europe with the Gulf and Israel will have negative repercussions on Lebanon, according to analysts.

"Beirut has already lost its role as a regional economic and banking hub. When this railway is completed, the role of Beirut as a harbour will also disappear," Hilal Kashan, chair of the Political Studies Department at the American University of Beirut, told Xinhua.

Khashan said that the transport of goods through the railway is easier and faster than using trucks. The railway, a 1,300 km track, was built by the Ottomans in 1908 to transport goods on locomotives from the Mediterranean Sea to the souk of Damascus and the Saudi holy city of Medina. The once busy train line linked the heartland of the Arabian Peninsula to the port of Haifa on the

Mediterranean. The railway closed in 1920 as the Ottoman Empire collapsed.

Israeli Intelligence and Transport Minister Yisrael Katz made it clear on several occasions that Israel is keen on reviving the historic Hejaz railway through the Tracks for Regional Peace initiative which is intended to create a trade route connecting Europe with the Gulf and Israel.

Retired Army General Khalil Helou reiterated Khashan's views, saying that such a railway would cost Lebanon heavy economic losses, because Haifa harbour is closer to the Gulf than Beirut port, and that Israel is more stable in general than Lebanon. He added that Haifa harbour may also provide more attractive facilities than those offered by Beirut port.

Helou said that Haifa harbor can surely compete with Beirut's harbor, as the latter is no longer able to facilitate transport of products to the Gulf region through Nasib border. As the only functioning crossing between Jordan and Syria, Nasib is vital for the transport of goods from Lebanon and Syria to Jordan and the Gulf states. The border crossing was closed in 2015 when the rebels took over the Nasib area and the crossing in the countryside of Daraa Province in southern Syria. It re-opened again lately.

"The border has opened only for Jordanian trucks and Lebanon is not yet capable of sending anything through Nasib," he said.

However, analysts strongly believe that the railway project will definitely begin. Khashan said that Katz's announcement fulfills the aspirations of former Israeli officials. He noted that former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has always said he wanted Israel to become a commercial and financial hub with Lebanon being a tourism destination only.

"Also, former Israeli President Shimon Peres wanted to establish a Mideast economic system with Israel being the centre of it," he said.

Similarly, Helou believed this project will come sooner or later since Israel has a great interest to revive it. While analysts also believe that the implementation of the project will require some time as a peace agreement between the Gulf countries and Israel is still absent. Israel has signed peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan, but it has not signed such deals with the Gulf countries, Syria or Lebanon.

Helou said that a peace agreement between the Gulf countries and Israel should come into effect before the railway project can be implemented. "I do not know to which extent Saudi Arabia is ready to sign a peace agreement with Israel," he said, adding that "if it does, then this project will materialize and Lebanon will be greatly affected."

Likewise, Khashan said that if peace with Israel comes into effect, this will restore the role of Haifa harbour."

F. JORDAN.

First someone sells the port area of Aqaba for housing development without seemingly realising that a major export rail route for bulk goods is thereby cut off from its destination and outlet; Now consultants and banks come togther to resolve this problem!

From 'R.G.I.' 12.02.2019: "The Saudi Jordanian Investment Fund and the Aqaba Special Economic Zone Authority have signed a memorandum of understanding to undertake feasibility and technical studies for the development of a 195km railway connecting a planned inland dry port at Ma'an with port facilities around Aqaba.

The existing 1,050mm gauge railway to Aqaba was built in the 1970s to carry phosphate for export, but rail operations have been suspended since this traffic was transferred to a new port site which is not currently rail connected.

ASEZA and SJIF envisage that the 500M Dinar rail project would be developed through a PPP arrangement. It would include construction of the dry port, rehabilitation of the existing railway, construction of an extension of the line to serve Aqaba's container terminal and southern port facilities, and the procurement of new rolling stock. SJIF was formed in 2017 by the Public Investment Fund of Saudi Arabia (90%) and 16 Jordanian banks (10%).

'We are proud to partner with the SJIF to develop a key transport project that promises to strengthen Jordan's logistics offering and drive economic growth', said the Chief Commissioner of ASEZA Nasser Shraideh after the MoU was signed on February 10. 'The Aqaba – Ma'an railway and Ma'an dry port would reduce transport costs and spur the development of the logistics ecosystem in southern Jordan and could be the first step in the development of a national railway network.'"

G. IRAN-SYRIA.

Frank Adam wrote: "I lifted this paragraph from a piece by D. Pipes on how Iran intends to keep hold of Syria one way or another. "There is even a putative plan for an Iran-Syria rail link, to run from the Shalamcheh border crossing between Iran and Iraq, via Basra in southern Iraq and eventually to Latakia on Syria's Mediterranean coast. Such projects are more in the line of visions at present. But they demonstrate the depth and scope of Iran's plans for the area between its western borders and the Mediterranean."

H. AFGHANISTAN – IRAN.

AFGHANISTAN APPROVES FOURTH SECTION OF KHAF – HERAT RAILWAY.

From 'R.G.I.' 21.02.2019: "Design and construction of the 43km first phase of the fourth section of the railway being built from Iran to Herat was approved by the National Procurement Commission at its meeting on February 18. The 1435mm gauge line is being built in four sections. Work has been completed on the first two sections covering the 76km from the Iranian railhead at Khaf to Sangan and the border with Afghanistan at Shamtiq. The 62km third section from the border to Ghoryan is reported to be nearing completion. These sections of the line have been funded by Iran.

The fourth section of the project is to be funded from Afghanistan's budget. It is to be built in two phases, with the latest approval covering the 43km from Ghoryan to Rabat Paryan, which the Afghanistan Railway Authority said is to be built by a company from Kazakhstan. The final phase would extend this line 20km to an industrial area near Herat airport.

AfRA said completion of the Khaf – Herat railway was of high economic importance as it would provide Afghanistan with a rail route through Iran to the sea and the Turkish network."

I. PALESTINE.

"Palestinian official throws wrench into Israeli plan for railway link to Gulf". (02/15/2019.) By Thomas Coex (AFP). (From i24 News website. 24.02.2019):

"The rejection comes amid fears of normalization between Israel, Arab states.

