

HaRakevet

הרכבת

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138.01.

The new face of rail travel in Saudi Arabia. (From 'Railway Gazette).

Where has the time gone to? This Editorial is being written just a few days after the sad passing of Queen Elizabeth II who has been the Editor's monarch for his entire life – i.e. a direct link back to the 1950's if not indeed before, to a time of steam-hauled Royal Trains. And how the world has changed in that time! Or in some respects – see Ukraine – not as much as one might have hoped. One consequence is changes in the East-West overland rail and traffic routes. There is a lot of news this time from other Middle East countries to report, largely from published sources but it indicates just how much is being invested in Egypt, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, etc.; From Israel, there is mainly routine progress and maintenance and electrification, we have a lot on issues with the Light Rail in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, some historical glimpses and in general quite a mixture.

Due to some technical issues a report on the successful Raitour in March with illustrations is held over, alas. Enjoy!

The Editor

(i). ALLERGIES

Following an incident on 08.06.22 in which the life of a five-year-old boy was saved after suffering a severe allergic attack, Israel Railways wants to inform the travelling public that in each of the 600 trains operated daily and in each of the 69 train stations, there is an epinephrine syringe as well as other life-saving medical equipment, which are in the medical kits available within minutes of identifying a medical emergency, as in the case of a life-threatening allergy attack, This is in addition to defibrillators that are installed at all stations and train complexes.

On that evening around 20:00 during a routine stop at Tel Aviv HaHaganah Inspector Gal Alon identified an incident in a nearby carriage; when he arrived at the scene he identified a child as unconscious and not breathing, following a severe allergy attack.

Inspector Gal Alon immediately updated all train crews in the area, who called the MDA, and also used the communication systems on the train and the station to call for medical personnel. At the same time he brought to the

- *138: 03 The Editor came across this in an archeological magazine and could not help thinking that (from this angle) it looks just like one of those made-up primitive "choo choo train" images used on signs, cakes, toys etc So here as a little self-indulgent whimsy - At the ancient ruins of Tel Taf. An Erich Von Daniken-style picture of an ancient steam locomotive from Outer Space....?*



scene the medical kit which contains an epinephrine syringe, respiratory aids and transfusions, which were given to the child by a medically-trained man who happened to be on the train at the time.

After a few minutes of life-saving medical treatment and the administration of medications and transfusions from the train medicine kit, the child was evacuated and was in a stable position.

"I am happy and grateful for the privilege I and everyone who helped had to save the child's life" notes the railway inspector Gal Alon and adds: "I take this opportunity to stress to all passengers the presence of life-saving medical equipment on trains and stations, and in any emergency, medical or otherwise, train crews are available for them."



• *Blue medical box)*

News from the line

(ii). ADJUSTING PLATFORM HEIGHTS.

Due to spot works to take place to adjust the height of tracks at Herzliya station to reduce the gap between trains and platforms and to make boarding and alighting safer, there will be temporary changes to traffic through the station between Thursday 07.07.2022 at about 22:30 and Saturday night 09.07.2022 the whole evening. Trains on the Herzliya - Jerusalem Navon line will operate between Tel-Aviv Savidor and Jerusalem Navon only and will not call at Tel-Aviv University and Herzliya stations. Traffic will resume on Sunday 10.07.2022 at about 05:00.

(iii). NATIONAL DAY OF THE BLIND

From a press release of 09.06.2022 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"For the Day of the Blind, which is today, 09.06.2022, the railways have published the number of passengers with limited capabilities who used rail services; the figures which cover the period between June 2021 and May 2022, show that 46,728 such passengers used rail services, of whom 17,325 were people who were blind or had severely reduced vision.

Services for such passengers must be pre-coordinated and include escort from arrival at a station till arrival at destination.

Most railway stations have been upgraded to be fully accessible to this class of passengers. The railways have also launched recently a pilot scheme in which advanced technological devices have been installed at selected stations, which guide the blind people by voice announcements up to the train. 70 stations are already fully accessible and on each of the trains operated daily, one car is fully accessible.

The following link <https://vimeo.com/716764722> shows a blind person being assisted by the advanced technological devices."

(iv). FIGHT AGAINST GENDER DISCRIMINATION

From 'Times of Israel' 14.06.22: "Israel Railways is to pay compensation to a woman who filed a gender discrimination lawsuit after she was asked by a rail worker to move from her seat because some men were holding a prayer service in her car. The state-owned rail company agreed Sunday to the Jerusalem District Court's suggestion that it pay Maya Melitz 16,000 NIS (\$4,700) and also stop asking people to relocate so others can pray.

"What a joy to see justice," Melitz wrote on Facebook. Anat Hoffman, executive director of the Israel Religious Action Center, which helped file the lawsuit, called the outcome "an important ruling, and an additional step toward gender equality in the public domain." "Women are not a disruption, and we should be free to sit wherever we choose – on buses, airplanes, and trains," Hoffman said in a Monday statement from the IRAC.

As part of the agreement, all Israel Railways employees or service providers are to be given clear instructions that they are forbidden from asking anyone to change seats, even for the sake of prayers.

"This means that no railway carriage can be commandeered and turned into a synagogue thereby barring other passengers, especially women, from sitting in that car," the statement said.

The IRAC together with the Israel Women's Network filed the lawsuit on behalf of Melitz after the 2018 incident when a rail worker demanded that she move seats. The lawsuit had demanded NIS 66,969 (\$19,584) as a violation of the Prohibition Against Discrimination Act."

(v). EASTERN LINE WORKS

From a press release of 14.06.2022 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Both the Transport Ministry and Israel Railways Ltd. are promoting the revival of the Eastern Line between Lod and Hadera (practically between Kfar-Sava and Hadera East), which will be another rail axis between Northern, Central and Southern Israel and will reduce road congestion. As part of the project, the railways will perform complex engineering works in the Hadera area, including preparations to link the Eastern Line with the coast line and laying new turnouts.

The works were planned ahead to be carried out in summer when fewer people travel to work and will take place between Sunday 24.07.2022 and Saturday night 30.07.2022 inclusive. On these dates there will be no traffic between Netanya and Binyamina, namely: no direct trains between northern, central and southern Israel. The Transport Ministry will strengthen regular bus services and the railways will provide alternative bus services. Traffic will resume on Sunday, 31.07.2022 at about 05:00."



- *Computer images of Shoham Aviation station under construction east of Ben-Gurion Airport, provided by courtesy of Mr. Matan Berkovich from the Railways' spokesman office. More details in the attached link: <https://www.rail.co.il/development/pages/magazine-articles-2022/eastern-railroad-project.aspx> An image video: <https://youtu.be/Z-K3p9JWndc>*
- *(Note: These links are to a Hebrew version only.)*

THE REVISED REMEZ JUNCTION : At the end of July / early August the railways performed intensive works to link the Eastern Line with the coast line by creating the realigned Remez Junction flyover between Binyamina and Hadera East just south of Pardes Hanna-Caesarea station; Here are pictures of the works, provided by courtesy of Mr. Matan Berkovich-Israel Railways Ltd. Spokesman.





(Aharon wrote later: "Further to my recent report regarding the closure of the Tel-Aviv - Haifa main line between Tel-Aviv and Binyamina due to works on the new turnouts between the Eastern Line and the main line at Remez Junction: Despite early announcement about the closure, there were many irritated public reactions claiming that travel by alternative bus services caused many passengers on the later evening journeys to arrive at home at about 02:00!")

(vi). MORE ELECTRIFICATION PROGRESS

"Temporary changes in train traffic in the Tel Aviv area and the Sharon due to the acceleration of the electrification works on the section of track between Herzliya and Netanya stations: IR continues to accelerate the electrification project that enables significant improvement in the railway service through the integration of advanced and green electric trains for the environment.

In preparation for the operation of another electric line, between Netanya stations, Tel-Aviv, Lod and Rehovot, which is expected to open soon, IR will carry out work to connect the section of track between Netanya and Herzliya stations to the railway electricity supply network.

Due to the works, which require temporary disconnection of electricity to extensive sections in the Sharon area, Herzliya and Tel Aviv, changes in train traffic will apply from Thurs. 23.6.22 at 21:00 until Saturday evening 25.6.22 during all operating hours (inclusive); Also from Thursday 30.6.22 at 21:00 until Saturday evening 2.7.22 during all hours of operation (inclusive). Train traffic will return to normal every Sunday with the resumption of service.

Below is a list of the changes:

- Herzliya station will be temporarily closed for service on these days and hours.
- Trains on the Jerusalem line Yitzhak Navon - Herzliya - will begin and end their journey at the station TA Savidor Center and will not stop at stations University and Herzliya.
- Trains on the Beer Sheva - Herzliya line - will begin and end their journey at station T.A. Savidor Center and will not stop at the stations University and Herzliya.
- Trains on the electrified Ashkelon - Rashel line (Moshe Dayan - TA - Herzliya) - will be operated these days using diesel trains, and these will begin and end their journey at Raanana West station and will not stop at Herzliya station. ["Rashel" is the acronym from the first letters of the name 'Rishon-leZion]

Also depending on the route of travel and the desired departure and destination stations, it may be necessary for passengers on this line to change trains at T A Savidor Center.

- The following trains will not be operated*:

Train number 133 which departs every Thursday from Nahariya station at 20:49 and ends its journey at Modi'in station at 23:06, and train number 135 which departs every Thur. from Nahariya station at 21:49 and ends its journey at Netav station" C at 23:45.

For train passengers during these days and hours, it is recommended they follow updates with full details on the IR website."

(vii). GALILEE PLANS

Steve Sattler wrote on 27.06: "The new train line from Carmiel city to Kiryat Shmoneh in the NE Galil will cost 12 Billion Shekels. 54 kms of a standard railway double track with 20 kms of tunnels - TBMs and double concrete walls against earthquakes. All tunnels to be double-track with massive air-circulation fans. Some tunnels will have built-in missile-protection shelters.

The National Planning Board, after 20 years of discussion, has finally decided to extend the IR railways to the East and North of the Galil. The project will take ten years and this will include the future plans for the Tiveria station. The junction of Roads 65 / 85 just North of Kadariim will have an underground rail complex with local stations and the tunnel deep under this junction to allow for a future North-South line running up the country.

B: Criticism: The Kiryat Shmoneh train terminal will be outside of the city in the fields of a kibbutz some 2.7 kms from the city centre and South-East of the city. All town planners [everywhere] today insist that the main train station be in the city centre. Across Europe [with very few exceptions] the main train station is in the city centre; thus the passenger has a minimum of travel, expense and difficulty getting to the station. The original plan was to run the double tracks up the main road of Kiryat Shmoneh but underground. The security situation [rockets falling] and water seepage from West to East was the main reason to avoid this original plan. The next good alternative was to put the station just immediately West of the football stadium in the city centre.

It is still unclear why they chose this 'outside the city' site for the main station."

(viii). LEVEL CROSSING VIDEO

From a press release of 26.06.2022 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"For the U.I.C. Level Crossings International Safety Month Israel Railways Ltd. produced a video clip for drivers of trucks and heavy road vehicles, performed by Lior Farchi (a singer) and the Arabic-speaking rapper Zoo/Lod, in order to clarify for the drivers the importance of being careful and using full attention when approaching any of the 60 still active and protected level crossings equipped with advanced safety devices and monitors.

As electrification is in progress, the danger of an object touching the 25 kV current also needs more attention from the road vehicle drivers.

Many of the drivers speak Arabic, the clip is in both languages.

The link for watching the clip:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/AqyN3nokhBHMce4F7>

(ix). WHITE NIGHT SPECIALS IN TEL AVIV

From a press release of 27.06.2022 by Israel Railways Ltd. on their website:

"On Thursday 30.06.2022 the White Night events will take place at Tel-Aviv; Fifteen special additional trains will operate from/to Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central station only. However, due to electrification works north of Herzliya as already reported, the last train from Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central northwards will depart at 22:00. Here are the additional trains:

*Three special trains will depart from Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central at 00:55, 01:55 and 02:55 and will call at Tel-Aviv HaShalom, Tel-Aviv HaHagana, Ben-Gurion Airport and terminating at Jerusalem Navon.

*A special train will depart from Modi'in Central at 00:05 and will call at: Modi'in Outskirts, Ben-Gurion Airport, Tel-Aviv HaHagana, Tel-Aviv HaShalom and terminating at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central.

*Two special trains will depart from Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central at 01:20 and 02:20 and will call at: Tel-Aviv HaShalom, Tel-Aviv HaHagana, Ben-Gurion Airport, Modi'in Outskirts and terminating at Modi'in Central.

*Two special trains will depart from Ra'anana West at 01:25 and 02:25 and will call at: Ra'anana South, Hod-HaSharon/Sokolov, Kfar-Sava Nordau, Rosh-HaAyin North, Petach-Tikva stations, B'nei-Brak, Tel-Aviv University and terminating at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central.

*Two special trains will depart from Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central at 02:30 and 03:30 and will call at: Tel-Aviv University, B'nei-Brak, Petach-Tikva stations, Rosh-HaAyin North, Kfar-Sava Nordau, Hod-HaSharon/Sokolov, Ra'anana South and terminating at Ra'anana West.

*Two special trains will depart from Be'er-Sheva Central at 22:55 and 23:55 and will call at: Be'er-Sheva North/University, Ofakim, Netivot, Sderot, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Yavne West, Rishon- LeZion Moshe Dayan, Bat-Yam, Holon, Tel-Aviv HaHagana, Tel-Aviv HaShalom and terminating at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central.

*Two special trains will depart from Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central at 02:00 and 03:00 and will call at: Tel-Aviv HaShalom, Tel-Aviv HaHagana, Holon, Bat-Yam, Rishon-LeZion-Moshe Dayan, Yavne West, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Sderot, Netivot, Ofakim, Be'er-Sheva North/ University and terminating at Be'er-Sheva Central."

(x). PETACH TIKVAH TRAIN / TRAM INTERCHANGE CONSTRUCTION.

From a press release of 05.07.2022 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"The Transport Ministry and NTA are promoting the works on the Tel-Aviv LRV Red Line; as an integral part of these works and per the Ministry's instructions, NTA will perform a large-scale operation in which the Israel Railways station Petach-Tikva Kiryat-Arie will be linked to the adjacent LRV station carrying the same name (Kiryat-Arie).

Due to the works, Platform 2 at Kiryat-Arie station will be temporarily closed and there will be the following temporary changes to train traffic at the station between Friday 15.07.2022 and 01.08.2022 inclusive:

*Trains arriving from Tel-Aviv University and destined Herzliya will not call at the station.

*Trains arriving from Herzliya and destined Tel-Aviv, Rishon-LeZion Moshe Dayan and Ashkelon will call at the station as per regular timetable.

*Train traffic through Petach-Tikva Sgula station will run as per regular timetable and passengers are recommended to use this station.

*The railways will provide free-of-charge bus shuttle services between the two stations during operational times.

Traffic will resume on Tuesday 02.08.2022."

(xi). JERUSALEM LINE STATISTICS, TIMETABLE IMPROVEMENTS AND POSSIBLE EXTENSION.

From a press release of 07.07.2022 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"Less than four years after the opening of the A1 line and Jerusalem Navon Railway station in September 2018, the railways state that 10 million passengers have used the line and station until now.

The Railways authorities have decided to introduce earlier services; the first train between Herzliya and Jerusalem will depart from Herzliya at 05:24 instead of 05:54; the first train from Jerusalem to Herzliya will depart from Jerusalem at 06:09 instead of 06:39.

The Navon station is used by an average of 15,000 to 20,000 passengers/day using the two lines reaching it, the line to/from Herzliya with service frequency of 2 trains/hour each direction and the line to/from Modi'in opened recently with service frequency of 1 trains/hour each direction; IR are now actively upgrading Navon station and its services and within a few months a service of 2 trains/hour each direction will be introduced to/from Modi'in as well.

The upgrading works have now started and include a new eastern entrance which will serve passengers arriving from east of the station where huge parking facilities (many underground) are being built as part of the project "Entrance to the City"; the new entrance will save the time wasted when using the station's southern entrance.

An interesting project is planned for the coming decade: to upgrade and extend the A1 line in an underground alignment up to the so-called Khan area which is actually the historical Jerusalem railway station opened on 26.09.1892 and which was in service until 1998; For some years it has been an entertainment area with the old buildings preserved. The underground line will have two stations; the first at Benin site near the Davidka Square and the city's famous Mahane Yehuda Market; the other one at the Khan area.

Within a few years the A1 and Jerusalem Navon Railway station will be linked to the 'No. 43 I' railway line providing a rail link to Ramla, Rishon-LeZion, Tel-Aviv and the south of Israel; the 43 I railway line will also link Modi'in with Ramla, Rishon-LeZion, Tel-Aviv and the south of Israel."

[Ed. adds: A short while ago there was talk of an extension to the Old City and a station named after President Trump. This seems to have been quietly dropped.]

(xii). TRACK WORKS AT NITZANIM

From a press release of 11.07.2022 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"As part of the annual programme of track maintenance and improving safety, track upgrading works are to be performed at Nitzanim area (north of Ashkelon) and as a result on Friday 15.07.2022 and on Saturday night 16.07.2022, the following traffic changes will take place in the southern rail area:

*Trains between Be'er-Sheva and Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central will operate between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Ashdod and will not call at Be'er-Sheva.