Palestinian official Hussein al-Sheikh rejected an Israeli offer to establish a railway link between Israel and several Arab states that would go through the West Bank on Friday.

"Israel offered us the chance to participate in a railway scheme linking Haifa to Jenin to a number of Arab capitals," the Palestinian Authority's Civil Affairs Minister said on Twitter. "But we rejected the offer," al-Sheikh said. "We won't normalize relations with Israel and we won't take part in economic solutions that perpetuate the occupation."

The statement refers to an Israeli initiative unveiled by transportation minister, and current Likud party Knesset hopeful, Israel Katz in April 2017, which would make Israel a bridge between Europe and the Middle-East. The April 2017 plan, called 'Tracks for Peace,' would see Israel build a rail link between the major port of Haifa, in the north of the country, to Amman, Jordan, via the West Bank. Connecting into the Jordanian rail system would then build a direct connection to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf.

"It makes sense and is beyond political and ideological disagreements," Yisrael Katz previously said on a rare November visit to a transportation summit in Oman. Arguing that the proposal was also favourable to the Palestinian economy, the minister said the additional trade route would be "shorter, faster and cheaper, and will contribute to the economies of Jordan, the Palestinians - who will also be connected to the initiative - Israel, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, and in the future Iraq as well."

The plan has reportedly received warm approval in Washington - although it is unlikely to find supporters in the region, despite Katz's efforts. The Palestinian position, while not surprising, reiterates that there will be no compromise with Israel after Netanyahu scored a massive media coup in the Polish capital Warsaw this week. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu rubbed shoulders with a plethora of high-ranking Arab officials at a US-led summit focussing on curbing Iranian influence on the region. Social networks were awash with messages blasting the Arab states for pursuing normalization with the Jewish state.

The Israelis capitalized on the phenomenon, with the prime minister's office itself leaking a video showing Bahrain's foreign minister Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa calling Iran the most toxic challenge to the region.

"We grew up talking about the Palestine-Israel dispute as the most important issue," the politician says. "But then we saw it the most toxic challenge came to us from Tehran," he continued, calling the Iranian government a "fascist regime."

• 'Harakevet' tries to keep out of politics where possible but this illustration of a new railway tunnel from Egypt to Gaza was forwarded to us and we wanted to use it.)

J. MIDDLE EAST RAIL CONFERENCE.

Having indicated interest, the Editor was flooded with a series of mails as the conference approached. By 18.02.2019 the list of speakers included:

"We are thrilled to announce that H.E Dr. Rumaih Al-Rumaih, President, Public Transport Authority, Saudi Arabia will act as a keynote speaker at Middle East Rail and Middle East Smart Mobility 2019. His Excellency Dr. Rumaih Al-Rumaih who manages over $200bn worth of transport projects in the Kingdom, will share his thoughts on the new vision for Saudi Arabia's transportation systems."

The full speaker list included:

H.E. Dr. Abdulla Belhaif Al Nuaimi, Minister of Infrastructure Development, Chairman, Federal Transport Authority - Land & Maritime, United Arab Emirates

H.E Dr. Rumaih Al-Rumaih, President, Public Transport Authority, Saudi Arabia

H.E. Mr. Khalifa bin Saeed Al-Abri, Assistant Secretary General, Economic & Development Affairs, GCC General Secretariat, United Arab Emirates

Shadi Malak, Chief Executive Officer, Etihad Rail, United Arab Emirates

Dr. Bashar AlMalik, Chief Executive Officer, Saudi Railway Company, Saudi Arabia

Mohamed Rabie Khlie, Director General, ONCF Morocco

Dr Amr Shaat, Deputy Minister for Rail, Ministry of Transport, Egypt

Eng. Maha Raslan Deputy Minister of Transport, Syrian Arab Republic for Land Transport, Syria

Mourad Gassab, Chief Executive Officer, Société du Réseau Ferroviaire Rapide de Tunis, Tunisia

Hicham Kirtassi, Projects Director, CasaTransport, Morocco

Gamal Alshami, Vice Chairman for Freight, Egypt National Railways, Egypt

Abdullah Al- Yousif, Signaling & Telecommunication Maintenance Manager, Saudi Railway Company, Saudi Arabia

Eng. Rayan Alharbi, Haramain High Speed Railway Operation & Maintenance Director, Saudi Railway Company, Saudi Arabia

Thi-Mai Tran, GCC Managing Director, Alstom, United Arab Emirates

Loay Ghazaleh, Undersecretary Advisor on Infrastructure and PPP, Ministry of Works, Municipalities Affairs and Urban Planning, Bahrain

Ashraf Al Sabaee, General Manager, Freight, Egypt National Railways

Mohammad Khaled, Cybersecurity and Digital Transformation Expert, Department of Energy, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Eng. Mohamed Hosni, Head of Central Department of Rolling Stock, National Authority for Tunnels, Egypt

Nawal Alhanaee, Head of Research and Technical Studies, Ministry of Infrastructure Development, United Arab Emirates

Mahmoud Kamal Habboub, Smart Mobility Director, Careem, United Arab Emirates

Harj Dhaliwal, Managing Director – Middle East and India, Virgin Hyperloop One, United Arab Emirates

Helena De Flaviis, Senior Director, Khatib & Alami, United Arab Emirates

Mohammad Yamma Shams, President, Afghanistan Railway Authority, Afghanistan

Eng. Abdullah S. Balhaddad, General Manager, Abraj Alyaum for Engineering Consulting, Saudi Arabia

Imad Belmajdoub, High Speed Railway Station Construction Project Manager, ONCF, Morocco

Prof. Khaled El-Akruti, Leader of Engineering Asset Management Discipline, Faculty of Engineering & Information Sciences, University of Wollangong, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Kostas Tzanakakis, Senior Railway Expert, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Oman

Frederic Sanchez, Project Director, Alstom, United Arab Emirates

Steven Cassidy¸ Engineering & Maintenance Director, Dubai Metro, Serco Middle East, United Arab Emirates

Mahmood Al-Wahaibi , Urban Planning Expert, The American Planning Association, Oman

Essam Selim, Transport Consultant, Egypt

Kumneger Hussien, Team Leader, Railway Electrification and Power Supply, Ethiopian Railways Corporation, Ethiopia

Fitsum Tsegaye Chaka, Tunnels, Bridges and Structures Design Leader, Ethiopian Railways Corporation, Ethiopia

Mohammad Yamma Shams, President, Afghanistan Railway Authority, Afghanistan

Tarek Alsayed, Rail Consultant, Egypt

Jonathan McKinley Hill, Transit Product Development Director, Visa, United Arab Emirates

Taher Diab, Senior Director of Strategy & Planning, Dubai Supreme Council of Energy & Secretary General, Emirates Energy Award, United Arab Emirates

Dr Ahmed Hussien Ahmed, General Manager of Technical Affairs, Ministry of Petroleum, Egypt

Dina Mustafa, Head of Sustainability Operations - Sustainability, Expo 2020, United Arab Emirates

Dr Mohamed Soliman, Chairman, Arab Council for Sustainable Energy, Egypt

Stephen Goldie, City Planning Advisor, Al Ain Municipality, United Arab Emirates

Hector Lopez Ruiz, Research Fellow for Transportation and Urban Infrastructure, King Abdullah Petroleum Studies & Research Centre, Saudi Arabia

Rolando Fuentes, Research Fellow, King Abdullah Petroleum Studies & Research Centre, Saudi Arabia

Nadeem Shakir, Technical Director, Middle East Transport Planning Leader, Aurecon, United Arab Emirates

Vilhelm Hedberg, Founder, EKar, United Arab Emirates

Liam Farrell, Expert Urban Planner, Abu Dhabi Airports Company, United Arab Emirates

Andy Stevenson , Future Mobility Leader, Mott MacDonald, United Arab Emirates

Dr. Spencer Dando, Director - WIFI and Advertising, Business Development & Partnerships, du, United Arab Emirates

Rene Seyger, Managing Partner, Roland Berger, United Arab Emirates

Eng. Alaa Mahjoub, Data Management Senior Expert, Abu Dhabi Department of Transport, United Arab Emirates

Ramadan Harb, Senior Vice President – Infrastructure, Khatib Alami, United Arab Emirates

Professor Dr Khaled Abbas Sayed, Professor, Transport Planning & Traffic Engineering Founder & Chairman, Transport Planning & Traffic Engineering House (TPTEH), Egypt

Mohamed Youssef, Senior ICS/OT Cybersecurity Consultant & Chapter President, CS2AI, United Arab Emirates

Dr. Oualid Ali, Founder and President, FutureCitiesCouncil.org, United Arab Emirates

Mohamed Hegazy, Director, Transport for Cairo (TfC), Cairo, Egypt

Mahmoud Al Burai, Director Real Estate Development, Dubailand Government, United Arab Emirates

Karim El Jisr, Director, SEENEXUS, United Arab Emirates

Tim Woodward, Operations and Network Manager, Bahrain Public Transport Company, Bahrain

Irene Corpuz, Head of Planning & IT Security, Al Dhafra Region Municipality

Abdirashid Samater, IT Governance & Risk Management, Saudi Arabia Government Sector, Saudi Arabia

Faisal Rashid, Director, Supreme Council of Energy, United Arab Emirates

Nabeel Alzaka, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Surface Mobility, United Arab Emirates

Konstantin Trofimenko, PhD, Director, Centre for Urban Transport Researches, Russia

Alaa Saber, Specialist of Planning and Operation, SAPTCO Head Office, Saudi Arabia

Abdellatif Waked, General Manager - Middle East & North Africa, Uber, United Arab Emirates

Abdelrahman Elgamal, CEO & Founder, FriendlyCar, United Arab Emirates

Iman Ousseyran, Head of Commitee, United Nations, United Arab Emirates

Mohamed Nabhan, Passengers Transport Activities Monitoring Director, Roads and Transport Authority, United Arab Emirates

Ahmed Hafez, Regional Director, Via, United Arab Emirates and Exhibition Centre UAE

REPORT ON THE NUREMBERG TOY FAIR.

By Marco Claudio Pardini

Marco attended this famous fair and sent an extensive report from which we have extracted this, since it refers to a loco type which did work over the PR and HBT systems in the 1940's. We hope for a further report from members of the Israel Model Railway Club in the next issue.

The "Truman" locomotives: Whitcomb 65DE14

For over half a century Italian rails were traversed by an American-manufactured diesel-electric engine, mainly used in heavy-duty service. Its typically American line has always intrigued the Italian "trainspotters". The machine is known locally as a "Truman", named after the President of the USA in office in the years in which the locomotive started its service on the FS (although it had arrived in Italy some time before, during the time of Roosevelt, during the war).

The long history of the Truman begins in 1941, when the Whitcomb Locomotive Works began production of its "65 ton switcher" diesel-electric classified as 65DE14 and equipped with two 6-cylinder engines of 280 hp (209 KW) built by Buda under license with Lanova and Westinghouse Electric equipment. The 65DE were not the only ones produced by Whitcomb (there are several series after 14), but these have a particular history.

The machines were ordered by the British War Department (WD) and were designed for use in the North African deserts. In total there were four orders for 112 machines, of which seven were lost before arriving in Africa due to the war.

The following table gives an idea of the several series

Number	WD Num.series denomination	Year
1200 – 1224	60130 – 60154 65-DE-14	1942
1225 – 1251	60167 – 60193 65-DE-14	1942
1537 – 1576	60236 – 60275 65-DE-14 A	1943

The first series had in the cab two central windows that gave onto the motor-bonnet, while the subsequent versions A and B, having the lowered roof of about 20 cm, lost them.

In addition, the latter had a tilted bonnet and imperial - "sloped hood – sloped cab".

The A had a bigger side window than the B's. On some of the first series the cab was cut and lowered to reduce the maximum overall shape. Also in this case the two central windows were lost.