*Trains between Ashkelon and Ra'anana West will operate between Ra'anana West and Yavne West only and will not call at Ashdod and Ashkelon.

*Trains on the Western Negev line between Ashkelon, Sderot, Netivot, Ofakim and Be'er-Sheva will operate as regular.

*The railways will provide bus shuttle services free of charge between Yavne West, Ashdod and Ashkelon in both directions.

Traffic will return to regular on Sunday 17.07.2022 at about 05:00."

(xiii). THE PRESIDENTIAL VISIT.

Not the Messiah but the POTUS (President of the United States) John Biden was due to visit Israel between Wednesday 13.07.2022 and Friday 15.07.2022; as a result the temporary closure of Highway 1 between Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem and many roads in Jerusalem was announced. The Transport Ministry published an announcement advising use of trains on the A1 line as well as the Jerusalem LRV which would operate regularly.

(xiv) MACCABIAH OPENING EVENT

Due to the ceremony of opening of the Maccabiah (sport event) at Teddy Stadium in Jerusalem on Thursday 14.07.2022, the railways would operate special trains between Modi'in and Jerusalem; passengers arriving at Modi'in Outskirts station would change there for trains to Jerusalem; between Jerusalem Navon and Teddy stadium special bus services would be provided in both directions.

(It should be mentioned that the railways could theoretically operate trains on the old line to Jerusalem Malkha station which is near the stadium and, although the journey is longer - about 80 minutes compared with 45 minutes on the A1 - the total time which involved changing trains and the bus services is not shorter!)

(xv). POWER CUT

Due to an electric failure on the electric network on Monday, 25.07.2022 at about 05:00 on the Tel-Aviv HaHagana - Lod section, traffic between Herzliya and Jerusalem Navon A1 suffered from disruptions for about 5 hours.

(xvi). CARRIAGE WASHING MACHINES:

Subject: Israel Railways Ltd. new train washing "tunnel" to be watched at link: <https://youtu.be/HbgIYnIzImk>.

The new IR tunnel for washing train sets. (Provided by courtesy of Mr. Matan Berkovich from Israel Railways Ltd.)

Jeremy adds: "Finally, maybe one can see some scenery through the windows!"

(xvii). FREE TRAVEL FOR SENIORS?

From 01.08.2022 the new reform in public transport tariffs will start offering amongst other things free travel for retired persons of the age of 70+; We'll watch for developments.

(xviii). TRACKWORKS

From a press release of 03.08.2022 by Matan Berkovich - Israel Railways Ltd. spokesman's office: "As part of the annual maintenance programme, infrastructure works of upgrading and track maintenance and replacing components are to take place in the area of Haifa Hof-HaMifratz railway station. As a result, on Friday 12.08.2022 only, trains between Carmiel and Haifa Hof-HaCarmel and between Nahariya and Haifa Hof-HaCarmel will not operate; the following stations will be closed: Nahariya, Akko (Acre), Kiryat-Motzkin, Kiryat-Hayim, Haifa Hof-HaMifratz, Ahihud and Carmiel.

The railways will operate alternative shuttle buses services free of charge as follows: between Carmiel, Ahihud, Kiryat-Motzkin and Merkazit Ha-Mifratz, as well as between: Nahariya and Akko (Acre), Kiryat-Motzkin, Kiryat-Hayim and Merkazit HaMifratz.

Services will resume on Saturday night, 13.08.2022 at about 20:30."

(xix). ELECTRIFICATION OF THE REHOVOT LINE

From a press release of 04.08.2022 by Matan Berkovitch - IR spokesman:

"The railways continue accelerating the electrification project and are currently in the last stage towards operating an additional electrified line later this year, the suburban line running between Netanya, Tel-Aviv and Rehovot.

Electrification of this line will provide much shorter journeys, increased frequencies and will reduce noise and air pollution.

As an integral part of the preparation for starting to operate the electrified line, and due to infrastructure works at Rehovot area, works originally planned for September 2022 will instead take place between Sunday 14.08.2022 and Thursday 18.08.2022 inclusive.

The changes will be as follows:

*There will be no services between Rehovot and Ashdod.

*Services between Rehovot and northwards (Tel-Aviv and other destinations) will be provided at a frequency of 1 train/hour rather than 2 trains/hour.

*Yavne East station will be closed.

*The railways will provide bus shuttle services between Ashdod, Yavne East and Rehovot free of charge.

*Passengers from Ofakim, Netivot and Sderot whose destination is north of Ashdod will have to change trains either at Ashkelon or Ashdod stations.

Traffic will resume on Sunday, 21.08.2022 at about 05:00."

(xx). HASHALOM PLATFORM REBUILDING

Israel Railways Ltd. announced on 21.08.2022 that due to works raising tracks at some points of platforms at Tel-Aviv Hashalom railway station in order to overcome the gap problem, the station will be closed on Friday 26.08.2022 and on Saturday night 27.08.2022. The station will be reopened on Sunday, 28.08.2022 at start of service at about 05:00.

(xxi). 2022 FIRST HALF RESULTS

From a press release of 18.08.2022 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"On Wednesday 18.08.2022 the railways published their results for the first half of 2022.

The EBITDA was \$14.7M (NIS 48M) compared with the EBITDA for the first half of 2021 which was \$8.62M (NIS 28.1M); up by 70%.

Total Income was \$437M (NIS 1.425 Bn) compared with \$386M (NIS 1.258 Bn) in the first half of 2021; up by 13%.

Total Profit was \$1.043M (NIS 3.4M) compared with \$1.38M (NIS 4.5 M); down by almost 25%.

Passenger Sector:

Daily average number of Passengers was 189,000 compared with 111,000; up by 70%.

The number of passengers carried in the first half of 2022 was 23.98M compared with 13.1 M over the same period of 2021; up by 83%.

Income from passenger services was \$384M (NIS 1.252 Bn) compared with \$336M (NIS 1.095 Bn) over the same period of 2021; up by 14.3%.

The average Punctuality was 96.88 compared with 97.18 over the same period of 2021; about 1% lower.

Freight Sector:

The railways carried during the first half of 2022 3.43M tons compared with 3.7M tons over the same period of 2021; down by almost 8%.

The loss of freight sector was \$11.96M (NIS \$39M) compared with \$12.27M (NIS 40M) over the same period of 2021; down by 2.5 %.

The reason for the losses is mainly due to line closures in favour of track and electrification works; the Eastern Line now in massive renovation status will contribute to freight haulage as it will enable freight trains to bypass the Greater Tel-Aviv area.

Link: <https://maya.tase.co.il/reports/details/1471615>

(xxii). SALE OF ALSTOM PUSH-PULL CARRIAGES

See 'Tenders' for fuller details. These slab-sided carriages are being withdrawn in favour of further Bombardier double-deck vehicles and it is hoped to sell the carriages, which are in good condition, rather than scrap them.

(xxiii). TRACKWORKS NEAR RISHON-LEZION

From a press release of 29.08.2022 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

Due to engineering works being performed by Ayalon Highways company (who operates Ayalon highway 20 median of which the line to Rishon-LeZion runs) near rail tracks at Rishon-LeZion, train traffic at Rishon-LeZion Moshe Dayan railway station will temporary cease between Wednesday 31.08.2022 at about 23:00 until the end of activity on that day.

Train services between Ashkelon, Tel-Aviv and Herzliya will be split; services will operate between Herzliya and Tel-Aviv HaHagana to/from the north, and between Ashkelon and Yavne West to/from the south; the stations of Rishon-LeZion Moshe Dayan, Bat-Yam and Holon will be closed on the mentioned date; traffic will resume on Thursday, 01.09.2022 at about 05:00.

Link: <https://www.rail.co.il/pages/updates/closure-moshe-dayan-310822.aspx>

(xxiv). TRACKWORKS AT BEN GURION AIRPORT

From a press release of 01.09.2022 by Israel Railways Ltd.:

"As an integral part of the railways' annual infrastructures' maintenance programme, work on replacing track components at Ben-Gurion Airport station will take place on Friday 16.09.2022 and on Saturday night 17.09.2022.

As a result, trains will not operate on these dates between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Jerusalem Navon, and between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Modi'in Central stations; the railways will operate alternative bus services free of charge between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Ben-Gurion airport stations in both directions, as well as between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Modi'in

Central stations in both directions. Traffic will resume on Sunday, 18.03.2022 at about 05:00."

(xxv), NIGHT TRAINS TO THE AIRPORT

Contradicting the above! - "From 17. September night trains between Jerusalem, Ben-Gurion and Tel Aviv are to be introduced – between Saturday evening and Wednesday evening an hourly service in each direction. The service from the airport to Jerusalem will not run Thursday nights due to maintenance and Friday nights due to Shabbat, but on Thursdays it will run through the night to Tel Aviv. This will be of help to those whose flights arrive or depart during the night or the early morning hours."

ELECTRIFICATION PROGRESS! NEW TIMETABLE!!

Late news as we went to press: "

From a public announcement of 05.09.2022 by the Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry and Israel Railways Ltd.: The Ministry and the railways have brought the electrification project one stage forward: The railways have completed electrification of 500 km, which are half of the total electrification project; the additional electrified line is the suburban section between Netanya, Tel-Aviv, Lod and Rehovot which will significantly improve the services in central Israel as well as on other parts of the network; the changes are as following:

On Saturday night 17.09.2022 a new timetable will be introduced in which thisline will start operating electrically; the line will serve the stations of: Netanya, Beit-Yehoshua, Herzliya, Tel-Aviv, Lod, Be'er Ya'akov and Rehovot; upon completion of electrification at these stations, the night train services (until midnight), as well as on Fridays and Saturday nights will resume.

Additional changes from Saturday night, 17.09.2022:

*Night trains will operate between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central, Ben-Gurion Airport and Jerusalem Navon stations, between Saturday nights and Wednesdays at a service frequency of 1 train/hour in each direction; on Thursdays, night trains will operate between Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central and Ben-Gurion Airport stations only, due to the need to perform essential maintenance works in the AI tunnels, which cannot be done while trains run.

*Service frequency between Modi'in Central and Jerusalem Navon stations will be raised from 1 train/hour each direction at rush hours to 2/hour.

* Operational times at the stations of: Ramla, Mazkeret Batya, Kiryat-Malachi/Yo'av, Kiryat-Gat and Lehavim/Rahat (on the main line to/from Be'er-Sheva) on week days (Sunday to Thursday) will be extended until approximately midnight; on Fridays, services will operate until 14:00 as well as on Saturday nights.

The stations of Be'er-Sheva will be closed on each Saturday night due to the start of electrification works in the area; the railways will provide alternative shuttle bus services between Be'er-Sheva and Lehavim/Rahat stations.

*Activity times at Beit-Shemesh station will be extended until approximately midnight; trains will also operate on Fridays and Saturday nights.

*From 27.09.2022 services on the Rishon-LeZion Harishonim - Lod line will resume.

*Upon the beginning of electrification works of the line between Ashkelon, Sderot, Netivot, Ofakim and Be'er-Sheva (the Western Negev line), the service frequency at these stations will be reduced to 1 train/hour in both directions during the whole activity times and days; the end of service at these stations between Sunday and Thursday will be at about 21:30; the stations will be closed each Friday and Saturday night until completion of electrification; the railways will provide alternative bus services as well as strengthening of public transport.

*At Dimona station the number of trains working on Fridays will be increased from 4 to 6; on Saturday nights the station will be closed due to electrification works being performed at Be'er-Sheva North/University station."

138:05

TENDERS

. A.

(i). Tender No. 220401: Running a 48 sq.m. Ice Cream Shop at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central railway station: The contract comprises:

An adjustment period of up to 4 months.

An authorisation period of 60 months.

An additional authorisation period of up to 24 months.

Latest date for submission of proposals: 23.06.2022.

(ii). Tender No. 12062: Providing services by a Dedicated Device Service combined with CRM and additional Technological Systems: The contract is for 60 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 05.07.2022.

(iii). Tender No. 32203: Supply of Tubular Batteries for the Signalling System and Level Crossing devices: The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 07.07.2022.

(iv) Tender No. 32202: Supply of Electrical Ascending Turret Forklifts for a new store at Haifa Kishon Works: The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 24 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 07.07.2022.

(v). Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 220701: Permission to operate Automatic Sale Machines for Cellular Accessories at railway stations: The contract is for 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 21.07.2022.

(vi). Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 5214: Creating an Inventory Management System and Service Calls and Information Systems Centre: The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 60 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 08.08.2022.

(vii). Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 220601A: Running a 50 sq.m. Sales Point for freshly-squeezed Natural Fruit Juices only at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central railway station:

The contract consists of the following:

*An adjustment period of 4 months.

*An authorisation period of 60 months.

*An additional authorisation period of 24 months.

Latest date for submission of proposals: 08.08.2022

(viii). Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 121103: Developing, Manufacturing, Supply, and providing Maintenance Services for a Test Bench for 60 & 7.5 KVA Converters and sinus filters on coupling of D/D cars: The contract is for 72 months with optional extension of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals 02.10.2022.

(ix). Israel Railways Ltd. Tender No. 22149: Haifa Kishon works site package No. 6 (Gate, Offices and Control Buildings, Wheelsets Storage, Roads, Systems and developments: Implementation time: 25 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 15.09.2022.

(x). R.F.I. – Sale of Push-Pull sets. Israel Railways Ltd. ("ISR") is requesting information regarding the sale of Push-Pull carriage sets ("the sets").

Guidelines

1. This RFI shall not be considered as a Tender.

2. ISR is free to take whatever action it may consider upon receiving addresses from prospects following this RFI and will not be obliged to negotiate and/or sell and/or publish a tender regarding the sets.

3. ISR may use any information received following this RFI in any way it might find useful.

4. ISR may address one or more prospects that will submit information regarding the sets following this RFI.

5. This RFI shall not be considered as a declaration of any kind as to the technical situation of the sets.

Details about the sets:

1. Manufacture – 1995-1996
2. Service entry – 1996-1997
3. Num. of power cars – 5 units
4. Num. of passenger carriages – 10 units
5. Num. of cars accessible for the Disabled – 8 units
6. Num. of end cars (for attaching a locomotive) – 12 units

7. Total number of carriage: 35 units.

8. Carriage formation on ISR: 5 – 9 carriages per set.

Anyone interested should contact Aiad Shafir of the Commerce Unit at IR, on aviads@rail.co.il by 15. September.

(xi). Tender No. 220802: Operating a 59 sq.m. Convenience Store at Ashkelon railway station:

The contract is as follows:

An adjustment period of up to 4 months.

An authorization period of 60 months.

An additional authorization period of 60 months.

Latest date for submission of proposals: 15.09.2022.

(xii). Tender No. 210903: Operating a kosher Meat Fast Food Bar/Restaurant on an area of 202 sq.m. at Tel-Aviv Savidor/Central railway station:

The contract is as follows:

An adjustment period of up to 4 months.

An authorization period of 60 months.

An additional authorization period of 60 months.

Latest date for submission of proposals: 28.09.2022.

(xiii). Tender No. 12063: Providing Stewardesses services for the railways:

The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 19.09.2022.

(xiv). Tender No. 122150: Operating services for Catering, a mechanized Kitchen, and Food Equipment at the railways' Beer-Sheva North Depot: The contract is for 12 months with optional extensions of up to additional 48 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 03.10.2022.

(xv). Tender No. 22143: Supply, Installation and Maintenance of technological devices at Level Crossings and Roads under the railways' responsibility: The intention is to select two bidders; one for the northern region; one for the southern region. The contract is for 24 months with optional extensions of up to additional 36 months. Latest date for submission of proposals: 03.10.2022.

B. TENDERS AWARDED:

(i). Tender No. 32203: Annual frame agreement for supply of Stationary Batteries. Winner: Israeli Industrial Batteries Ltd. at €220,140.00/year.

(ii). Tender No. 32202: Supply of Tower Forklifts. Winner: Eagle Forklifts & Logistics Ltd. at \$232,416.00 (NIS 760,000.00) including 7 years guarantee and maintenance.

(iii). Tender No. 1725: Providing Lobbying Services and Consulting regarding Strategic Thinking and planning at work with government offices. Winner: Gilad Lobbying Company Ltd.; Impact Lobbying Ltd. has been put as a reserve waiting bidder.

138:06



Light Rail

A. TEL AVIV.

(i) LEGAL CHAOS

Due to the government's resignation and the coming elections (due either at the end of October or the beginning of November), the \$43.6 Billion (NIS 150 Bn) project METRO Law is now stuck with several government offices accusing each other for not passing the law.

(ii). NTA Tender No. 357/2022:

Providing Brokering Services to Purchase a Property and consequential Damage Insurance for the Red Line and its systems:

The processes are planned by NTA in three stages:

Stage A - Public tender to select the insurance broker: the current procedure.

Stage B - Closing the sub-insurance plan according to the insurance specification as against reinsurers to be assisted by the selected broker.

Stage C - Creating a public tender to an Israeli insurance company which will be fronting and will sign on the policy as against NTA.

Latest date for submission of proposals: 20.07.2022.

(iii). FILM.

The latest animation by courtesy and permission of the Tel-Aviv municipality spokesman office from 20.07.2022 of the future Metro reality in TEL-Aviv as the people meet the new rails and use them, can be watched through the link:

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=IzWg2CrVUjM&feature=share>

(iv). TRAM ONE, CAR NIL

On 02.08.2022 at about 23:30 one of the Red Line LRV trains was on a test run in the city of Bat-Yam; at the corner of Balfour and Rothschild Streets a private car driver crossed the rails and collided with the train (for the first and hopefully for the last time). The tram was lightly damaged; the car driver had light injuries and was treated by teams of United-Hatzala of Israel (a rescue organization of volunteers) who took the attached pictures and gave them by courtesy and permission by their manager.