At the end of the fighting in Africa 49 machines, after participating till the Battle of El Alamein, were moved to Italy following the front, and here they remained at the end of the conflict.

According to one source these are 1200-1208, 1232-1259 and 1260-1271, (but the numbers do not match with those of the table above).

Twelve of these locomotives between 1943 and 1944 were used for military trains in Palestine before landing in Italy in the wake of Allied troops.

An interesting curiosity: After the landing in Sicily, these locomotives were transported by rail to the centre of Italy that was still occupied by the German troops. To avoid their being intercepted and bombed by German planes, some wooden panels were applied to the sides and on the roof, with windows, ports and writing to simulate closed freight cars in the typical Italian brown color. The shape of the 65DE14 in fact is well-suited to this "camouflage".

Of those left in Africa about twenty (all of the Series A and B) reached Holland where at the end of the war they were initially registered as series NS 600. For Dutch requirements, used in freight trains, the locomotives were very poor: they had a maximum speed of 65 km/h but were extremely noisy, not very powerful and unreliable because of the Buda engines, for which it was very difficult to obtain spare parts.

After replacing the engines they were renumbered in the NS 2000 series (from 2001 to 2018, with the 2019 set aside as a spare parts supplier). They continued to be used mainly for freight trains, often in double traction, but not being designed for this purpose they needed a machinist in each.

Despite the changes made the machines were not yet satisfactory and between 1958 and 1960 were withdrawn. Two of the "African" machines reached France, and there they were registered in the 8082 SNCF series. One is still preserved at the Chemin de Fer de la Vallée de l'Eure in Normandy; It is of the first series with the central windows in the cab.

The remaining "Africans" returned to the United States and were stockpiled in Pennsylvania in anticipation of an invasion of Japan. At the end of the war they were largely reacquired by Whitcomb, who modified and resold them as industrial locomotives. [NB Japan had of course 3' 6" gauge lines!]

But back to the "Italians". After serving the Allied army they remained in the peninsula whose fleet was devastated by war and entered the FS fleet registered as NE series. 1200 (001-049) – Denomination modified in NE.120 in 1953. ("N" stands for "Diesel Engine" and "E" for electric traction"). Apparently they were initially nicknamed "Budini" (Italian for Pudding) by the Sicilian railwaymen, due to the engine name "Buda".

The engines were downgraded to 150 KW (from 209) but the problems encountered in Holland were also present for us: already from 1946 were manifested episodes of breakage of the heads of the Buda engines. The FS decided to replace the pairs of 12 cylinder engines with pairs of Fiat V1612, of 260 kW, mounted on the ATR 100, keeping the Buda motors disassembled as spare parts for the other engines. Despite some drawbacks the modified locomotives proved to be very sturdy and very suitable for heavy shunting work.

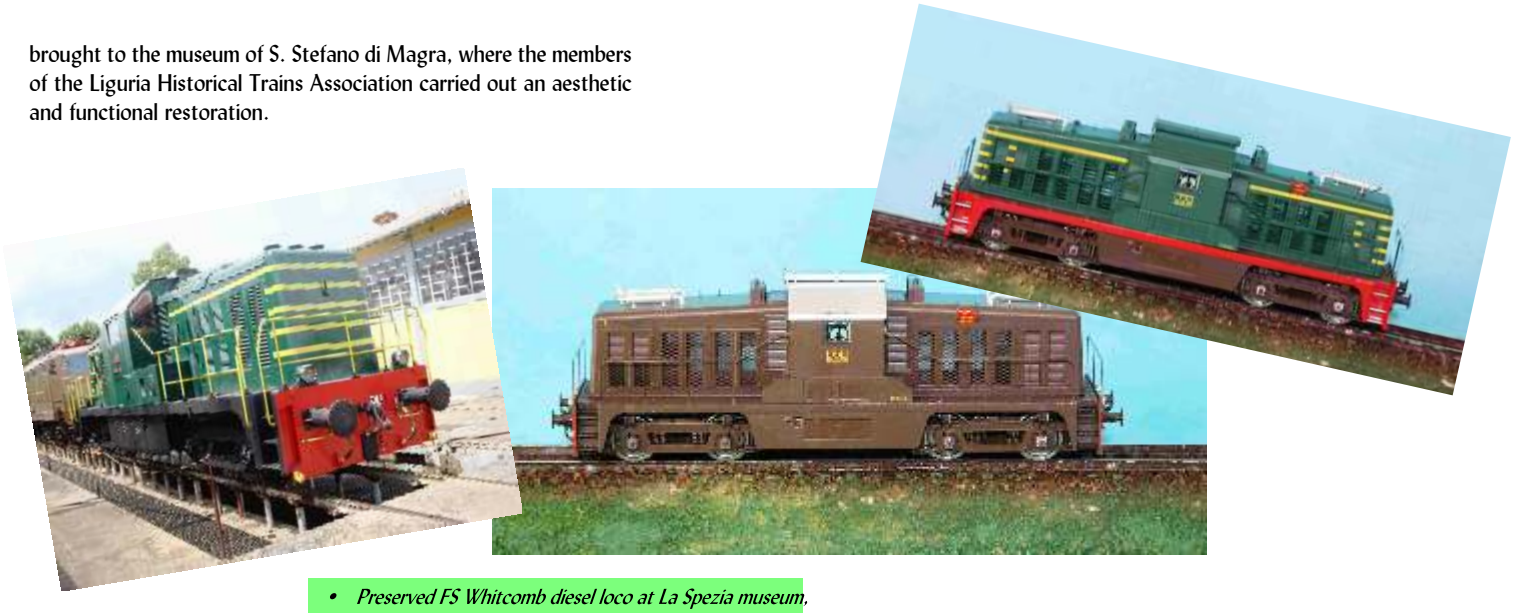
The Ne.120 have worn three liveries. After the grey-sand of the army, they took a plum colour with a yellow band that on the heads became a moustache with V. Later the livery was replaced with the classic FS Castano-Isabella livery. In the Sixties this changed to the typical dress of shunting locos: Green body with yellow stripes and red bench.

In 1965 began a new phase of modernization of the trucks. The two 6-cylinder diesel engines were replaced by a single 12-cylinder engine, almost double-displacement, with 420kw, of OM type SEV 4-stroke construction, under licence of Saurer, with natural feeding and direct injection. The DC Westinghouse dynamo powering the electric motors was modified or replaced.

The 12 engines were reclassified as D.143. Between 1965 and 1972 all other Ne.120 (which had retained the original Buda engine) were modified and also reclassified D.143 (Nos. 3001-3049). The main aesthetic differences between Ne.120 and D.143 relate to roof exhaust pipes on the hoods, a protuberance on one bonnet, modified side windows and the position of the headlights.

Today there are still several units stored awaiting scrapping, although some are still in service or being restored to working order. One locomotive was

brought to the museum of S. Stefano di Magra, where the members of the Liguria Historical Trains Association carried out an aesthetic and functional restoration.



- *Preserved FS Whitcomb diesel loco at La Spezia museum, and new HO models of the different types. (Photos: Marco Claudio)*

124:10.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

(i). GERMAN TV DOCUMENTARY.

In 2011 SWR made a 28-minute documentary for the ARD network, "A Train Ticket to Israel" (it appears in both German and French as a co-production), by Grit Merten. The 'plot', if one may describe it so, is that the narrator searches in Israel for a survivor of the Deutz 0-4-0D diesel shunters on which his late father worked at the factory in Köln. However, rather than just going straight to the Haifa Railway Museum (reached near the end, with an interview with Chen Melling) - or even going to the Museon HaAretz in Ramat Aviv! - this gives the director an excuse to visit the former Jaffa station, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Kotel, a minyan davvening in an IC3 from Beit Shemesh to HaShalom, ride a Jerusalem tram during the period of test running, cab-ride trains to Beer Sheba, chat with a girl soldier in Beersheba, visit the Dead Sea, the Greek Orthodox monastery in Wadi Kelt, the old Hedjaz Railway Kishon viaduct and so forth. Noticeable is just how often the camera seems to focus on attractive young women in civilian, military or bathing costume, or young girls (ahem). An Israeli historian Dr. Jakob Eisler stresses how much traumatised Holocaust survivors held back the use of railways in Israel – rather a polemical point – and of course there is the usual obsession with 'Peace' contrasted with images of barbed wire and warning signs. As someone with a little experience of the difficulties of TV filming the Editor is amazed that permission was obtained to film so closely and intimately inside the church and monastery etc. From the 'Harakevet' point of view it is fascinating to see how much has changed even since 2011! There are many IC3 units in service, few double-deckers, 701 and 617 haul minerals and containers, the line into Beer Sheva is still single track, etc. The film can (hopefully) be accessed still at:

https://www.ardmediathek.de/ard/player/Y3JpZDovL3N3ci5kZS8xNzMzMjkzOA/

(ii). STUTTHOF EXTERMINATION CAMP.

In the magazine 'Die Museums Eisenbahn' 3/2018 p.26 is an article on a trip on a section of the former Westpreussische Kleinbahn AG (750mm gauge). Occasional tourist trains are run on a section, using diesel railcars. The line serves Sztutowo – the former Stutthof concentration camp and a photo shows two wagons placed on a length of track at the site of the camp – a bogie enclosed van and a bogie open wagon – as far as can be ascertained without numbers.

Stimulated to research a little further, the Editor can add that THE historian for this line was the late Reinhard Richter, who died young; his book on the Westpreussische Kleinbahnen was published by 'Eisenbahn Kurier' in 2002. In January 2005 the DME published an article with several corrections and additions. The irony will have it that an enthusiast society has rescued a section of this once-very-extensive network between Danzig and Marienburg and Elbing; Stutthof itself is some 35km. East of Danzig (now Gdansk). The system had to cope with a large number of smaller and later water-courses, using a train ferry over one and a swing bridge. The tourist trains are run from Mikoszewo (formerly Nickelswalde) to Sztutowo, and are marketed as 'Janter Express' (Janter being the Polish for Amber, German Bernstein, which is often found on the Baltic coast in this region.) On the occasion of a visit in June 2017 the train was formed of a FAUR bogie diesel railcar Mbxd2-212 (built in Bucharest in the 1980's) and three open-sided summer carriages. At Stegna, formerly Stegen, there is a junction and the line south to Nowy Dwor Gd. Wask. is used to access the depot – this was formerly Tiegenhof and a major centre for the system with depot and workshops. 4.6km further on the train reaches Sztutowo and reverses by means of a track triangle which itself incorporates part of a spur built in 1945 to access the Frischen Nehrung.

MORE ON RAILWAYS TO STUTTHOF.

From 'Das Polen Magazin' website, dated 13. January 2009; by Brigitte Jaeger-Dabek. Translation and editing by WLR. Accessed 05.10.2018.

Until September 1939 this area belonged to the Free City of Danzig and was a natural paradise; an Old Age Home was opened on the road to Kahlberg but already in mid-August a group of SS moved in with ca. 500 prison inmates from Danzig and began to transform this into a labour and concentration camp. From 1936 the National Socialists in the Free City had been collecting names of "unwanted political elements" who were to be interned should a conflict begin and they were so well prepared that already on the first day of the war, 1st. September, 1,500 were arrested. On 2nd. September the first 150 Jews from Danzig were brought to Stutthof and later Poles from the entire region and from Warsaw were deported to Stutthof, then from 1942 also Russians, Norwegians, French, Dutch, Belgians, Czechs, Lithuanians, Latvians, Danes and Sinti and Roma.