(iv). WE ALL HAVE OUR CROSSRAIL TO BEAR

From 'Jewish News' 24.08.22: "Engineers from the Crossrail project in London are to advise Israeli officials on the new Tel Aviv metro.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps flew to Israel on Wednesday, where he will meet officials in Tel Aviv and also sign a "memorandum of understanding" with the transport ministry. Shapps will say: "Today's partnership ingrains our commitment for a global Britain, helping our world-leading rail industry to extend its expertise to friends overseas while unlocking fresh business opportunities to boost the UK economy." He will also say it is "a fantastic opportunity for our British engineers and advisers to share their ingenuity with Israel as they undertake their largest ever rail project."

Matthew Salter, the UK's trade attaché to Israel told The Times: "It is very gratifying to see a British company win such a significant advisory role in Israel.

"We are confident Crossrail International will help in many aspects of the complex metro project across all the various challenges it will face... making a significant difference to improving the lives of Israeli citizens."

It will be confirmed that engineers from Crossrail International, will provide consulting services for a new £33 billion, three-line underground with 90 miles of tracks and 109 stations.

The Department of Transport said the company, which they own, will provide advice on design and environmentalism. Crossrail was responsible for the new Elizabeth Line in London, which opened in May, after a three year long delay and a massive budget increase. The government is hopeful that the Tel Aviv project will boost the UK's image as an engineering force."

(v). RED LINE OPENING DELAYED

From 'I.R.J.' 07.09.2022: "The opening of Tel Aviv's first light-rail line could be delayed by months as issues with the 25km at-grade and underground Red Line's signalling system and stations mount, IRJ has learned. The Red Line runs north from Bat Yam/Holon and then travels through central Tel Aviv before continuing east to Petach Tikva and Givat Shmuel. The line is the first of three planned by the Tel Aviv Metropolitan Mass Transit System (NTA).

Covid-19 related issues caused the original October 2021 opening date to be delayed, but IRJ was informed during a visit to Tel Aviv on March 15 that the project was expected to meet the updated delivery schedule of November.

However, The Times of Israel reports that during a trial run in the middle of August carrying Ministry of Transport director-general Ms Michal Frank and senior ministry staff along with NTA chairperson Ms Maya Liquornik, an LRV suddenly braked while travelling at 80km/h underground due to a signalling fault. This fault is reportedly happening frequently on the line.

Other issues concern staffing. According to IRJ sources, only half of the drivers and staff needed have been recruited and with unemployment in Israel at a historic low of 3.8%, it could be difficult to attract new employees. In addition, construction is running behind schedule with only five underground stations expected to open in November, with most stations still unfinished and experiencing electrical, safety and finish issues. Experts have also raised concerns over the potential for heavy winter rains to cause flooding on the line.

A NTA spokesman told IRJ that the line is still officially due to open on November 30, and the NTA is currently running full-page advertisements in local newspapers to instruct pedestrians and drivers on how to stay safe around the new LRVs.

Contracts for Tel Aviv's Purple and Green lines were awarded in February, with preliminary work now underway. Alstom, bus operator Dan Transportation and Israeli infrastructure company Electra were awarded a contract to design, build, maintain and finance the 39km Green Line, while a consortium of CAF and construction firm Shapir was awarded a €1.015Bn contract to construct and equip the 27km Purple Line, both of which are expected to be fully operational by 2027. Both lines will connect with the Red Line."

(vi). COMMENT FROM STEVE SATTLER

The planned official opening is set for Tuesday 1st. November 2022.

BUT! A set of problems is still active and may force the opening back well into the winter of 2022/ 23. At this time the official opening has been re-set for 'the end of November'. New expert opinion has put the problem of winter-rains and drainage near the top of the list. The sand/stones and clay under Tel Aviv is very permeable to water and water pockets - that explode - and flooding may occur if the winter rains are 'too strong'. The test-run to show the senior staff of the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry Director how the system runs and thus 'show-off' the new toy was a failure - as the test-train, after a short run, automatically locked the brakes as a sensor decided that there was a danger of hitting something. So far 18 Billion Shekels have been spent on the project and it is obvious that more money will be needed.

Yet another problem is that the 340 sub-contractors for the project all have their own timetables, materials and workers who do, or don't play-ball with the main engineering staff. A lot of time [and money] is wasted by one sub-contractor waiting for another one to finish or start his portion of the project.

Then there is the issue of Elections: a serious worry is that some sub-contractors are playing politics - as they don't want the current government to have any 'value' or PR TV time from the project. Since a new [and probably a different] government will be formed after these elections [in Feb 2023] - some contractors have an interest in 'just-waiting' till then. The official municipal review and 'check-up' of the system in March 2022 found many problems and unexplained delays that the engineering staff couldn't or didn't want to explain.

As of October 2022 - the electronic and mechanical system of automatic printing of travel-cards is still being tested and - in fact - may not be ready for use by November '22. Another main issue is the initial decision to have a combined underground and surface metro all in one. Experts 20 years ago recommended to have either an underground or an above-ground tram system in Gush Dan, but that mixing the two would complicate the system and the maintenance. Of course there are systems worldwide where trams run underground in tunnel for sections of their routes without being at the same time classed as 'subway systems'."

(vii). NEWSPAPER WARNINGS

From 03.09.2022: Steve Sattler notes that "This is unusual. The Tel Aviv Metro system will start in November. So, the newspapers are now starting to advertise full-pages of 'SAFETY RULES' for these trams. What to do, or what not to do. These are headed 'Harakevet Kalah Magiah! - The Light Rail is coming!" Israelis are notoriously careless and do a lot of jay-walking; So these adverts, illustrated with cars and bicycles misusing the tram tracks while manoeuvring, will hopefully teach them not to get run-over by a tram in Tel Aviv and the suburbs."



Two more pictures on next page →

B. JERUSALEM

(i). BLUE LINE TENDER

From a press release of 09.08.2022 by the Finance Ministry, Transport & Roads' Safety Ministry, the Jerusalem Municipality and Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan Team:

"Today, Tuesday, 09.08.2022, these bodies have jointly issued an open tender to build the new LRV BLUE LINE of Jerusalem.

So far four consortia have applied:

- Shickun U'Binui + EGGED (buses)
- Alstom + Electra
- CAF + Shapir
- DAN (buses) + COMSA

The Blue Line to cost \$4.28 Billion (NIS 14 Bn), will be 20km long, most of it on streets from Rosemary junction in the south, along Hebron Road, Keren HaYesod and King George the 5th in the city centre, a 2km long underground section further on in the city centre including three underground stations, then on street section through Har Hozvim and terminating at the Ramot neighbourhood in northern Jerusalem.

There will also be a branch from the preserved historical railway station (now an entertainment site) through Refa'im Valley street and Talpiot neighbourhood towards the planned depot at Jerusalem Malcha neighbourhood (adjacent to the railway station of the same name).

Additionally, a branch of the planned Purple Line from Hadassa Ein-Kerem Medical Centre in western Jerusalem through the Kiryat HaYovel neighborhood to Malcha and Talpiot neighbourhoods is to be built.

The line to be built on the PPP system will be among Israel biggest projects ever to be performed by cooperation between the government and the private sector.

The winning concessionaire will operate 66 LRV trains and will be responsible for maintenance and operation of the infrastructures including tracks, depots, rolling stock and systems.

Announcement of the winner is planned for November 2022.

Operation of Phase I of the line is anticipated for 2028 with full operation for 2030.

The Mayor of Jerusalem Mr. Moshe Leon, the Finance Ministry's Accountant General Mr. Yaheli Rutenberg, the Transport and Roads' Safety Ministry's Deputy General Manager Mrs. Michal Frank, and the Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan Team General Manager Mr. Zohar Zoler, each mentioned the importance of the Blue Line which is planned to carry 250,000 passengers/day and has the greatest potential among the Red, Green and Blue lines; when all three have been completed they will together carry 400,000 passengers/day; all mentioned that there is no doubt that the success of the Red Line has contributed to the participation of the mentioned world leaders of LRV operation regarding the tender.

The Jerusalem Transportation Master Plan data can be found on their website:

<https://www.polisnetwork.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/jerusalem-transportation-master-plan.pdf>



• *(Photos courtesy of Steve Sattler.)*

Altogether Jerusalem plans eventually nine coloured lines and the Cable car.

(ii). RED LINE EXTENSIONS

On 04.09.2022 the Mayor of Jerusalem announced that on 15 Feb. 2023 the two extensions of the RED LINE light rail will start working. In the North to NEVE YAAKOV and an extra 40,000 residents and in the South an extra 70,000 residents will have access to this tram, which will terminate at the South with a station under the Hadassah Hospital, Ein Kerem campus. Kiryat HaYovel and Ora will also have stops.



A. TURKEY

(i). ANKARA - SIVAS HIGH SPEED LINE TO OPEN THIS YEAR DESPITE PROBLEMS.

From 'R.G.I.' 04.07.2022: Completion of the Ankara – Sivas high speed line is facing more potential delays because of an error in the excavation of emergency access tunnels.

A member of parliament for the city of Sivas, Ulas Karasu, has asked Transport Minister Adil Karaismailoglu to explain why around 2,000m of service and evacuation tunnels bored as part of works on the T18 tunnel near Yildizeli are being refilled. A parliamentary hearing was told that the bores had been 'incorrectly designed' and Karasu asked whether new tunnels would need to be excavated or whether the T18 tunnel could open for rail services without the access routes.

These problems are the latest to cause potential delay to the 405km high-speed line linking Sivas with the capital. Work on the route began as long ago as 2008, requiring some 291km of new alignment between Yerköy and Sivas. This cuts almost 200km off the distance by rail between the two cities as compared to the existing line. However, the new corridor passes through challenging terrain which has necessitated the construction of seven tunnels and four viaducts.

In a statement to parliament, infrastructure manager TCDD confirmed in mid-June that it had encountered subsidence problems over an 80km section of the route. A lowering of the ground water level in the affected locations had led to the deferral of the railway's most recent scheduled opening date of September 4 last year. This was the seventh time that the completion had been postponed.

However, Karaismailoglu said certification of the 315km section between Baliseyh and Sivas had been completed, and with 99% of civil works now finished, he predicted the line would open by the end of this year. Services are planned to run at up to 250 km/h, cutting the journey time between Ankara and Sivas from 12 h today to 2 h 51 min."

(ii). RENFE HOTEL TRAINS IN TURKEY

From 'R.G.I.' 30.06.2022: "Spanish national operator RENFE is to lease two Talgo locomotive-hauled hotel trains to private tourist train operator Sun Tren for use on a luxury tourist service linking Istanbul with Cappadocia. Sun Tren is a joint venture of Japan's HIS Global travel agency and Turkey's Sun Group. The service will be aimed at high-end Japanese tourists, with the target of reaching 200,000 passengers/year. The initial lease of the Talgo VII sleeping-car trainsets runs for two years, with options for future extensions.

The lease agreement announced on June 28 was brokered by the Turkish government's Investment Office. RENFE will deliver the rolling stock to Barcelona, from where Sun Tren will be responsible for moving the two trainsets to Turkey. Sun Tren is in the process of negotiating a contract for the maintenance of the trains with Talgo.

Each 20-car trainset is expected to make 300 trips per year, totalling approximately 285,000 km. The trains have variable gauge axles and can run at up to 220 km/h. They offer high-class cabins with beds, televisions, toilets and showers.

RENFE says the agreement opens the door to possible future operations in Turkey, a market which it describes as being 'in full expansion with numerous development plans, including the high speed market'."

(iii). BURSA TRAM LINE T2 OPENED.

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 11.07: "Bursa's north-south tramway T2 opened on July 2, with a week of free travel. The 9.4 km line connects the Terminal bus station in the north with Kent Meydan, where there is an interchange with T1. The route has 11 stops. Construction cost TL1Bn, including a short cut-and-cover tunnel at the northern end of the line. Services are operated using Silkworm trams supplied by local company Durmazlar."



Thanks to Marc Stegeman we have an item from 'Op de Rails' 8-2022 which adds more:

"Bursa has 1.3M inhabitants. The line is almost wholly on an own alignment. The low-floor Silkworm trams are also used on the circle line T1 opened in 2013. In addition there is a short tourist tram line T3 on which some former Stadtbahn M-trams from Bochum operate. There are also two Express Trams routes – more a form of overground metro – where in addition to new material of German and Turkish manufacture some 30 'Type T' trams formerly with Rotterdam operator RET are found."

(iv). FREIGHT FLOWS

(a). From 'R.G.I.' 08.08.22: "TransContainer has launched twice-monthly rail, sea and road service from Russia to Mersin in Turkey via the Delo Group's NUTEP terminal at the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk."

(b). And: "ÖBB Rail Cargo Group has launched a TransFER service from Giengen in eastern Baden-Württemberg in Germany to Cerkezköy, 80 km west of Istanbul, with a transit time of seven days and connections to other terminals

in western Europe and Turkey. It has also launched services from Bratislava to Istanbul and to Köseköy via the Marmaray Tunnel."

(v). NEW TURKISH FREIGHT HUB PROJECT.

From 'R.G.I.' 16.08.2022: "The Swiss rail freight, rolling stock and container group InterRail has established a Turkish subsidiary, saying it sees great potential on trade routes linking western Europe, the CIS, Central Asia and China. It also wants to develop Turkey as a hub for transport from North Africa. InterRail Uluslararası Nakliyat ve Lojistik Hizmetler TAS is based in Istanbul and headed by Managing Director Enver Eser, who spent 20 years managing logistics projects at DHL, most recently primarily in the rail sector.

"With its geo-strategically favourable location between Asia and Europe, Turkey is one of the most important international transport hubs" Eser explained when the subsidiary was launched on August 8. It 'not only acts as a bridge between east and west, but also towards the north and south'. InterRail said the coronavirus pandemic and 'recurring problems on the EU – China trade lane' had provided momentum for the development of new routes, noting that many manufacturers were realigning their supply chains and moving closer to their sales markets."

(vi). WORK BEGINS ON ANKARA – IZMIR HIGH-SPEED LINE

From 'I.R.J.' has begun on the 508km Ankara - Afyonkarahisar - Usak - Izmir high-speed line in Turkey following a ground-breaking ceremony in Afyonkarahisar on August 30. After giving a speech in central Afyonkarahisar, Turkish president, Mr Recep Tayyip Erdogan, made a video call to minister of transport and infrastructure, Mr Adil Karaismailoglu, who launched work on the project.

When completed in 2025 the 250km/h line will reduce the journey time from Afyonkarahisar to Ankara to 1h 30min, 3h 30min to Istanbul, and 2 hours to Izmir. The British government announced in March it will guarantee a €2.1Bn loan to finance the line. The financing is led by Credit Suisse and Standard Chartered Bank and will be guaranteed by UK Export Finance (UKEF) through its Buyer Credit Scheme.

Construction of the line is divided into four sections:

Polatli (just south of the junction where the Ankara - Istanbul and Ankara - Konya high-speed lines diverge) - Afyonkarahisar

Afyonkarahisar - Banaz (Usak)

Banaz (Usak) - Salihli (Manisa), and

Salihli (Manisa) - Menemen (Izmir).

Construction of the 151.2km Polatli - Afyonkarahisar section started in 2013 but was suspended in 2018. The ERG joint venture of three sister companies, ERG International, ERG Insaat Ticaret ve Sanayi (ERG Construction) and Sauerwein & Schaefer Bau (SSB), was awarded a contract to finish the incomplete infrastructure works of Section I, which includes superstructure, electrification and signalling."

(vii). ANKARA METRO PLAN

From 'Metro Report Intl.' 07.09.22: "EBRD is considering providing a senior loan of up to €125M to Ankara municipality for the construction of the 7.46km Dikimevi – Nato Yolu underground metro line serving eight stations. The remainder of the €337M project cost would be financed by the parallel lenders and the city's equity contribution."

(viii). GAZIANTEP SUBURBAN: TEST RUNNING STARTS

From 'R.G.I.' 06.09.2022: "Test operations have started on the Gaziray suburban network in the southeastern city of Gaziantep, with Minister of Transport Adil Karaismailoglu attending the inaugural test run on September 1.

The 25.75km corridor is being developed jointly by infrastructure manager TCDD and Gaziantep municipality, within a budget of TL5Bn. Karaismailoglu said it would help to reduce traffic congestion in the city, but did not give an estimated opening date. According to previous announcements, testing had been expected to start in May ahead of a scheduled opening in September to coincide with the new school year.

Gaziray will be the fourth dedicated suburban rail network to be developed by TCDD after Izmir's Izban, Ankara's Baskentray and most recently Istanbul's cross-city Marmaray line, which was finally completed in 2019.

Development of the Gaziray network has involved quadrupling the existing standard-gauge railway corridor to provide two tracks each for inter-city and suburban trains. A 5 km section of the route through the city centre has been rebuilt on an underground alignment. Gaziray will serve 16 stations, of which four are located in the tunnel section.