Until November 1941 it was classed initially as a civilian prison camp, but following a visit by Himmler in January 1942 it became an SS 'Special Camp'. The difference was immaterial to the prisoners, who suffered and died in large numbers due to the poor conditions; the camp was usually overfilled and constantly expanded. Over the years some 3,000 SS personnel were employed as guards, plus Ukrainian 'Hilfspolizei'. There was a wide range of satellite camps throughout East and West Prussia; the largest were in Thorn and Elbing each with ca. 5,000 Jewish women prisoners; in early 1942 in Stutthof itself there were an average of 3,000 prisoners, by 1944 8,000 and at the end over 20,000. Together with the 'Aussenkommandos' the number was over 52,000, including 33,000 women (26,000 of the 29,000 Jews were women). Towards the end of 1944 numbers rose suddenly due to transports of Hungarian Jewish women (20-30,000) and others who were transported by sea from camps that were being threatened by the approach of the Red Army, from the Baltic and especially Riga, Kaunas and Schaulen and also from Auschwitz. By the end of 1944 at least 70% of the prisoners were Jews. Most of the inmates worked as slaves in SS-owned factories such as DAW (Deutsche Ausrüstungswerken) directly adjacent to the camp, in workshops at the camp or in other industries and on the land. The high death rate was largely due to the miserable hygienic conditions and wholly inadequate nutrition; the first typhus epidemic came in winter 1942/3, then came scarlet fever and further typhus. The sick were only treated sufficient as to reduce further spread of the epidemic, Jews were not to be treated at all. Others were shot, using the specially-designed equipment for neck shots, and others were injected with poisons or benzine. In Spring 1944 a gas chamber was built, that was used partially for delousing clothing and from that summer also for gassing people. Its capacity however was small and so prisoners were often placed in specially sealed wagons of the Kleinbahn that led to the camp and gassed here.

From summer 1944 the military situation worsened and the great Russian offensive of January 1945 led to chaos and disorganisation since East Prussia was not permitted to evacuate in time. On 25th. January, with the Russians some kilometres away, the Kommandant Paul-Werner Hoppe ordered the evauation of the camp into the Reich. Only the sick and those required for dismantling the camp were left behind. At this time probably some 47,000 prisoners (including 35,000 Jews) were left. Columns of 1,000-1,500 were formed and were marched off towards Lauenburg, 7km. between each column, each of which had 40 guards. The march was intended for 7 days, lasted 10, there were rations for two days and the prisoners were inadequately clothed, many without shoes and whoever could not keep up was shot without mercy (at least 700). Nobody knows precisely how many were on this death march or how many died, but estimates are ca. 10,000 were sent off, of whom more than a half died. Others were sent eastwards to Königsberg and Palmnicken to build fortifications. On 31. January countless Jewish prisoners were massacred by the SS on the beach at Palmnicken, barely a dozen survived. Survivors in Pommern were liberated by the Soviets in March 1945. Thousands of others were loaded into small ships and sent westwards by sea towards Schleswig-Holstein – the 'Cap Arkona' was sunk by the British one day before they took Lübeck, some 400 who managed to swim to the beach were shot there by the SS....."

North of the main station at Slupsk is a memorial stone for an Aussenlager of KZ Stutthof. Between 1944 and 1945 prisoners were used here as forced labour to repair railway wagons. In April 1945 they were returned to KZ Stutthof, many of them dying on the way and all the rest died in the camp before it was liberated by the Soviets.

The website 'Urlaubsland Polen' has an article on the narrow-gauge railway to Sztutowo and Mikoszewo, which is operated in the summer months by a society 'Stowarzyszenia Zulawskiej Kolei Dojazdowej.' The line had its origins in a short sugar beet line of 1891 which was gradually expanded into a major network – the last section from Stutthof to Kahlberg (Krynia Morska) in 1944. The Weichsel was crossed with a train ferry 'Schiewenhorst II' almost 30m long, which was sunk in 1945 but raised and restored and worked under the name 'Swibno' from 1948 to 1959. In Rybina there is a 51m. swing bridge over a river.

When the pumping stations used for drying out the countryside in the Weichselpolder were out of service following the flight of the Nazis in March 1945 the land became flooded and almost 65% of the railway stood under water, thus destroying also much of the infrastructure. However the line was rebuilt by the Poles after the war. Passenger services were all withdrawn by 1996 and freight in 1999. The society was formed and began operating trains for tourists on the east side of the Weichsel from 2003. During the Second World War it had also been used for conveying prisoners to the KZ Stutthof. A memorial tablet at the station Nowy Dwor Gdansky recalls this episode."

In 'DME' 1/2005 is an article by Reinhard Richter (who died later that year aged only 45) entitled 'Neues von den Westpreussischen Kleinbahnen (WKAG)' with additional material to his book. Some of this is relevant to the War.

Emil Budd was a workshops apprentice at Tiegenhof from 1943-45. There was a spectacular accident at the swing bridge in autumn 1943. One wagon that had half-fallen down the bank could be hauled back by rope so that the line could be reopened the same day, but the first wagon and the loco could only be salvaged some days later when a floating crane was brought from Danzig. The loco had only slight damage – the chimney and cab were repaired at Tiegenhof and the engine soon re-entered traffic.

Around 1943-44 between 12 and 14 Englishmen worked at the Lokeinsatzstelle (depot) Tiegenhof, who were accommodated in an extension to the engine shed and guarded by a solitary German soldier who was in any case slightly handicapped by a war wound. The English often got packets from home and were (perhaps as a result?) much liked by the Light Railway staff.

Jochen Finke made notes regarding the evacuation and flight in the last days of the war here:

"24.1.1945. Evauation of the line Marienburg – Lichtfelde and in the following days all the southern lines on the Grossen Werder area. 26.1 Evauation of Tiegenhof, on 30.1 the line Steegen – Tiegenhof was returned to a limited service, hindered by heavy snowfall. From the last week of January the line Tiegenhof – Danzig was above all flooded with refugee transports. In addition the clearance of numerous army equipment depots was begun. 31.1.45: The timetable showed trains 61/71 and 66/76 from Danzig to Gemlitz and Groß Zünder, whereas traffic on the line Danzig – Stutthof – Tiegenhof was irregular.

The personnel were pulled apart through the evacuation of Marienburg and the Großen Werder. Those who reported for duty in Danzig were put to work on the lines around Danzig which were working round the clock. Day and night the trains loaded with Wehrmacht materials, foodstuffs and Wehrmacht members as well as refugees were run.