Construction work has been undertaken under multiple contracts awarded to domestic groups Kolin, Kalyon and BS Uluslararası Mühendislik, while Elsitelel Elektromekanik Insaat was awarded a separate contract covering electrification and signalling.

Rolling stock is being supplied by domestic manufacturer Türasas which early last year signed a €47M contract to deliver eight four-car EMUs with a top speed of 120km/h and capacity for 1,000 passengers each.

Karaismailoglu reported that work was continuing on the reconstruction and electrification of the Mersin – Adana – Osmaniye – Gaziantep main line; this will see the route become a double-track alignment throughout with a maximum speed of 200km/h. Realignment of some sections will reduce the distance between Mersin and Gaziantep from 361km to 312km, while the higher line speeds will see the standard journey time between the two cities fall from 6 h 25 min to 2 h 15 min, the minister added. The route modernisation is due to be completed in 2025."

B. IRAN

(i). TRANSIT FROM CHINA

The national railways of Iran and Kazakhstan have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to increase co-operation and set tariffs designed to significantly increase transit freight from China to Europe through Iran and Turkey rather than via Russia.



(ii). NEW LINE TO BE BUILT TO LINK CHINA AND UZBEKISTAN

From 'I.R.J.' 10.06.22: "The President of Kyrgyzstan, Mr Sadyr Zhaparov, has told local media that he expects construction of the 523km China - Kyrgyzstan - Uzbekistan (CKU) Railway to begin next year.

"We will start in 2023 after the feasibility study is completed this year," he said, speaking at a summit of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council earlier this month. Work on the feasibility study is being conducted by all three countries, which in 1997 first signed a memorandum of understanding on the construction of the new CKU Railway.

The CKU Railway would comprise 213km in China, 260km in Kyrgyzstan and 50km in Uzbekistan. It would be the largest project to be undertaken in Kyrgyzstan since the country gained its independence from the Soviet Union.

The partners expect the new line to provide the shortest route for rail freight between China and Europe, being 900km shorter than the existing route. This would reduce transit times for freight moving between China and Europe by eight days.

Last month, the prime minister of Kyrgyzstan, Mr Akyzbek Japarov, told a cabinet meeting that all three governments were working on an agreement to build the CKU Railway. "We expect that during the summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in September, the leaders of the three countries will sign a document to begin construction of the railway," he said."

(iii). IRAN TO AFGHANISTAN LINE: WORK TO BE RESUMED

From 'I.R.J.' 29.06.232: "Mr. Miad Salehi, the head of Iran Railways (RAI), has met with Mr Bakht-ur-Rehman Sharafat, head of Afghanistan Railways, in Tehran to discuss ways to complete a 225km line between Khaf, Iran, and Herat, in Afghanistan.

Work on the link began in 2007, with the 140km. Khaf – Rozanak section opened in December 2020 along with a free trade and Customs processing zone on the border. Work remains to be completed on an 85km section between Ghurian and Herat, as construction was halted during the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan last year, during which a section of the line near Rozanak was damaged.

Salehi expressed Iran's determination to complete the railway as soon as possible and stressed the need to take steps to determine ways to make the route operational.

"We welcome cooperation with Afghanistan," he says. "If Afghanistan is ready for long-term cooperation and practical agreements with our country, we will also declare our readiness in this regard."

Sharafat called for cooperation with officials of the Iranian Ministry of Roads and Urban Development to help resume construction.

The line is expected to improve trade and communications with Herat, one of the Afghanistan's most prosperous cities, and will provide a trade route to the Middle East as well as further afield to India, Europe and Southeast Asia.

The line is expected to carry about 320,000 passengers and 6.8 million tonnes of freight a year, including the export of oil, construction materials and food from Afghanistan and the import of grain, dried fruit, plants and medical supplies. The line is expected to connect with the China - Kyrgyzstan - Uzbekistan railway and the north - south trans-Afghan line."

(iv). OLD NEWS: SLEEPING CAR TRAFFIC

From the 'Eisenbahn Modellbahn Magazine' 1973-00 p.9 by 'ag': "SOON ONE CAN GO BY SLEEPING CAR TO PERSIA: Lovers of train travel will be able to travel by sleeping car from the Bundesrepublik of Germany to Persia. In addition the number of trains between Europe and Persia is to be doubled. These decisions were made at the International Railway Conference at Teheran. On the route from Europe to Persia tourists can also enjoy a glimpse of the future, for it forms a section of the future Trans-Asiatic Railway which by the end of the decade should link Europe with Asia (Singapore). From the Turkish border the Persian section of this line is already almost one and a half thousand kilometres long, once the section Teheran – Zahand, some 80km from Kerman in the direction of Pakistan is taken into operation at the beginning of May."

(v). More Old News: THROUGH FREIGHT TO RUSSIA

Marc Stegemann is busy ploughing through ancient issues of 'Eisenbahn Modellbahn Magazin', this item is from Dec. 1973 p.11: "Link Teheran – Moscow. At the end of September the first through railway link between the USSR and Persia without any need to transship at the border became operational.

The regauging of the wagons from Iranian standard gauge to Russian broad gauge will be carried out at the appropriate equipment at Djulfa.

Initially one departure weekly is planned, the journey in each direction between Teheran and Moscow will be from Monday to Friday. At both destinations there are further rail links to Western Europe and Central Asia, also to Siberia and the Pacific Ocean."

C. EGYPT.

(i). ROLLING STOCK MANUFACTURE.

From 'R.G.I.' 16.6.2022: "The National Egyptian Railway Industries Co. joint venture has signed an agreement with Hyundai Rotem for the local assembly of 40 Metro trains totalling 320 cars to be deployed on Cairo Metro lines 2 and 3.

NERIC said the localisation agreement signed when a delegation visited South Korea in late May was a significant step towards the development of a rolling stock industry in Egypt. NERIC is a public-private joint venture of the Egyptian Sovereign Fund, the Suez Canal Economic Zone Authority, Samcrete Investments, Orascom Construction, Hassan Allam Holding, Connect Professional Services and East Port Said Development Co.

It is currently developing a rolling stock factory in the Suez Canal Economic Zone at East Port Said, with opening planned by the second half of 2023."

(ii). CAIRO METRO CONTRACTS

a). From 'Metro Report Intl.' 22.06.22: "National Authority for Tunnels has awarded Thales, Orascom Construction and Colas Rail a turnkey contract to design and deploy the telecoms, control and ticketing systems for Cairo Metro Line 4 Phase 1 and provide two years of maintenance.

The East-West Line 4 is being developed in two phases. The first covers 19km connecting central Cairo to Giza, with 16 stations, a depot and the operations control centre. Phase 2 would add 23.5km and a further 19 stations.

b). France and Egypt have signed a government to government agreement for the financing of Alstom's €876M November 2021 contract to supply 55 nine-car Metropolis trains for Cairo Metro Line 1 and provide eight years of maintenance."

I.R.J. adds to this: "Egypt's National Authority for Tunnels (NAT) has signed a contract with a consortium of companies, including Hyundai Rotem and the National Egyptian Railway Industries Company (NERIC), to manufacture and supply 40 new trains, comprising 320 vehicles, for Cairo metro lines 2 and 3. The \$US 656M contract includes maintenance for a period of eight years in addition to one major overhaul per train. Local content of the order will be no less than 30%.

Egyptian Prime Minister Dr Mostafa Madbouly witnessed the signing ceremony, which was attended by Minister of Planning and Economic Development Dr Hala Al-Saeed, Minister of transport, Lieutenant-General engineer Kamel Al-Wazir, Minister of International Cooperation, Dr Rania Al-Mashat and Minister of Trade and Industry, Mr Ahmed Samir.

The agreement was signed by NAT chairman, Major-General Sherif Hassan Leil, Hyundai Rotem President and CEO Mr Young Bai Lee, and NERIC managing director Dr Ahmed Fikry Abdel Wahab.

Madbouly stressed that signing the contract was an important step in implementing the policy of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi to encourage the development of heavy industry in Egypt.

Egypt is increasing the Cairo Metro fleet in order to accommodate the anticipated increase in passenger traffic. Lines 2 and 3, when completed, are forecast to carry around 3 million passengers per day.

Another aim of the fleet contract is to develop domestic skills in the fields of rolling stock production and the manufacture of electric traction equipment, in order to earn hard currency and provide job opportunities. The contract aims to transfer advanced rail technology skills to the local workforce and serve export markets around the world, especially in Africa.

Metro rolling stock production will be undertaken on a 300,000sq.m. site in an industrial estate in East Port Said, close to port facilities.

Egypt's Ministry of Transport has also signed an agreement with Talgo and NERIC to research the possibility of establishing an Egyptian factory for the manufacture of passenger coaches. The protocol includes the manufacture of 500 coaches, comprising 100 air-conditioned first-class cars, 200 air-conditioned second-class cars, and 200 advanced third-class cars using Talgo technology as the first stage of manufacturing a total of 1,000 coaches in Egypt.

"Concluding an agreement to manufacture and supply 40 new trains, comprising 320 cars, represents the first step in realising the dream of Egypt being one of the major industrial countries in this field," says Al-Wazir."

(iii). NEW ELECTRIC RAILWAY LINKING NEW CITIES IS OPENED

From 'R.G.I.' 14.07.2022: "President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi has inaugurated the first phase of the 103km Capital Train 'light rail transit' electric suburban railway which is being built to connect Cairo with 10th Ramadan City and the New Administrative Capital.

The ceremony was held on July 3, with passenger services starting the following day.

The 68.8km first phase starts at an interchange with Cairo Metro Line 3 at the Adly Mansour transport hub east of Cairo and runs largely at-grade eastwards alongside the Ismailia Highway for 28.6km through Obour, Shorouk and New Heliopolis City to a junction at Badr. The line then splits, with one branch turning north to Knowledge City in 10th Ramadan City, and the other running south to Arts & Culture City in the New Administrative Capital. There are twelve stations, including seven bridges, three tunnels, two substations and one depot.

The second phase will extend the NAC branch by 18.5 km and four stations, and the third phase will add 16 km and three stations to serve the centre of 10th Ramadan City. The line has been built using Chinese finance and technology under a US\$1.24Bn contract signed in August 2017 by the National Authority for Tunnels and a consortium of China Railway Engineering Corp and AVIC International Holding Corp.

Around 20 Egyptian and 15 Chinese companies took part in the project. Adly Mansour station was built by The Arab Contractors and Orascom Construction, and the other stations by The Arab Contractors, Petrojet, Hassan Allam and Concorde.

A joint venture of TSO and Orascom Construction was awarded a US\$112.5M subcontract for tracklaying. CASCO provided the signalling, which it said was the first deployment of CBTC in Egypt. The contract is CASCO's first full signalling system integration project outside China, and includes 12 years of maintenance.

In 2018 CRRC Qingdao Sifang was awarded a contract to supply 22 six-car electric multiple-units and maintain them for 12 years. The 120 km/h EMUs

have a capacity of 2,222 passengers [?] and are designed with wind and sand-resistant components.

In March 2021, National Authority for Tunnels awarded RATP Dev Mobility Cairo a contract to operate and maintain the line for 15 years, with an optional five-year extension.

The line is projected to carry around 340,000 passengers/day when fully operational."

(iv). TRIALS WITH TALGO STOCK COMMENCE

From 'I.R.J.' 01.08.22: "National Railways (ENR) has begun trial operation with the first of its new train fleet supplied by Talgo, Spain. The train has been placed into service between Cairo and Alexandria.

ENR awarded Talgo a contract worth €158M to supply six trains in April 2019, financed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). According to local media reports, Talgo is now to supply a seventh train "as a gift to the Egyptian people."

Each train comprises a diesel-electric locomotive, five first class and eight second class coaches, a buffet/restaurant car and a power car. Total seating capacity per train is 492 passengers and the new fleet has a maximum speed of 160km/h. The fully air-conditioned coaches have been designed to withstand temperatures as high as 55°C. Passenger amenities include at-seat display screens in first class and Wi-Fi. The trains have fully accessible toilets and are equipped with CCTV.

Talgo's contract with ENR includes fleet maintenance over a period of eight years."



(v). EQUIPMENT FOR NEW ELECTRIC STOCK

From 'R.G.I.' 04.08.2022: "Siemens Mobility has awarded Knorr-Bremse contracts to supply subsystems for the rolling stock to be delivered for the country's electric railway programme. The order announced on August 3 includes Knorr-Bremse braking systems and IFE-branded pressure-tight doors with boarding aids for 15 eight-car 230 km/h Velaro high speed trains. The equipment is to be delivered to Siemens Mobility from Q4 2023 to Q1 2026, and there is an option for another 26 trainsets.

Knorr-Bremse's Evac brand will supply 136 toilet systems including a new type of bidet for 34 four-car Desiro High Capacity regional EMUs, with an option for another 60 EMUs.

'Egypt has emerged as an ambitious, dynamic market for rail travel and transportation', said Dr Jürgen Wilder, Knorr-Bremse board member for Rail Vehicle Systems. 'The country has been investing in state-of-the-art infrastructure and railways for some time.'

Another report – of the same date! - 'in I.R.J.' added more information:

See photo next page....

SIEMENS Mobility has awarded Knorr-Bremse a contract to equip 15 of the Velaro Egypt high-speed EMUs it is supplying to Egypt's National Authority for





• Photo Knorr-Bremse

Tunnels (NAT) with braking and entrance door systems, together with an option for equipping another 26 trains.

The initial order will run from the last three months of 2023 through to the first quarter of 2026. The trains that Knorr-Bremse will be fitting out will run between Alexandria and other major Egyptian cities, carrying millions of passengers each year at speeds of up to 230km/h.

Siemens won an €8.1Bn share of the contract to build 2000km of high-speed lines for NAT, including a €2.7Bn initial contract for the first 660km route from Ain Sokhna to Marsa Matrouh and Alexandria. Dr Roland Busch, president and CEO of Siemens, described it as “the biggest order in the history of Siemens.”

The deal includes the supply of 41 eight-car Velaro high-speed trains, 94 four-car high-capacity Desiro EMUs for regional services and 41 Vectron freight locomotives.

The braking systems to be installed in the Velaro trains by Knorr-Bremse will include all bogie equipment, axle-mounted and wheel brake calipers, steel discs and sintered pads, as well as brake control systems with integrated smart braking computers. Compressed air will be supplied by enclosed PistonSupply Eco compressors and the braking system as a whole will be designed to deliver safe, highly efficient braking performance in Egypt’s hot, dusty and challenging desert climate.

Knorr-Bremse will supply service-proven and reliable pressure-tight doors, including boarding aids, for the Velaro trains through the group’s IFE brand. The doors will be designed to keep passengers safe as they enter and exit from the EMUs, helping to contribute to reliability of train connections.

In addition, Knorr-Bremse’s Evac brand will supply sanitary systems for 34 Desiro High Capacity regional passenger trains also built by Siemens Mobility for the Egyptian market – plus the option to supply another 60 sanitary systems. Equipping the initial 34 trains will involve installing a total of 136 ultra-reliable toilet systems, including a new type of bidet function.

(vi). TALGO NIGHT TRAIN CONTRACT

Egyptian National Railways has awarded Talgo a €280M contract to supply seven night train sets and maintain them for 15 years. The contract was announced on August 9. Talgo expects financing to be put in place in the coming months, and deliveries from its Alava (Rivabellosa) and Madrid (Las Matas) plants in Spain to begin in 2024. It said the trains would be from the same family as the inter-city coaches it supplying to DB in Germany and DSB in Denmark. Talgo has already delivered six day trains ordered by ENR in 2019 under a contract worth €126M plus €32M for eight years of maintenance. Comprising a locomotive, 14 coaches and a generator car, these 160km/h sets will be used along the River Nile from Alexandria to Cairo and Aswan."

(vii). TALGO CONSIDERS ESTABLISHING EGYPTIAN MANUFACTURING FACILITY

From 'R.G.I.' 16.08.22: "The Ministry of Transport, the National Egyptian Railway Industries Co joint venture and Talgo have agreed to study the feasibility of developing a domestic passenger rolling stock factory. It is envisaged that this could produce 100 air-conditioned first class coaches, 200 air-conditioned second class coaches and 200 third class cars, with a total order of 1,000 vehicles envisaged.

Minister of Transport Kamel Al Wazir said co-operation with international companies could make Egypt a leader in rolling stock production for the Middle East and Africa.

NERIC is a public-private joint venture of the Egyptian Sovereign Fund, the Suez Canal Economic Zone Authority, Samcrete Investments, Orascom Construction, Hassan Allam Holding, Connect Professional Services and East Port Said Development Co.

It is currently developing a rolling stock factory in the Suez Canal Economic Zone at East Port Said, with opening planned by the second half of 2023. In May it signed an agreement with Hyundai Rotem for the local assembly of 40 metro trains totalling 320 cars to be deployed on Cairo lines 2 and 3."

D. JORDAN

A Travelogue from the 'New York Times' 11.06.2022:

"Built by the Ottomans at the dawn of the 20th century, blown up by Lawrence of Arabia and Arab fighters during World War I, and used as a nostalgic backdrop in “The Mummy Returns” and in syrupy Arab music videos about forlorn lovers, the railway is a relic of the bygone dream of regional unity before wars, borders and more advanced modes of transportation rendered its services obsolete.

A pet project of Sultan Abdul Hamid II, the railway was completed in 1908 and ran for more than 800 miles through the mountains and deserts of the Levant and Arabia to ferry pilgrims from Damascus to Medina, one of Islam’s holiest cities, now in Saudi Arabia. From there, they would travel on by other means to Mecca, the focus of the pilgrimage.