On the line Tiegenhof – Liessau/Neuteich a modest evacuation service could be established at the beginning of February, however trains ran mainly during the night, as the area was already under enemy observation. The line further on to Wernersdorf was already unusable due to damage by shell fire. In the night 14/15.2.45 a train of the Deutsche Reichsbahn ran through the last buffer stop and so blocked the Kleinbahn line to Lindenau. The Reichsbahn could not see a way to remove the blockage and so the evacuation trains of the Kleinbahn were interrupted here for a longer period.

Most of the Kleinbahn staff remained at their posts until the end. Karl Schäfer, who had leased the Station Buffet at the Kleinbahnhof in Danzig, wrote in 1946: "Until the departure of the last train on 26. March 1945 I kept the buffet open, and then with a small amount of hand luggage made my way here (to Lübeck). I have lost a part of my family and the whole of my economic existence.." "

Post-War: Roman Witkowski, formerly of Danzig, notes on the mysterious fate of the line built on the Frische Nehrung in the last days of the war in 1945. In his book 'Die Danziger Bucht 1945' p.21 he writes that the evacuation of the Old Age Home in Bad Neuhäuser near Pillau and the transport of the other inhabitants on 18.4.1945 was performed with the narrow-gauge railway on the line Kaddighaken – Narmeln. If this is so the line must have been in operation for some 50km. from Stutthof. From a Polish navy map it appears that the Polish navy restored the majority of the destroyed line in the 1950's, up to the border with the Soviet-occupied part of East Prussia. Here also it seems the alignment and earthworks must have been ready and in place.

In 1948 the Navy hauled goods wagons from the station at Stutthof with horses and brought them to the closed area near Lysa Góra. Probably the locomotive Ty1-1085 (e-No.5) that was handed to the Navy and was withdrawn 1965 was also used here, for a military map dated 1964 shows also a 3.5km. line from Lysa Gorá or now Krynica Morska in the direction of Pillau. Probably it was the military who ordered the dismantling of the connection to Stutthof to discourage tourists, who were only permitted into this area with special passes, for the PKP seems to have actually been interested in a rebuilding of the line.

In the 1950's and '60's the passenger trains were still very busy, with anglers, schoolchildren, workers, bathing guests and tour groups to the former KZ Stutthof. However the last passenger train ran 31.12.1973."

(iii). CAIRO STATION.

Here a link to a very 'film noire' Hitchcockian but actually very good 1958 Egyptian Film 'Cairo Station' – 76 minutes and exciting till the last minute. Many very good railway scenes of diesels, steam locos, railcars, shunting and train movements.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JYAG_Gi2iDA&feature=youtu.be

The following gives information to the history of the film:

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cairo_Station

It concerns characters who literally live and make their living on the station – with unrequited love, politics and attempted murder as just part of a passing day. The film poster illustrates an LNER / BR Class A1 or A2 Pacific heading over the Forth Bridge! Thanks to Dieter Zoubek for the links.

(iv). THE 'EL-ACHAI' PEACE TRAIN.

We have referred to this rather strange initiative before. Based at Sissach east of Basel (where the 'Old Hauenstein Line' branches off) they possess three couchette cars, a baggage van and a covered goods van – although the Editor noticed a red 'Mitropa' Speisewagen standing outside the shed when passing recently. Steam charter trains have been run over the Hauenstein line using rebuilt Class 52 Kriegslok 52 8055; The plan, for which sponsors and donors are sought is to run a train from Switzerland to Jerusalem. Anyone with any knowledge of the current political and railway infrastructure situation will understand that this is a rather messianic vision. Now a note in 'Lok Report' 2/2019 mentions that the 'Blue Star Train' restaurant based at the Bahnpark Augsburg and formed of a former DB VT601 diesel Trans-Europ-Express diesel multiple unit has also been acquired by the El-Achai. http://www.blue-star-train.de/

This comprises the driving cab units ('Triebköpfe') 601.006 and 601.015, which worked on DB from 1957 to 1987, were then sold to a Lichtenstein dealer and have had a mobile life ever since, being repaired in Italy and then hired by DB and used briefly in 1990 on Berlin-Hamburg services, rebuilt as a luxury land-cruise train set, later acquired by a famous chef and (painted in blue and cream rather than TEE red and cream) placed at the Bahnpark Augsburg

and used as a stationary restaurant. It is announced that the unit will be rebuilt with new (unspecified) power units, but how this will help it to travel up to Jerusalem remains to be seen...

(v). RAILWAY MEMORIAL AT PARIS DRANCY.

The Editor was able to visit this memorial to the deportaton of Jews, Sinti and others from Paris to extermination camps in February. It is at 'Square de la Libération' and can be reached by 143 bus from near Le Bourget station (RER line B) or 248 from Drancy – plus a short walk.

As well as a statue with scrolling inscriptions, and two plaques, there is a short length of track leading from the memorial to a goods van situated at right angles on a short track panel. The van is:

SNCF (1) Kkuw 215941. It bears inscriptions: "Tare: 11543kg. Capacity 20T. Hommes 40 Chevaux en long 8. 'Inscriptions'." Also on the solebar: 'Rev. 25.1.1944'. The south side is getting rather bare and needs repainting.

Plaque: (1):

La République francaise
en hommage aux victimes
des persecutions racistes et antisemites
et des crimes contre l'humanité
commis sous l'autorité de fait
dite 'Gouvernement de l'État francais'
(1940-1944)
N'oublions jamais."

Plaque: (2):

Ici, l'État francaise de Vichy
interna plusieurs milliers de juifs
tsiganer et étrangers
Déporté vers les camps nazis
presque tous trouvérent la mort.
Nous, génération de la memoire,
m'oublierons jamais.
U.E.J.F. Février 1993.

(vi). NOTE ON THE HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL IN MILANO.