Secondary lines ran to Haifa — now a major Israeli city — and Beirut, the Lebanese capital on the Mediterranean coast. And plans were in place to connect the line to Constantinople, the Ottoman capital, in the north and all the way to Mecca in the south, stitching together a large swath of the Ottoman Empire.

But only six years after the train’s first triumphant arrival in Medina on Sept. 1, 1908, World War I broke out, leading to the dismemberment of the empire and new borders. The Haifa line went out of service around 1948, when Israel’s creation left it at war with its Arab neighbors. The Beirut line stopped around the start of Lebanon’s 15-year civil war in 1975.

Now, the narrow-gauge tracks remain, but the railway’s mainline crosses three countries — Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia — whose leaders have shown little interest in reviving the project.

Saudi Arabia welcomes pilgrims bound for Mecca at a fancy airport terminal and shuttles them around the holy sites on a modern high-speed train. Rail traffic in Syria screeched to a halt after the outbreak of its civil war in 2011.



That leaves only Jordan, which now offers 50-mile leisure trips from Amman to the Al Jizah station south of town and back, with a four-hour lunch break in the middle.

It is a trip that does not go anywhere anyone needs to be, so the riders come for the journey — and a big dose of nostalgia. “I love trains because they remind me of Agatha Christie novels,” said Islam Dawoud, 36, sinking into her red plush chair and gazing out the window. She first rode the train as a schoolgirl, she said. There was no air-conditioning and the cars were dusty, but the memory stuck with her nevertheless. “What I loved was that the window was open and I could put my head out,” she said.

The train departs in the morning from the Amman station, a handsome, ivy-draped stone building from the first decade of the 20th century.

In the train yard were two original, but refurbished passenger cars, including the one that Abdullah I, the great-grandfather of Jordan’s current king, rode into the city in 1921, when he became the territory’s ruler. Parked nearby were seven giant black steam engines with red wheels. They all still work, but are used only on special occasions because they take hours to fire up and are heavy polluters, said Nader Malkawi, a railway official and train conductor who organizes the trips.

On its recent journey, the train was pulled by two diesel-electric locomotives built in 1976. Some components of the cars were original, but most were Japanese tanker cars that Jordan had converted to wooden passenger cars in 2005.

That upgrade also added electricity for lighting, as well as air-conditioning and the speakers that piped Arabic pop music into the cars throughout the trip.

Railway buffs in Jordan also have another option: A line that carried phosphates to Aqaba, Jordan’s only coastal city, stopped running in 2018, Mr. Malkawi said. But that line passes through Jordan’s scenic Wadi Rum, where tourists can take short rides on it and sometimes watch a band of locals on horseback and dressed in period costumes re-enact Bedouin attacks. The trips from Amman are longer,

but without the theatrics. Tickets cost \$7 for riders 12 and over, and less for children. Those under 3 ride free. The train has a snack car as well as a V.I.P. car with plush seats, burgundy curtains and a crown on the door.

The trip was different three decades ago, said one passenger, Fidaa Abu Safia, 38, who first rode along the same tracks when she was 6. There was no music, the wooden seats were uncomfortable and it was hot, she said, but the train still felt magical. She recalled passing trees with yellow blossoms that fell into the windows. “It was the best trip of my life,” Ms. Abu Safia said.

As the upgraded train wound through the cinder block sprawl of southern Amman, there were no blossoms to see. Instead, many industrial warehouses, junkyards and mechanic shops popped into view, along with a gargantuan failed shopping mall and lots of garbage strewn along the tracks. The railway lacks crossing guards to stop traffic; the police are supposed to do it. But they were not in evidence that day, so the conductor slowed down when approaching intersections and leaned on the horn as cars and motorcycles raced across until the last instant.

• More pictures next page



tracks and had to move them before the trip could proceed. "These are experiences I will never forget," Ms. al-Shishan said."

E. SAUDI ARABIA

(i). NEOM TUNNELLING CONTRACTS

From 'I.R.J.' 22.06.22: By Robert Preston.

"Two contracts have been awarded by the company developing a new city in the Neom Economic Zone in Saudi Arabia, for the construction by drilling and blasting of 28km of tunnels through rock to accommodate high-speed passenger services and freight trains. The contracts have been awarded by Neom, a company owned by Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth fund, which is developing the economic zone city of the same name in Tabuk province in the northwest of the country.

Tunnelling work has been divided into two geographical lots, with the first awarded to a joint venture of FCC Construction, China State Construction Engineering and Shihb Al-Jazira Contracting. The second contract has been to a joint venture of Samsung C&T, Saudi Archirodon and Hyundai Engineering and Construction.

Neom aims to be carbon-neutral by 2030, and rock excavated during tunnelling will be processed for reuse in the concrete tunnel linings and other projects to ensure minimal impact on the environment. Covering 26,500sq.km along the Red Sea, the Neom economic area is being developed as a smart city and tourist destination at a cost of \$US 500Bn. Its energy needs are intended to be met entirely met from renewable sources.

Neom will include The Line, a car-free, zero-carbon city with 1 million inhabitants and no roads, laid out as a 170km belt with services and transport infrastructure built underground. Saudi Arabia aims to complete the first section of Neom by 2025. "The sheer scope and scale of the tunnelling work to be undertaken highlights the complexity and ambition of the project," says Neom CEO, Mr Nadhmi Al-Nasr. "At Neom, we are inspiring a new way of living, making seamless mobility possible, reducing emissions and protecting our environment. We are not only making a giant leap for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, but we are also establishing a model for sustainable living around the world." "

There has also been a problem with boys throwing stones at the train to shatter its windows. To stop them, railway workers had tried to distract them by throwing candy, Mr. Malkawi said, but it did not work. So they took the boys' pictures and gave them to the police, who summoned their parents to sign vows that their children would no longer target the train. That tactic worked, mostly.

The dearth of scenic vistas did not bother Hussam al-Khatib, a soldier, who had learned of the trip on Facebook and brought his wife and their three sons. All were first-time train riders. He said that Jordan did not have great public transportation and that the views were not stellar, but he felt it was important for Jordanians to know their country. "We are proud of Jordan's sights," he said.

Outside Amman, the landscape opened up, with golden wheat fields, greenhouses full of tomatoes and eggplants, flocks of sheep, the occasional herd of camels and barking dogs chasing the train. Before the station in Al Jizah, where the passengers stopped for lunch, the train passed Amman's international airport, from which jets took off overhead, roaring reminders of the technologies that had reduced the train from a cutting-edge conveyance to a historical curiosity.

At the station, as workers moved the engines from one end of the train to the other for the return trip, families claimed shady spots under cypress and eucalyptus trees and fired up charcoal grills and hookahs while their children ran around a sandy playground and climbed on abandoned boxcars. Later, the train blew its horn and the riders returned, snapping photographs alongside the cars.

The return trip was quieter, with the sun, the creaking cars and the steady click-clack of the train lulling many of the children, and some of the adults, to sleep. But Heba al-Shishan refused to miss any of it. Smiling and snapping photographs as she took in the landscape, she, too, recalled a childhood journey. On that ride, the train had to stop because nomads had tethered sheep to the

(ii). AL-ULA TRAMS TO BE BASED ON HEDJAZ RAILWAY THEME

From 'R.G.I.' 04.07.2022: "Plans for a 50 km light rail network with trams designed to look like trains from the historic Hedjaz Railway have been announced by the Royal Commission for Al-Ula.

The tramway would connect urban areas, archaeological sites and tourist destinations around the ancient city of Al-Ula. The initiative is part of the 360 Mobility programme to reduce car dependency by developing a network of trams, electric buses, autonomous pods, cycle paths and 'alternative transport'.

The first phase of the tramway would be the 21 km Red Line from the former Hedjaz railway station in Al-Ula to the Hegra UNESCO World Heritage Site in the north.

There would be stops at Hegra South, Equestrian Village North, Equestrian Village South, Nabataean Farms, Al Uthayb, the Incense Museum, Jabal Ikamah, Tal Al Khatib, Dadan North, Dadan Village and Dadan, Al Jadidah, Old Town, Al-Ula Central East and Al-Ula Hijaz.

Each stop would be a hub for bicycles, e-bikes and on-demand electric vehicles.

The second phase of the tramway would run 33 km south to the international airport.

'Reinterpretation' of the Hedjaz Railway

On July 1 Systra signed a contract to act as lead design consultant for the project, with preliminary and detailed design studies to be completed in 2023.

Systra said the 'modern and prestigious' trams with a maximum speed of 50 km/h would offer visitors and residents a 'reinterpretation' of the 1,050mm gauge Hedjaz Railway, which once ran through the Al-Ulla valley on its route from Damascus to Medina.

The tramway would also reflect Al-Ulla's recent history as a stopping point for pilgrims, and its ambitions to be a global destination for tourism and 'the world's largest living museum'.

'The new tram service is an exciting development that will greatly empower Al-Ulla's continuous growth', said Moataz Kurdi, RCU's Chief County Operations Officer. 'Al-Ulla's rich heritage is the foundation on which our future achievements are built. As such, great care and attention has been paid to the design of the trams to reflect the rolling stock that travelled along the old Hedjaz Railway line in the early 20th century. Fully updated with modern amenities and technologies, the trams will function as part of an integrated and enabled network of low impact and easy to use public transport that provides unhindered access across Al-Ulla county.

'Created to be an experience as much as a means of getting around, passengers will enjoy incredible views of the surrounding landscape, growing urban developments, cultural sites and world-famous heritage areas in complete ease and comfort.



(iii). MAKKAH (MECCA) METRO

Two items from 'Metro Report Intl.' 25.07.2022:

"Work is underway to prepare the Al Mashaer Al Mugaddassah Metro in Makkah for its seven-day annual operating season during the Hajj pilgrimage, which this year falls on August 19-24.

The journey between the holy sites in Arafat and Mina can take up to 8 h by car or bus on the very congested and polluted roads, but the 18km metro can transport 72,000 passengers/direction/h safely and more comfortably in less than 1 hour, moving more than half a million pilgrims in 8 hours.

'This intense demand for mass transportation does not exist in any other parts of the world', according to Noormah Mohd Noor, Chief Executive of Kuala Lumpur airport shuttle operator Express Rail Link which is seconding operating staff to run the metro. 'Every single pilgrim must be transported and vacated from Arafat within six to eight hours'.

With the metro only running for a short period each year, operations are contracted out by the Saudi government. China Railway Construction Corp ran the line for the first five seasons after it opened in November 2010, carrying a total of 15 million pilgrims. The contract for the 2015-17 seasons was awarded to Malaysian public transport operator Prasarana, and the current contract is once again held by CRCC.

More than 5,000 staff are needed during the annual two-month period of inspections, test running, passenger operations and demobilisation. One requirement is that anyone entering the city of Makkah must be a Muslim.



Haj Metro

Express Rail Link and its subsidiary ERL Maintenance Support have been providing experienced railway staff to the operating contractors since 2012. This year ERL has seconded 33 people for roles including station management.

Speaking at an event to mark the departure of this year's staff for Saudi Arabia, Noormah said the employees would gain 'valuable exposure to crowd control, station management and train operations on a massive scale'. They would also develop interpersonal and management skills as they work with operational staff of various nationalities."

And:

"Hytera has replaced the communication systems on the Al Mashaer Al Mugaddassah metro line in Makkah which only operates during the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

Hytera said the existing communication system, which had been running since the 18km line opened in November 2010, had become inconvenient and costly to maintain.

'As this year Saudi Arabia expected to welcome over 1 million people for the biggest Hajj pilgrimage since the outbreak of the pandemic, the challenge for the transport system was huge', said Stanley Song, Deputy General Manager of the company's overseas sales department. 'To ensure a safe Hajj season for pilgrims taking the Makkah metro, we decided to customise most of the equipment even under a tight schedule.'

The hardware supplied includes five Tetra base stations, 34 bespoke onboard radios and antennas. The onboard radios connect with the on-train public address systems to enable announcements to be made in the event of emergencies.

Hytera also assigned two engineers to provide a 24/7 presence in the metro's control centre during the line's annual seven-day operating season, which this year fell in July."

(iv). TENDERS FOR NEW INTERCITY STOCK

From 'R.G.I.' 01.08.2022: "Prequalified companies have been invited to submit tenders to supply and maintain Saudi Arabia Railways' next generation of inter-city passenger trains.

The tender covers an base order of 10 trainsets to increase capacity on the Riyadh – Dammam route, with an option for a further 10 trainsets to accommodate growth on the Riyadh to Hail section of the North–South Railway.

The contract would include spare parts, maintenance, documentation and training SAR staff to operate and maintain the new fleet.

The national railway said the tender has been structured to balance technical and financial offers in order to provide the best overall cost and quality. There is a focus placed on material selections, design and innovative systems to provide a high level of reliability in the challenging environment.

SAR said efforts have been made to reduce barriers to entry to the Saudi



Arabian market, to encourage suppliers who currently do not have a local presence to participate in the tender, and also to support the current and future growth of the network."

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH ALSTOM

From 'I.R.J.' 15.08.2022: "Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Investment has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Alstom to discuss investment opportunities in the transport sector and to look at the possibility of the supplier establishing its regional headquarters in Saudi Arabia. The MoU, signed in the presence of undersecretary of the ministry, Mr Fahad Al-Naheen, aims to explore the future of sustainable transport in the country and identify investment opportunities in the public transport sector relating to rail infrastructure, sustainable transport technologies and reducing carbon emissions in line with the objectives of the Kingdom's Vision 2030. Under its Vision 2030 programme, Saudi Arabia intends to build an additional 10,000km of main-line railways and metro lines by 2030 to meet public demand for better transport, relieve traffic congestion, improve residents' health and quality of life and meet decarbonisation targets. Other aims are to reduce dependence on oil, diversify the economy and develop public service sectors such as health, education, infrastructure, recreation and tourism.

By 2024 Saudi Arabia is expected to have spent over \$US 48Bn on rail projects, at the forefront of which is the Riyadh Metro, the world's largest

single-phase Metro system project. Lines 4, 5 and 6 have been built by Alstom and partner organisations, with Alstom supplying 69 metro trains and Urbalis signalling. Alstom has also implemented Harmonic Energy Saver (HESOP) technology, whereby current produced by trains during regenerative braking is recovered for use elsewhere, reducing operating costs, cutting carbon emissions and decreasing power consumption."

(vi). PLANS FOR NEW EASTERN LINE

From 'I.R.J.' 07.09.22: "Saudi transport authorities have begun studying possible plans for a line connecting the capital Riyadh with the eastern provinces, similar to the Mecca – Medina Haramain high-speed railway in the west which opened in September 2018.

The 'Saudi Gazette' reports that the new line would reduce the journey time between the capital and the region to 1h 15min.

Saudi Railway Company (SAR) currently operates a 449km conventional route between Riyadh and the Eastern Province capital of Dammam. The Saudi Railways Organisation (SRO), which was merged with SAR in March 2019, awarded a consortium led by Spain's Conslutrans a \$US 1.6m contract in 2014 to study options for a high-speed line linking Riyadh and Dammam.

Deputy minister of transport Mr Rumaith Al-Rumaith also announced that women would begin driving high-speed trains on the Haramain high-speed railway from January 2023. More than 28,000 women applied for the 31 posts as trainee drivers in Saudi Arabia when the role was first opened to women in February. Spanish operator Renfe is providing the training in Saudi Arabia, with in-cab training now underway." [and see below. Ed.]

F. UAE, DUBAI AND ETIHAD RAIL

(i). PASSENGER FLEET ORDERED.

From 'I.R.J.' 23.06.2022, by David Burroughs:

"Etihad Rail has awarded CAF, Spain, a Dirhams 1.2Bn (\$US 326.7M) contract to design, manufacture, supply and maintain push-pull diesel passenger trains for the Etihad Rail project. Neither CAF nor Etihad Rail disclosed the number of trains included in the contract.

The trains will meet European standards with a maximum speed of 200km/h, with capacity for more than 400 passengers. CAF said the base contract is worth more than €250M.

The agreement was signed on June 23 by Mr Shadi Malak, CEO of Etihad Rail, and Mr Josu Imaz, CEO rolling stock at CAF, in the Sakamkam area, where the first station will be built in the heart of Fujairah city. The signing was witnessed by the chairman of Etihad Rail, Sheikh Theyab bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, Mr Suhail Mohamed Faraj Al Mazrouei, minister of energy and infrastructure, Mr Inigo de Palacio, ambassador of Spain to the UAE, and officials from both sides.

The development of passenger services is one of the three strategic projects of the National Railways Programme in the United Arab Emirates. Passenger trains will connect 11 cities and regions in the UAE from Al Sila to Fujairah, including Al Ruwais, Al Mirfa, Dubai, Sharjah, Al Dhaid, and Abu Dhabi.

In February, Etihad Rail signed an agreement with First Abu Dhabi Bank (FAB) to finance passenger services, with a total value of Dirhams 1.99bn. First Abu Dhabi Bank will be the Certified Lead Arranger for the loan.

Rail is expected to reduce journey times by up to 40% compared with road. This includes a journey time of 50 minutes from Abu Dhabi to Dubai and from Dubai to Fujairah, and a 1h 10min journey time from Abu Dhabi to Al Ruwais. The journey from Abu Dhabi to Fujairah will take 1h 40min. The trains will be equipped to cope with the UAE's harsh climate, and will provide amenities including infotainment systems, charging stations, and a food and beverage service. There will be ample legroom and an advanced air-conditioning system, with seating divided into first class, business class and economy.

Construction progress

Before the signing, Nahyan visited the final package of Stage 2 of the UAE National Rail Network, which extends for 145km from Sharjah to Fujairah Port and Ras Al Khaimah, to review the progress of construction work.

During the visit, which started in the Al Suyoh area in Sharjah and concluded in Sakamkam, Nahyan inspected key landmarks on the route, starting with the rail bridge in Al Suyoh, followed by a stop to visit the Al Bithnah bridge in Fujairah. He then travelled to visit tracklaying work in tunnels in Al Hajar



Mountains in Fujairah. Stage 2 has 54 bridges and 20 wildlife crossing points, along with nine tunnels totalling 6.9km. This includes the longest freight tunnel in the Arab Gulf which runs for 1.8km. In November 2021, Etihad Rail completed excavation works for all tunnels on the route, two months ahead of schedule."

(ii). VIDEO

A nine-minute video on the Gulf Cooperation Council railway project can currently be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNsn3ds2op8>

(iii). NEW LOCOS AND WAGONS DELIVERED.

From 'I.R.J.' & 'Rail Group News' 19.08.2022. "Etihad Rail, the developer and operator of the national rail network in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), says it has achieved another milestone with the arrival of the first batches of its new rolling stock fleet.

The first EMD SD70 diesel locomotives and multi-purpose wagons, which are designed to carry all kinds of goods with the aim of increasing the capacity of the rail network to carry 60 million tonnes per year, reached the UAE via the ports of Zayed and Al Musaffah.

The first deliveries were marked by an unveiling event at in Mirfa City, in the Al Dhafrah region of Abu Dhabi, attended by Mr Shadi Malak, CEO of Etihad Rail, alongside Mr Marty Haycraft, president and CEO of Progress Rail, and Mr Henry Pang, executive director, MENA, at CRRC.

The 38 new locomotives, ordered in February 2020, and 842 wagons, the contract for which was awarded in August 2020, and which have been designed specifically to withstand the region's geographic and climatic conditions - including high temperatures and humidity levels - will operate across the whole Etihad Rail network upon its completion.

The UAE Railways Programme aims to increase the volume of freight and passengers transported by rail, developing a land transport system that links cities, increases sustainability and reduces pollution over the next 50 years. Etihad Rail reported in June that it had awarded CAF, Spain, a Dirhams 1.2Bn (\$US 326.7M) contract to design, manufacture, supply and maintain push-pull diesel passenger trains meeting European standards with a maximum speed of 200km/h and with capacity for more than 400 passengers. The aim is that passenger trains will connect 11 cities and regions in the UAE. CAF said the

base contract is worth more than €250m but the number of trains included in the contract was not disclosed.

Etihad Rail aims to increase its current number of freight locomotives sixfold, to give it a fleet of 45. The EMD SD70s are being supplied by Progress Rail. The locomotives provide 3.38MW and are able to haul 100 wagons. They are also equipped with a pulse sand filtering system for desert operation and onboard ETCS Level 2.

The wagon fleet will increase threefold to a total of 1,000 multi-purpose wagons, supplied by CRRC. Etihad Rail says claims the new fleet will contribute towards reducing carbon emission by 70%-80%.

"We made sure that the company's new fleet is among the most modern in the region and the world, providing the highest safety criteria in terms of design, ensuring the best specifications for sustainability and environmental protection, and integrating the latest technologies for train operation and monitoring," says Mr Mohammed Al Marzouqi, executive director of rail relations sector at Etihad Rail.

The new locomotives and wagons will be stored at Etihad Rail's Al Mirfa facility until construction work on the UAE national railway network is completed."

'R.G.I.' adds:

"Etihad Rail has begun taking delivery of 38 locomotives and 842 wagons as part of plans to provide a freight capacity of more than 60 million tonnes per year on the future national railway network.

The 38 EMD SD70 diesel-electric locomotives are being supplied by Progress Rail under a contract announced in February 2020. They follow on from the seven 4,500 hp EMD SD70ACS locomotives delivered in 2013 for the opening of the 264 km first phase of the rail network.

Etihad said the 4,600hp locos would be among the most powerful in the Middle East with the ability to haul 100 wagons, equivalent to 300 lorries. They are fitted with ETCS and designed for local conditions including high temperatures, humidity and dust, with the air intakes being equipped with sand filtration.

The 842 wagons being supplied by CRRC Yangtze under a contract signed in August 2020 will triple the fleet to more than 1,000 wagons. They are tailor-made for local conditions and meet Gulf Co-operation Council requirements for the braking and safety systems.

They will be used for traffic including petrochemicals, steel, limestone, cement, building materials, industrial and household waste, aluminium and food. Etihad Rail said the use of rail would cut transport costs by 30% compared to road, while also reducing highway congestion.

The locomotives and wagons are being delivered through the Zayed and Al Musaffah ports in Abu Dhabi and will be to be stored in Al Mirfa until the completion of construction works on the 605 km Stage Two from Fujairah Port on the east coast to Mussafah, Khalifa Port, Jebel Ali Port and Ghuweifat on the border with Saudi Arabia, which is now 75% complete.

'The network will contribute to revitalising and bolstering economic growth in the UAE, particularly during the next 50 years, by providing reliable and safe





Peshawar. The proposed railway is a joint initiative by Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan which is intended to promote regional connectivity and trade. It would also provide Central Asia with access to Pakistan's seaports. The cost is provisionally estimated at US\$5Bn.

Speaking during a visit to Pakistan earlier this year, Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev described the proposed railway as 'our common future', suggesting that when completed it would 'create the closest, cheapest and safest corridor linking Pakistan with Central Asia' that would 'completely change the face of our regions'.

Surveying by a joint technical team from the three countries began at Naibabad on the existing Uzbekistan – Hairatan – Mazar-i-Sharif railway on July 27 and was completed at Torkham on the border with Pakistan on August 10. The joint team will make any necessary changes to the proposed alignment before presenting a final route to the authorities in the three countries for further technical and economic feasibility studies.

The Afghanistan Railway Authority said the members of the tri-national technical team considered the survey a success, and had expressed satisfaction with the arrangements made by the Afghan government and the professional behaviour of the railway

authority. freight services with high efficiency. The network will also contribute to the region's economic growth upon its connection with the Gulf Co-operation Council network, which will consolidate the UAE's position as a regional and global centre for shipping and logistics services', said Mohammed Al Marzouqi, Executive Director of Rail Relations Sector at Etihad Rail, on August 18.

'We made sure that the company's new fleet is among the most modern in the region and the world, providing the highest safety criteria in terms of design, ensuring the best specifications for sustainability and environmental protection, and integrating the latest technologies for train operation and monitoring. We also ensured that the fleet suits the local geography and climate in the UAE and the region and meets current and future needs of Etihad Rail's clients.'

(iv). MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

From 'IRJ' July 2022: "Etihad Rail has signed Memoranda of Understanding with Spanish national operator Renfe, High Speed 1 Ltd. (HS1), Britain and GB Railfreight (GBRF). The MoUs provide for exchanging knowledge, expertise and best practice in passenger and freight operations, which should benefit Etihad Railways as it takes forward the National Railways Programme.

(v). INSPECTION VEHICLE

From 'R.G.I.' 07.09.22: "Etihad Rail has selected ENSCO Rail to supply a 'comprehensive' track inspection vehicle and provide data analysis services for 15 years. The vehicle is to be produced by French company Socofer and fitted with an array of measuring and inspection systems."

G. BAHRAIN

From 'I.R.J.' July 2022: "The Ministry of Transportation and Telecommunications (MTT) has received applications from 11 bidders to prequalify for the contract to build phase one of the Bahrain metro. MTT plans to build a fully-automated 109km elevated metro in four stages, with the first stage comprising two lines totalling 29km with 20 stations, including two interchanges."

H. AFGHANISTAN

Not technically 'Middle East' as such but a part of the through trunk routes between East and West which also concern us:

From 'R.G.I.' 16.08.2022: "Preliminary field survey has identified no technical problems with the proposed route for a 780 km trans-Afghanistan railway which would link Uzbekistan with Kabul, Jalalabad, the border with Pakistan and

authority.

Bakht-u-Rehman Sharafat, who became ARA Chairman following the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, said railway projects would guarantee Afghanistan's economic development and also security.

Afghan students have recently joined ARA after completing a railway course in Uzbekistan, and the authority has launched an indigenisation programme which includes a requirement for its contractors to transfer skills to Afghan engineers. 'We want and try to give our railways an Afghan identity', Sharafat explained.

History, economics and conflict mean that Afghanistan's rail links to Central Asia are currently limited to two short 1,520 mm gauge cross-border links from Turkmenistan and the 75 km line from Uzbekistan to Mazar-i-Sharif.

A 1,435 mm gauge line from Khaf in Iran towards Herat was inaugurated as far as Rozanak in December 2020; this was damaged last year and is now to be repaired.



Pakistan's 1,676 mm gauge Khyber Pass line once ran from Peshawar to a terminus just short of the Afghan border but is now out of use. It has been badly damaged by flooding, and reinstatement would require significant work."

H. IRAQ. OLD NEWS – CONSTRUCTION OF LINE TO SYRIA:

From 'Eisenbahn Modellbahn Magazine' 1973-12 p.11 – thanks to Marc Stegeman:

" RAILWAY THROUGH THE ARABIAN DESERT: Indian railway engineers will build the last 400km section of the railway line between the Iraqi port of Basrah through the Arabian Desert to the Syrian port of Latakia. An agreement to this effect has been signed recently between India and Iraq. The future transport volume for this direct link between the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean is estimated at 5 million tons p.a."

I. GENERAL

From 'Jerusalem Post' 13.07.2022. (By Yaakov Katz): "A new highway and railway system throughout Israel, Jordan and Saudi Arabia could facilitate tens of billions of dollars in trade, according to a special paper prepared by the Finance Ministry ahead of US President Joe Biden's visit to Israel."

The "Corridors for Economic Integration" plan

The paper was drafted by Shira Greenberg, the ministry's chief economist, under the direction of Finance Minister Avigdor Liberman. Government officials said that Liberman met in recent days with Prime Minister Yair Lapid to ensure that its main points would be brought up in talks with Biden during his visit to Israel, which begins on Wednesday and will end on Friday.

The paper – obtained by The Jerusalem Post and prepared in English so it could be shared with the Biden administration – pushes for a new plan called "Corridors for Economic Integration" that would create a regional transportation network including railways and highways linking Israel with Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf.

"By creating a direct connection between the Gulf and the Mediterranean, the network will allow for dramatically shorter shipment times between East and West," the paper claims. "The project thus has the potential to facilitate trade on both a regional and global level, in addition to enhancing regional economic cooperation."

The future is already here - at least some of it

Some sections of the network are already in stages of development, according to the paper. In Israel, a railway runs from the port of Haifa to Beit She'an, which is only 10 km. from the border with Jordan. In Saudi Arabia, the North-South Railway links the east and centre of the country with the north, all the way up to the border with Jordan. In the Gulf, a railway under development there is being planned to connect those of all Gulf countries, in particular railways in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

"The missing link

The distance, the paper said, of the "missing link" – between the Saudi-Jordanian border and the crossing between Israel and Jordan where the railway almost reaches – is just 200 kilometres. The network, the paper claims, could facilitate trade between the Gulf, Europe, North Africa and the east coast of the Americas. "The existence of numerous relevant and significant trade flows is expected to provide the project with robust demand – as traders in all relevant countries will seek to take advantage of reduced shipment times and direct access to regional markets," it says.

In the paper, the Finance Ministry calls on the Biden administration to take the reins of the initiative and to bring all of the relevant stakeholders together to facilitate its success.

"While preliminary analyses have shown the project's potential, a full cost-benefit analysis carried out on behalf of all involved parties by an experienced international partner could also help the sides decide on the next steps," it says. "We believe that the current positive atmosphere of regional cooperation will allow us the opportunity to move forward in these regards."

J. HOW FAR TO GO?

'Harakevet' concentrates on what we loosely term 'The Middle East' but of course there is a political, geographic and economic context. This item in 'I.R.J.' 8.8.2022 is therefore relevant:

"PAKISTAN's Board of Investment (BoI) says that a group led by Anwar Asian Investments (AAI) of Oman is ready to invest \$US 2.3Bn in the project to build a new 1,087km railway between Jacobabad and Gwadar, a port on the Arabian sea that is 70km from the border with Iran.

BoI federal minister, Mr Chaudhary Salik Hussain, has met with a delegation led by AAI chairman, Dr Anwar Al Balushi, which also included Railway Constructions Pakistan (Railcop) CEO, Mr Syed Najam Saeed, and Mr Tauseef Zaman, CEO of BIL Pakistan.

According to BoI, AAI is ready to provide an immediate tranche of \$US 500M for the Jacobabad - Gwadar railway, as well as financing and loans for other railway projects in Pakistan.

During a previous visit to Pakistan in January 2022, Al Balushi signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Railcop and BIL Pakistan.

A feasibility study later prepared by Railcop found that Pakistan's existing railway infrastructure would be unable to accommodate the increase in traffic forecast when projects are completed under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) programme, part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). CPEC aims to provide a rail connection between Gwadar and Xinjiang province in China."

So it would seem that the initiative is here being pushed by or encouraged by China and there could be a rail / ferry link to the Arabian peninsula in the foreseeable future.....

K. WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT

It is no secret that most societies in the Middle East remain very traditional and patriarchal, male-dominated, but 'I.R.J.' for June 2022 has an article on and portraits of

outstanding women in railway management and two of these are – perhaps surprisingly - in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Specifically:-

RABAA DE LAFORCADE. Operations Director, Colas Rail Egypt.

Rabaa De Laforcade says she has seen much improvement in diversity in the 28 years since she entered the construction industry, but thinks there is still work to be done. An electrical engineer by profession, De Laforcade says she was initially interested in moving into the airport construction sector before an opportunity came about on the Cairo Metro project that allowed her to remain working with Colas Rail Egypt. She initially began working in the design department before moving up to become project director and finally operations director. "It was very, very difficult in the beginning, in a male-dominated culture in the Middle East," she says. "It took a lot of hard work."

De Laforcade is now looking to pass on that experience to others moving up through the sector and is known for operating an open-door policy to her office for everyone, but particularly for women.

"I try to prepare the young women with me, to teach them that they have to fight for it, but they will succeed," she says. "It's changing all over the world. In Egypt we see that you have more and more women in high positions such as ministers."

Despite the success and hard-won wins, work still remains to be done and De Laforcade says a particular goal of hers is to see a woman appointed as a site construction manager. "The field of construction is not easy for ladies, especially on site," she says. "There are a lot of women working in the offices, but not on site."

In order to pass on her knowledge and experience, De Laforcade says she spends much of her time listening and giving advice to other women, including holding a Women's Day. "It's very important to listen and to talk, it helps in their work but also in their personalities," she says. "It develops a good spirit between people."

De Laforcade was nominated by Colas Rail – International CEO Christophe Mansuy, who says women in the rail sector were not always recognised for their talent as senior managers. "Rabaa is the kind of person to beat the odds, and despite the challenges she has always shown resilience in difficult times," Mansuy says. "A very hard worker, she demonstrates enthusiasm and team spirit and made her way up through the organisation with everyone's respect. We are proud and lucky to have her in our team."

Mansuy also cited De Laforcade's efforts to mentor young female colleagues "in an industry and a country not yet gender-balanced." as well as her extensive knowledge and skills that are well appreciated by Colas Rail's clients and partners.

"Rabaa is a role model for all Colas Rail Egypt employees," Mansuy says. "She demonstrates outstanding generosity and rare humility, always giving credit to her team and to others. She also developed the ability to influence stakeholders. She stands firm on her position, provides endless support in difficult times and modesty smiles when celebrating success."

ROSALINA REYES,

Driver Trainer, Haramain High-Speed Railway, Saudi Arabia. As the trainer of Saudi Arabia's first female train drivers, Rosalina Reyes has surely secured her place in the history books. The group of 30 women aged between 22 and 30 were selected from 28,000 applicants and according to Reyes, his response "illustrates the willingness of many Saudi women to join in the social and economic change that is taking place in the country."

It is a story that has made headlines around the world. However, Reyes' own career path has been no less remarkable, given that she only entered the railway industry when she moved from Cuba to Spain, armed with a degree in Physics and a Master's in Optics and Lasers. She trained as a driver with Renfe in Barcelona. One of only five women in a group of 75 trainees. "Thankfully, there are hundreds of female train drivers in Renfe today," Reyes says she went on to drive commuter services, freight and high-speed trains between Madrid and Leon. In training other women to drive trains in Spain, she has worked to overcome the stereotypes associated with this professions, such as the need for physical strength. Described as an exemplary student who helped lead the way, for both female and male classmates in Barcelona, Reyes had fulfilled a personal ambition by joining Haramain High-Speed Railway. To do so, she has had to overcome initial reluctance and doubt to become the first female trainer of both female and male drivers in Saudi Arabia. "All I needed to do was to get used to new infrastructure, a new train and new regulations, to respect the customs and traditions of the country and to do my job," she says.