At ground floor level under the main Milano Central station stand four FS goods vans, without identities, as part of a memorial to the deportation of Jews from here. Leonardo Micheletti has sent some intriguing notes:

"One van in that museum has a curious history. The front right side of the cars and wagons is identified by a star. The FS uses a Jewish star, the reason is practical, as with a hole in the middle the screw in the centre is easily located. Some enthusiasts restored that wagon and used it as headquarters and for storage in Milan. During an Open Day an imbecile told a Jewish lady "In this wagon they deported the Jews. The railwaymen put the star on in memory." This lady went to Moretti, the CEO of FS, to ask for the wagon. Moretti took the wagon from the association and put it in the museum. The members of the association protested by saying "This wagon was built in 1954". Unfortunately the boss is always right. Only a few know of this...."

(vii). MEISSNER PASHA EXHIBITION IN DRESDEN.

At the Dresden Verkehrsmuseum in the centre of the city there is until 14th. July 2019 an exhibition on the life and works of Heinrich August Meissner (1862-1940) – although born in Leipzig he grew up in Dresden and was educated there before embarking upon a career as civil engineer and project director on many railway projects in the Ottoman Empire. He is especially well known for his work on the Hedjaz Railway ('Hedschasbahn') and the 'Bagdadbahn', being granted also the title 'Pasha' by the Sultan. (The Editor attended the launch on 14.02 and met surviving family members of Meissner, some of whom have researched their ancestor extensively. The exhibition includes a couple of rail fragments marked as from the Editor's collection!) Any readers who find this feasible are recommended to visit the exhibition which MAY later transfer to other musea. Unfortunately, apart from a flyer and a poster there is no publication associated with the displays.

(viii). ARTICLE ON EXPORT OF I.R. LOCOS AND STOCK.

In the German magazine 'Der Schienenbus' 1/2019 is an article on pp.20-23 by Torsten Klose on the export of new locos and rolling stock from Germany to Israel through the port of Bremen. (Translation by the Editor):

"The history of the export of German railway rolling stock to Israel following the Second World War began in the form of Reparations. In the years 1955-56 apparently 18-27 machines (the exact number varies in the sources), shunting locos derived from the first series of our V60, were delivered by the Esslingen Lokomotivfabrik. Interesting in this connection are the apparently twelve diesel sets, similar to the VT08, which were also built by Esslingen in 1956 and then shipped to Israel.

In more recent history, Israel Railways had reached a low point in 1990 with only 2.5 million passengers. Such a large modernisation project was commenced that by the year 2015 it was already some 53 million passengers. Passenger traffic has been worked mainly by diesel locos of Alstom type JT42BW and machines imported from Spain such as Vossloh types Euro 3200 and Euro 4000, hauling trains formed of Bombardier double-deck carriages from Germany. These carriages are externally very similar to their sisters built for DB Regio. The most conspicuous difference are the broad light-grey stripes between the lines of windows and of course the Driving/Generator coaches. The generator provides for the current supply to the train when using Diesel traction; for example the air-conditioning system demands a lot of power in Israel's southern, desert climate zone.

In addition there are a few Diesel IC3 units ('Rubber-Noses') and Siemens carriages with Viaggio Low Floor carriages (similar to the ÖBB Railjet) [sic. - actually these are different] amongst the newer acquisitions.

In 2010 the government decided the invest ca. 4.5 Billion Dollars in electrification of some 429km of line with 25kV 50Hz AC, out of the total network of 1,384km. In the future trains will be hauled on these lines also by the Bombardier TRAXX P160AC3 locos which will form the backbone of haulage power in this area.

Now the new vehicles have to be transported somehow to Israel and this is done, of course, by sea. Whereas the locos and carriages in previous years had been brought by DB Cargo from the builders to the Bremen Neustädter Harbour, at present most of this work is actually performed by the firm RailAdventure. With its loco fleet of DB classes 103, 111 and 139 these are ideal for the task. Trips are therefore run on an irregular basis for transporting the vehicles for Israel Railways through Germany.

Once arrived at the Neustädter Hafen in Bremen the TRAXX locos and the double-deck vehicles are taken over by BLG Logistics (BLG: 'Bremer Lagerhaus Gesellschaft') and all further actions of storage, loading and the preparations for shipping are carried out by this firm. Until enough have been gathered to make up a ship load the vehicles are then often parked on the quay tracks for a period: The BLG has its own road/rail tractor for any necessary shunting movements in the harbour area – an MB Unimog No. 6136. Following a lengthy sea voyage the locos and carriages are then expected in the harbour at Haifa and are unloaded there."

The article is illustrated with two shots of a rake of four D/D carriages (including two driving trailers) being hauled by DB 152.018 on 22nd May 2014 near Langwedel; On 9th. April 2018 loco 3007 is being lowered carefully into the hold of 'Henrik S' while 3005 waits on the quay; On 26. February 'Hannah S' waits while the BLG Unimog shunts 3004 and 3006 alongside – this was just two hours after the ship had arrived; and two photos by Yaron Dozetas of 3007 at Ben- Gurion Airport station and a 3200 hauling a train of double-deckers near Kiryat Malachi.

(ix). FORTHCOMING RAILTOURS TO ERITREA AND IRAN.

Advertising for FarRail Tours includes:

A tour of Eritrea 'Arbaroba Special' Oct. 25th.- Nov. 1st. 2019.

and in Iran: Far East: Mashhad, Bandar Abbas and broad gauge. Nov. 16th.-Dec. 1st.

For details – see www.FarRail.com, or: mail@FarRail.com

An aerial view of the future planned Lod station complex, clearly superimposed on an aerial photo; In the background the new IR headquarters building and associated developments; In the foreground the main depot and carriage sidings; view looking roughly East with a train approaching from the Tel Aviv line. The yellow vehicles on the lower left are track machinery vehicles near their depot - close to which is also the new electric loco depot. Part of the turning triangle seems to have been tarmaced for a car park! The computer image is fascinating but does not of course show any overhead catenary installations! (Provided by courtesy of Mr. Matan Berkovich from the IR spokesman office; credit for the image: Peleg Architects Ltd.)