"The creation of these jobs has shown women that they could do what was unthinkable in this country a few years ago: to get behind the controls of a high-speed train. I have never felt that being a woman has been an obstacle in my professional career," she continues. "My best advice to women who are thinking of starting the professional career as train drivers is to be informed about the characteristics of the job. It requires a lot of responsibility, but it is also highly rewarding."

138:08.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

(i). THE EIN VERED TRACTOR MUSEUM.

Martin Haywood found a rather unusual 'preserved' 0-4-0 Diesel shunting locomotive and some correspondence followed.

"This locomotive appeared whilst I was researching the Sinai manganese mines railways. Loosely translating the text on the museums' webpage suggests it had some kind of connection to the Suez and Abu Zenima, moving to the tractor museum at Moshav Ein Vered near Tel Mond fairly recently. I have so far been unable to pinpoint its identity in the Plymouth works list.

<https://www.tractor.org.il/collection/item/139>

The website of the Tractor Museum states: "Plymouth, Dee 2, 1930, Abu Zenima. Made in Palmut USA. It was originally used to tow sailing ships of 20-60 tons in the Suez Canal in times when there was no wind. After the expansion of the canal in 1964 the locomotives became redundant. The instrument moved to Abu-Zenima, the Chinese Farm, where it was used to copy manganese transport cars. When the desalination plant was moved from Abu Zenima to Eilat, the locomotive was also transported with it. Starting in 1992, it served as a monument in Eilat until it was donated to the museum." Clearly some of the errors here are to do with Hebrew Orthography, the correct word for both 'Plymouth' and 'Palmut' is 'Plymouth' and 'Dee 2' possibly refers to a number 'D2'. Other errors are due to the translation programme used! A 'Chinese farm' presumably means 'Sini' which can mean the Sinai (correct) or China (not).

The Editor's initial response was: "Many years ago there was a small 4wD near the Timna Mines but I am not sure if this is it. The sign in Hebrew on the front says (as one might guess from the face) "Tomas HaKatar', 'Thomas the Engine'. I have not heard of railway lines running parallel to the Suez Canal to enable locos to tow boats so I don't believe this version. Is it standard gauge? Though there is no buffing gear, and a centre coupling. Could be 2'6" and it could have been used at one of the mines and mineral jetties on the west side of the Sinai peninsula. Were there sailing ships (dhows) till 1964? Most strange...."

To this from Martin: "I think it must be the loco in the 'Industrial Railway Record' 214, (page 17 with the photo attached). Paul Cotterell reports a few pages later: "Originally at Yuval Gad, concrete pipe manufacturers, Ashkelon; then to display at the Ostrich Farm, Eilat. Supplied through Pressed Steel Car Co Inc (agents for Plymouth). 'Caterpillar' name carried on radiator bonnet."

Your instincts were correct as it is indeed standard gauge. It's a small narrow gauge locomotive design with its wheels set out far from the frames. Paul Cotterell didn't have an identity for it either."

This led to a search in the Index and a reference to Harakevet 7:4. Finally (for now!) Chen added: "As you correctly identified, this is indeed a standard-gauge locomotive, formerly displayed at the Ostrich Farm venue in Eilat. I have no further details to add to Paul's regarding its identity or history but I will note that I have never seen any concrete evidence that supports the various versions put forward. Also, I did once find a written reference in old Israel Railways management files to the existence of a works shunter in the Yuval Gad works in Ashqelon. However, in more than two-dozen known photos of rail activities in that plant I have never seen any form of motive power other than rail-mounted cranes (made by American Locomotive Cranes)."

So the mystery continues.....



(ii). THE NEW DESIRO HC UNITS: "MULTIPLE UNITS TAKE OVER JERUSALEM SERVICES"

Translated and edited from 'Eisenbahn-Revue International' 6/2022 p.325f.
By Hans Leister.

"At the end of 2017, after some tough competition with Alstom, Bombardier, Hitachi, Skoda and Stadler, the contract was signed for the delivery of new emus and in November 2021 the first of the six-car Siemens units of the Desiro HC type entered passenger service. Now the new blue and white trains have taken over fully the main 'parade' line of Israel Railways, the half-hourly interval service from Herzliyya via Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Avi Zalman, head of the IR electrification programme, and Zahi Golan, Siemens CEO in Israel, met at the new maintenance depot at Ashkelon to assess this extensive contract.

IR: Rising Demand Envisaged

Before the Covid-19 Pandemic the passenger statistics on IR had been rising annually over several years by two-figure percentages. After the difficult years 2020 and 2021 the demand has returned already to 2019 levels. It is expected that the dynamic growth rate will re-establish itself. The development of the country to a hi-tech centre, further immigration and a good economic development have led to enormous capacity problems on Israel's roads and provided the railways with more passengers. The government is demanding a further transfer to public transport, with the aim also of saving energy consumption and using primarily energy which is created within the country (e.g. Solar energy, natural gas). The rail network is therefore being expanded with new lines and the existing network is being expanded and electrified. With additional tracks and signalling technology the capacity is to be raised. In autumn 2022 the first lines will be fitted with ETCS Level 2. The balises and the blue-yellow ETCS Halt signs can already be seen in many places and indicate the impending re-equipment.

IR urgently needed more rolling stock to cope with the rising demand. Further double-deck carriages from the Bombardier Twindexx family and Traxx electric locomotives from Alstom were needed in order to strengthen the existing fleet of double-deckers and in order to run now with electric traction. With the order from Siemens now for the first time electric multiple units have also been acquired.

For visitors from Germany Israel's railways present a form of *déjà-vu*: the red double-deck carriages look the same as those used by DB-Regio and the Siemens units look very similar to those employed on the Rhein-Ruhr Express (RRX) – technically and in terms of the interior design, even if many components are of Israeli manufacture, such as the passenger seats.

Ordering of Electric Multiple Units

The contract with Siemens is for the delivery of 60 units of the Desiro HC type, in both four-car and six-car forms, whereby a lengthening by one further intermediate carriage should be possible. The first batch of 24 vehicles comprised six four-car and eighteen 6-car train sets. 19 of these 24 vehicles had already arrived in Israel by March, eleven of which had been accepted by IR. By late summer all 24 should have been delivered and in service. Two following batches for a total of 36 trains should be called for in the second half of 2022.

In addition to the delivery of the trains Siemens had also assumed responsibility for construction of a maintenance workshop at Ashkelon, optimised after experience with the similar project for a workshop for the RRX trains at Dortmund-Eving. Three raised maintenance tracks allow for the necessary work and the exchange of components. Under normal circumstances a train should come into the works for four hours only after running 40,000km. The units include extensive equipment and sensors for monitoring the condition of components, and these are linked online; at the works the necessary work is known before the train enters the hall.

The workshops belong to Israel Railways. Here Siemens carries out the maintenance of the 24 trains for the next fifteen years and also trains workers, whereby preference is shown to those from underprivileged sections of the population.

The trains are fitted both with the Israeli PZB system, similar to the German type, and also with on-board-units for ETCS by Siemens. It remains to be seen whether the communication with the ETCS line equipment by Thales will function

properly. So far runs on a test stretch have worked well, so that no problems are envisaged with the start of ETCS Level 2 in autumn 2022.

In accordance with the Israeli security regulations the trains will not be run with the driver acting also as conductor; instead train despatch will be supervised by a separate guard and when several units run together each must be manned with personnel.

Operation of rail vehicles in Israel is challenging; there are extreme climatic conditions, from desert heat to snowfall, as well as special matters such as sandstorms and sea mists which make vehicles age more quickly than elsewhere.

Operation of the Siemens Trains.

Six-car Desiro-HC units had by mid-March taken over services on the Jerusalem line with a planned need for six trains; once this line had been completed in 2019 push-pull trains formed of double-deck carriages with Traxx locos had been employed. On the Herzliyya – Jerusalem line there is a half-hourly interval service. The trains serve the station in the centre of Tel Aviv and the Ben Gurion Airport and then continue without halt to the underground station at Jerusalem Yitzhak Navon. It is already feasible that the capacity of a six-car unit will not be sufficient on the Tel Aviv – Jerusalem line and then multiple running as ten- or twelve-car trains will be necessary.

The airport station is shared with the diesel push-pull trains to Modiin; this service continues to Nahariyya, well beyond the extent of the system so far electrified.

From April 2022 the Desiro-HC four-car sets are also used on a new line at hourly intervals from Modiin direct to Jerusalem, over a spur built to link the two lines. With travel time of under half an hour to Jerusalem, Modiin has become a form of suburb of the holy city; according to press reports the timetable is to be doubled soon to half-hourly. Further lines where they will be used are envisaged as the restructured line Netanya – Tel Aviv – Lod – Rehovot, and here multiple traction with 10- or 12-car trains will be necessary.

Customer Reaction is Not Only Positive.

In the Israeli media there were reactions and some criticism following the changeover to Desiro HC trains. Compared to the Bombardier carriages the tables are smaller, there are too few seats and especially difficult entry – in the long run IR established platform heights at 760mm and the Desiros match this; however in recent years platforms with 960mm height have also been built as in Jerusalem, which were better matching to the Bombardier double-deckers with their higher entrances. It may seem surprising that Israel has not only taken over many elements of German railway technology but also some of the problems caused by differences in German infrastructure! The other criticisms will be dealt with by IR and Siemens and the simplest way to increase seating is to run in multiple.

Further orders for electric units and locos will serve mainly to increase capacity; however at the same time two types of rolling stock are being withdrawn – first the Danish-built IC3 Diesel multiple units which should be withdrawn by the end of 2022, albeit one unit will remain and is already at the Israel Railway Museum; also the 35 single-deck passenger carriages built by GEC/Alstom in the 1990's with their doors at the ends. The Viaggio carriages from Siemens with their doors inset towards the centre, as with the German 'Silberlinge' types, will remain in service for now.

However the end of the IC3's means also the end of hopes for revival of the beautiful old line to Jerusalem, since these are the only vehicles with the capability to traverse this very curvaceous route. Traffic was suspended in 2020 due to the Covid crisis and will not be resumed.

In the medium term the entire IR network is to be electrified and in 2024 already Haifa should be reached from the South. One obstacle is the heavily-used line within the city itself and the city is demanding that a four-track tunnel should be built instead in order to remove the barrier between different parts of the urban area and the city and the sea. The city does not wish to agree to the electrification of the existing two-track section as it fears this would remove the urgency for the construction of such a tunnel. However none of the long-distance through routes that pass through Haifa can be turned to electric traction for as long as there remains a gap in the electrification at the city itself."

(iii). A NAMED LOCO

The Editor usually takes any opportunity to buy some ancient back-number of a magazine and recently acquired 'Steam Days' (Redgauntlet Publications) for November 2012. It includes Part I of an article by David Anderson on the North British Railway 0-6-0 tender goods locomotives of Class C designed by Matthew Holmes and later rebuilt with larger boilers and side-window cabs by William Reid – they were later classified 'J36' by the LNER – twenty-five of which were commandeered by the Government and served overseas with the Railway Operating Division in France in 1917-1919; On their return were given painted names (i.e. no nameplates were made) of famous personalities and places connected to the Great War. A total of 168 were built between 1888 and 1900. Simple, reliable machines, the last one survived in service until 1966 and has been preserved as NBR 673 'Maude'.

NBR No. 611 was named 'Allenby'. 'Put to work from Cowlares Works in August 1892 as North British Railway No. 611, this Series '247' engine was rebuilt from its original condition in July 1914 and it was officially with the Railway Operating Division as ROD No. 5611 between November 1917 and June 1919. Thereafter named, it became LNER 'J36' No. 9611 in September 1924. Spending all its LNER working life serving from Polmont shed, it became LNER 5268 in June 1946, while its '60000' series number that denoted its 'Eastern' origin post-Nationalisation was not applied until June 1948. Transferred to Bathgate shed in February 1952, No. 6526 'Allenby' was condemned from that depot in November 1962 and it was thereafter taken to Inverurie Works for cutting up.

The British Field-Marshal, Edmund Henry Hynman Allenby was born in 1861 and died in 1936. Commissioned in 1882, he served in the Boer War and rose to command a cavalry column and was appointed as Inspector General of Cavalry in 1909. During World War I he led a cavalry division in France in 1914 with distinction, although it is reported that his verbal outbursts affected respect from his men. As the Commander of the Third Army from 1915 he directed forces at the Battle of Arras before being transferred to oppose the Turkish forces in Palestine and capturing Damascus. He then became High Commissioner in Egypt."

Two other locos with a vaguely Middle-East connection through their names were:

NBR 657, built July 1891 at Cowlares, rebuilt Nov. 1913 and spent twenty months in military service from October 1917 and was then named 'Plumer'. "Herbert Charles Plumer, the 1st. Viscount Plumer of Messines (1857-1932) was a British Field-Marshal and an officer in the York & Lancaster Regiment. He was appointed to command the 2nd. Corps from May 1915 and succeeded in holding Ypres on the Western Front and captured Messines by trench and mine warfare. Arguably, he was the most liked and trusted of the World War I military leaders." Which sounds fine though in context need not mean much! But he later became a High Commissioner for Palestine 1925-28.

NBR 673, one of fifteen 'Series 663' engines was built by Neilson & Co in Springburn, Glasgow in Dec. 1891. It was rebuilt with larger boiler in December 1915 and was under ROD military control from Nov. 1917 to June 1919; on return to Scotland it was named 'Maude' to commemorate its contribution to the war effort. It served at Parkhead, Haymarket and Dalry Road sheds, went to Bathgate in Jan. 1964 and was withdrawn July 1966, being purchased by the Scottish Railway Preservation Society.

"General Sir Frederick Stanley Maude (1864-1917) who commanded troops on the Mesopotamia Front during World War I. Born in Gibraltar, Maude entered Sandhurst after education at Eton and joined the Coldstream Guards. He reached the rank of Colonel and was further promoted to Brigadier-General with command of the 14th. Brigade in France. After recuperation from wounds received in April 1915, he became Major-General in June of that year and took command of the 33rd. Division in England. Further commands of his saw actions at Suvla and in Mesopotamia, culminating in conflicts against the Turks in the Capture of Baghdad in 1917. Maude died of cholera in November 1917, so NBR No. 673 was posthumously named."

(iv). ITALIAN ARTICULATION

I am indebted to Andreas Knipping for an article in the 'Adler Museum Bulletin' of Witwatersrand University, Johannesburg, Vol. 33 No. 2 for December 2007, which describes the remarkable life and career of Yitzhak Gregory d'Arbella (sometimes spelt with only one 'l') actually born a Russian Jew named Amchislavsky. His first wife died aged 28 from tuberculosis and he later remarried in Jerusalem and sired three sons who all went to university in Italy. For our purposes, of the third son is written:

"Alfredo (1898-4.7.1977), a railway engineer, devised in 1938 a new type of electric locomotive with greater versatility than previous models and revolutionised Italian railroad traffic. He was based in Florence and died childless; he was the only son who chose to be cremated." It seems that Alfredo designed the concept of an entire electric loco generation for the FS – with two halves set upon three bogies. Eventually the following were built over the next 45 years according to this general concept: 468 of Class E.636; 98 of Class E.645; 199 of Class E.646; 403 of Class E.656. One could say that between 1950 and 2000 over half the Italian express trains were hauled by an Arbela-designed loco. Little else is as yet known of him; He was born in Jerusalem (or maybe Zanzibar?) and died in Florence. He was awarded the 'Grande Ufficiale Ordino al Merito della Repubblica Italiana'.

(v). TELEGRAPH CODES.

In 'Backtrack' August 2022 (Vol. 36 No. 8) pp.495 - is an article by Stephen G. Abbott on the Telegraph Codes used on British railways (pre-grouping, then pre-nationalisation, then until 1975) to expedite communication – a single word or combination of letters could save time and expense and capacity over the wires. Noted with some amusement was that the word 'HEBREW' indicated: "Following train is leaving with assistant locomotive. (Give number or name of assistant locomotive and number of vehicles in train.)" (Out of interest, CALVIN meant: "Following train will run as under. Advise all concerned.")

(vi). THE CLUB TRAIN

In 'Backtrack' July 2022 is an article by Paul Salveson on aspects of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway, especially seen through a contemporary writer, Allen Clarke. This includes:

"The premier train of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway was 'The Club Train'. It ran between Blackpool and Manchester Victoria each weekday, conveying the 'cotton lords' to the Exchange. It was a very exclusive train with specially-designed luxury coaches. Members of the 'club' had to pay a supplementary fare for club membership, which entitled them to an armchair, newspapers and at seat service. In the 1924 'Lancashire Annual' Clarke offered a selection of 'Club Train Yarns'. He introduces this rather special train thus: '...the train that takes to Manchester and brings back to Blackpool the businessmen who toil in the smoke so that their spouses may revel by the sea.'

.... One has odd echoes of anti-German, or possibly anti-semitic sentiment. Referring to 'the Waste Merchant' (though not named), Fred Wild, formerly of Bolton, comments on the composition of the train: 'I've nought agen' 'em, for my motto is to live an' let live, as the flea said to the Yorkshireman, but it's funny to see the crowd of 'em making for the train every morning and coming out of the station every evening. They manage to monopolise most of the seats!' He continues that some people are asking 'now that the war has been over for so long, when is the railway going to hand over the Club Train to the British?' Clarke adds that 'At Kirkham the porters shout 'Change here for Lytham an' Palestine!' (meaning Lytham and Blackpool)."

(vii). FRENCH HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL

On a recent journey from Toulouse Matabiau to Le-Tour-de-Carol the Editor was taken by surprise, just under an hour from departure, by a memorial brown goods van parked alongside a lengthy loading platform on the right at Le Vernet D'Ariège station, together with posters for a memorial to a large concentration camp here of which he had (shamefully) not been aware. In the circumstances a good photo was not possible. Maybe a reader has a better one. There are illustrated articles on it in Wikipedia, e.g. <https://meinfrankreich.com/camp-du-vernet/>. Brief excerpts from these indicate it was originally used as an

internment camp during the first world war and then revived from February 1939 – for Republican refugees from the Spanish Civil War. Then: "Between February 1939 and 30. June 1944 some 30,000 people from all five continents trod the platform at Le Vernet d'Ariège. The station was a part of the camp situated on National Road No. 20 between Saverdun and Pamiers. With the outbreak of the Second World War, from October 1939 all persons classified as 'hostile foreigners' and Frenchmen were brought to Le Vernet and interned under dreadful conditions. They included German and French Communists, Italians, foreign Jews, people from Alsace and Lorraine, White-Russians, Bolsheviks and Belgian Fascists. They were interned due to their political views, their activity in resistance or their Jewish origin. Also interned here were Spanish children and women. From August 1942 it was used as a Transit Camp for Jews arrested in the region. It was the 3rd. French Republic and later the French state under Pétain that were responsible for the administration of the camp. From the beginning of the Vichy régime till the end of the German occupation 6,226 people were transported by the French railways in 55 Transports by freight trains either to the German Reich, to Algeria or to Italy. The first transport of 465 "unwanted people" arrived on 12. October 1939 from Paris. Arthur Koestler describes his arrival in the section 'Scum of the Earth' in his autobiography. On 26. January 1941 the internees rebelled due to hunger but this was brutally quashed; in winter 1941/2 some 800 people died due to an epidemic. On 1. September 1942 a train took several hundred Polish and other Jews who had been rounded up from Le Vernet to Drancy; three days later the Jews from the Ariège were part of a transport of one thousand to Auschwitz. Only 26 of these survived the war....." A memorial was established in 1992. So this modest, picturesque little country station has a grim story to tell.



The camp buildings at Le Vernet no longer exist but the former camp station stands on Route Nationale 20 and is used still as a halt for TER trains of SNCF. On the tracks there stands an old wooden wagon identical with those in which the internees were transported to the extermination camps. Inside it a memorial plaque refers to ca. 40 Jewish children aged between 2 and 17 who were transported from Le Vernet to Auschwitz on 1 September 1942.



Also found on the internet is a reference to a memorial at another Internment Camp at Les Milles - a former tile works not far from Aix-La-Provence; Here Lion Feuchtwanger as well as many other opponents of the Nazis were interned. "From August 1942 to 10. September, even before the Germans had occupied this part of France, the most tragic part of the camp's history began; in this period mainly Jews were interned in Les Milles and shortly thereafter transported via Drancy in Paris to the Nazi extermination camps – including numerous Jewish women and children from Marseilles. Finally, seventy years after the final deportation train departed, a memorial was opened at the site....Some 10,000 had been interned here between 1939 and 1942 including ca. 2,000 Jews who were sent to their almost-certain deaths...."



See: www.campduvernet.eu.

(viii). OUT OF AFRICA: LIVINGSTONE RAILWAY MUSEUM

From an article in the 'Juedische Allgemeine' weekly newspaper 23.08.2022: "It is not only the synagogue and the old cemetery that act as reminders of Livingstone's Jewish community. In a lovingly-presented exhibition that was opened in 2013 the history of this community is presented.... It is by no means a coincidence that this small Jewish Museum is a part of the Livingstone Railway Museum; for the first Jewish settlers in Zambia were closely connected with the construction of the railway..."

(ix). SYRIAN HISTORY

From 'Eisenbahn Modellbahn Magazin' 1974-01: "Neue Eisenbahnlinie in Syrien. In Syrien wird mit Hochdruck an dem Bau einer neuen Eisenbahnlinie von der Hauptstadt Damaskus zum nordsyrischen Wirtschaftszentrum Homs gearbeitet. Die 210 km lange Strecke soll mit Hilfe sowjetischer Eisenbahningenieure noch vor Jahresende fertiggestellt und in Betrieb genommen werden. (ch)" – "New railway line in Syria; In Syria work is under



way at some pressure to complete the new railway line from the capital Damascus to the northern Syrian economic centre of Homs. The 210km line should be completed before the year's end and be taken into service." (Thanks to Marc Stegeman).

(x). SALEM

While travelling recently between Singen and Friedrichshafen in southern Germany the Editor was surprised to stop at Salem – see Genesis 14:18 where Melchizedek is the king and priest here. A little internet research revealed that this station had in fact been called Mimmehausen-Neufrach and had been junction for a branch opened in 1905 which headed north through Salem and despite further plans, ended after 8km in Frickingen. In 1972 the junction was renamed Salem and Salem (3km north of here) became Salem Nord. Passenger traffic ended 1953 and freight beyond Salem Nord in 1971, totally in 1990. At the former Frickingen station stand several old railway carriages used as holiday accommodation (aerial photos at:



(xi). ANOTHER MEMORIAL: BRUSSELS

At the national Belgian railway museum at Schaerbeek station in Bruxelles / Brussels – well worth an extended visit – is also this memorial wagon to the deportations.



138:09.

From: 'THE STORY OF THE BEILHARZ FAMILY'. By Paul Sauer

(Revised edition). Pub. Sydney, Australia. 1988.

[We have already published sections of the Templar history in Palestine – this is a separate section but very relevant to railway history. Sauer – I believe he was a city archivist in Stuttgart – writes here on the Hedjaz / Hedschas system in a manner sometimes inaccurate (e.g. Meissner's choice of the 105cm gauge must have been influenced by prior use of this gauge on the Beirut - Damascus line) but also indicating aspects otherwise unknown – if accurate – such as use of horse power on the Muzeirib line, or planned extensions. I assume he had access to original contemporary sources and I have cited him 'in extenso' as a consequence. (He refers to one source being the diary of Gottlieb Ruff Snr.) WLR]

pp.99-110. "The construction of the so-called Hedschas railway... was to be the most significant factor in the development of the construction firm Beilharz Brothers and is therefore discussed in detail. The project started at the turn of the century after numerous political and technical obstacles had been overcome. Other smaller rail projects had already been carried out, or were at least planned, before this large-scale enterprise was undertaken by the Turkish Government. In about 1890 a French firm had linked Beirut and Damascus by rail. In 1891 a Belgian concern had built a 'tramway', a horse-drawn railway from Damascus to Muzerib. Its main purpose was to transport wheat from Hauran to the Syrian capital. In addition to their own domestic requirements for grain, Haifa and Acre were important trans-shipping centres for the export of Hauran wheat. Between 100,000 and 150,000 tons of wheat were transported to the two cities by camel caravans annually. A rail link would significantly improve the movement of freight and help alleviate the problems of communications in North Palestine and East Jordan, which were distant from the coast. In 1890 a British syndicate had won the concession from

the Turkish Government to establish a rail line from Haifa/Acre via Medjedal, Bania, Hasbaye and Muzerib to Damascus.

In the same year Dr. Schumacher and Ernst Voigt, another civil engineer, were commissioned by the Turkish Government to survey the rail route from Acre/Haifa to the Jezreel Plain (Medjedal). But instead of the originally planned northern route which ran via Baniyas and Hasbaye, and crossed difficult and mountainous terrain and would have involved exorbitant costs, Schumacher and his assistant Weiler proposed a route further south, which was shorter and less expensive to build. The new route followed the Jezreel Plain and Yarmuk Valley on to the Hauran Plateau and the Golan heights. After lengthy deliberations the Government agreed to the Schumacher plan and construction commenced. But it was soon halted again. Perhaps this was for financial reasons, or possibly because Beirut objected to the project, fearing a reduction of communication and trade traffic and subsequent commercial disadvantage. In any case the recommendation to recommence construction was delayed until 1890. By then the project had become part of a much more extensive rail network - the Hedschas railway project.

Hedschas (Hidschas) is that north-western part of Saudi Arabia which extends from the Gulf of Aqaba to the Asir Mountain Ranges and covers an area of about 450,000 square kilometres. Both of the Holy Cities of the Moslems, Medina and Mekka, are in the Hedschas region. When the Turkish Government finally committed itself to the large-scale project of a railway line from Damascus to Hedschas, taking in Derâ, Amman and Ma'an, a decisive factor in its consideration was the intention to make the extremely exhausting pilgrimages to the Holy City easier for its Faithful. Indeed, to a large number of Mohammedans living in Syria and Palestine it would create the first opportunity to conduct a pilgrimage at all. There were of course important political, military-strategic and economic considerations as well.

Construction began simultaneously in Haifa and in Damascus. The overall project was directed by the German engineer Heinrich August Meissner, known as 'Meissner Pasha' (born 3rd. January 1862 in Leipzig, died 14th. January 1940 in Istanbul.) After completing his studies at the Dresden Polytechnic Institute in 1885 Meissner had gone to Turkey. He quickly rose to a leading position in the railroad system of the Ottoman Empire. Towards the end of the year 1900 he was commissioned to build the Hedschas railway. He pursued the gigantic undertaking with his characteristic vigour. During the survey of the route he spared himself neither trouble nor hard work, and completed that stage in record time. Several thousand Turkish soldiers were at his disposal at all times during the construction work, which was carried out in stages. The project was principally financed by voluntary donations from devout Mohammedans from all over the world.

Construction from the Damascus end made good progress and reached Medina in 1908. 1,302 rail kilometres were built in eight years, a remarkable achievement when one considers the difficulties involved. More than one hundred kilometres of uninhabited desert had to be crossed. Physical work was immensely trying in the hot and barren area. Extraordinary demands were made on the engineers, the soldiers and the workers. The severe water shortage was one of the most serious problems which had to be tackled. To this end Meissner constructed large underground water storage tanks in the desert. Water tanks mounted on rail wagons supplemented them. Only locomotives with extra water-carrying capacity were used on the supply train back-up. Meissner chose the narrow gauge of 1.05 metres for the single track railway. [sic.] Numerous supplementary constructions had to be built en route including 1,532 bridges and culverts as well as a number of tunnels. An important 10,600 square metre workshop was established in Damascus. Smaller workshops were set up at Ma'an and Medain Saleh. Ninety-six station buildings were required along the length of the Hedschas railway.

From abroad, progress of the construction was followed with avid interest. After all, the Hedschas railway was the first major rail project built under Turkish direction. When the Ma'an – Medina section of the track was officially opened on 1st. September 1908 the 'Times of India' praised the completion of that stage as a major historical event. According to the 'Times' the singularly outstanding track construction achievements of the Sudan and the Manchurian railways had been surpassed. Meissner, who in 1910 accepted a leading position in the construction of the Baghdad railway, received high distinctions for his services. As early as 7th. March 1904 the Sultan had already honoured him with the official title of Pasha.

The need efficiently to transport building materials to the Hedschas railway project prompted Meissner to establish a spur line towards the Mediterranean coast in 1903, linking Derâ to Haifa. Because of the mountainous terrain, the construction of the branch line became a technical masterpiece. Starting from Haifa, the track crossed the Jezreel Plain and the Yarmuk Valley towards Bet-Shean (Beisan). [sic] From here it rose in many twisting loops past the once famous El Hami Baths on to the Muzeirib Plateau. In the Yarmuk Valley alone, Meissner had 443 bridges and culverts built as well as six viaducts and eight tunnels. The line was officially opened on September 1st. 1905.

Meissner envisaged that further branch lines off the Haifa – Derâ line would promote the development of transport and communications in this part of Palestine as well. One line was to link Afule, approximately thirty-five kilometres south-east of Haifa, with Nablus and Jerusalem. A second one was to connect Muzerib with El Husn. Of these projects, however, only the section Afule – Dschenin had been finished by early 1913. As mentioned, Meissner had also been charged with the construction of the Baghdad railway in the last years before the First World War. To the Turkish Government the construction of an efficient rail network in Palestine and adjacent East Jordan was of secondary importance, though it conceded the economic advantages. But all this changed when, late in 1914, the Ottoman Empire joined Germany as an ally in the First World War. In an endeavour to effectively combat Great Britain's power base in Egypt and especially to gain control of the Suez Canal, the Turkish military command now gave absolute priority to the establishment of a strategic rail network in Palestine. So the construction of the railway from Afule via Nablus and Lodd (Lud, Lydda) to Beersheba was taken on once more. At the end of 1915 this section was completed. The Egyptian border was reached in 1917, at the railway station Hafir el Audscha. Complete control of the construction was in the hands of the expert, Meissner Pasha.

The firm Beilharz brothers (Christian, Fritz, Immanuel) was heavily involved in the construction of the buildings of the Hedschas railway project, and many of the buildings on the branch lines. In 1907 the firm was commissioned to construct thirty station buildings, six of these were between Haifa and Derâ, eight between Derâ and Damascus and sixteen from Derâ to the south. However, the buildings in Haifa, Damascus and Acre were built by other firms. As well as the construction, Beilharz brothers carried out all the excavations and the fitting out of the buildings. To cope with the extensive carpentry and joinery work it was agreed that the fourth brother Gottlob join forces with Johannes Ruff, and that the extended joinery business would be affiliated with the construction company.

A few of the station buildings in the Haifa – Derâ section could be built with the construction teams based in Haifa. But as the work became increasingly far flung the building supervisors had to work and live in an enclosed freight-carriage, which was then

shunted from site to site as required. Frequently the supervisor's wife or daughter-housekeeper also lived in the carriage.

[Note: This implies that small locos and some rolling stock were delivered to the Haifa end of the line for use on construction works. WLR]

The stations between Derâ and Damascus were built by Fritz, and those south of Derâ by Christian and Immanuel. By mid-October 1913 the Beilharz Brothers had completed their contract. Unfortunately Immanuel had been taken seriously ill earlier and had returned home. He died on 3rd. October 1913, at forty years of age. His widow retained her interest in the construction company. The associated joinery business of Gottlob Beilharz & Johannes Ruff was dissolved. Gottlob Beilharz once again returned to his trade and Johannes Ruff acquired and moved to a farming allotment in Betlehem (Galilee).

Following the outbreak of the First World War the firm Beilharz Brothers contracted the construction of the railway line Afule – Nablus – Lod – Beersheba. The Turkish army was expanding Beersheba as a principal supply base, where Fritz directed construction of railway buildings, several large, permanent supply sheds and dwellings. Whilst there he contracted a serious bout of malaria and was forced to return home to Haifa. Christian took his place. Christian's wife Lina, who kept house for him in Beersheba, caught typhoid fever and died. The German army doctors who had been called in were unable to save her. Later Christian recounted (in his diary):

"Due to the war and crop failures, food was in short supply. The poor were starving. There were German forces stationed in Beersheba at the time. A large tent had been erected nearby, where our transport drivers sheltered their horses. When the stables were un-mucked in the mornings the poorest of the Arab women were already waiting to collect the horse manure, which they dried in the sun and then picked out the undigested barley corns from which they baked their bread. One of these women supplied us with our daily drinking water, and water for our domestic use. We assume that she brought typhoid-carrying lice into our kitchen, as Lina found one in her clothes. In any case, Lina became ill with typhoid fever, which is normally transmitted by this type of vermin. The two German army doctors in attendance diagnosed the diseases, and found her death to be due to heart-failure brought on by the fever. She passed away on 4th. May 1916, two days after her 56th. birthday."

The British, with their superior naval forces, controlled the camel caravan route which ran along the coast from Palestine to Egypt. To maintain their supplies the Turks, supported by a few German units, attempted to establish a road link by pushing through Beersheba and across the desert, up to and across the Suez Canal. They actually came within thirty-five kilometres of the strategic waterway. A few reconnaissance patrols led by German Templar settlers even reached it. But the Turks lacked ammunition and supplies and were defeated by the British in August 1916 at Kemani, at the Bay of Tina.

As the Turks retreated, the British command was in a position to seize the initiative. They had solved their supply and reinforcement problems by constructing a rail track from Egypt along the coast which they extended eastward as their offensive progressed. On 25th. December 1916 the British occupied El Arish, on 1st. June 1917 they reached the border of Palestine near Ra'fa. They then slowly moved north-east and east on a wide front. On 31st. October 1917 Beersheba fell into the hands of Australian troops. During October British troops were initially repulsed at Gaza with heavy losses on both sides, but a few weeks later they succeeded in taking the town. The Temple settlements of Wilhelma, which was partially destroyed in earlier battles, was taken on 14th. November 1917. On 9th. December the British marched into Jerusalem. By the end of 1917 all Temple settlements in the south of Palestine – Wilhelma, Sarona, Jaffa and Rephaim (near Jerusalem) - were in the hands of the British. Those civilians from the settlements who had not joined the retreat of the German and Turkish forces were moved to Egypt on 3rd. August 1918 where they were interned. Since almost all the men eligible for military service were in the German army, the internees were mostly elderly men, women and children.

Shortly before the fall of Beersheba the Beilharz brothers' team had been called to Damascus where Meissner Pasha engaged them to build a large aircraft hangar. The team had been reduced to the brothers Fritz and Gottlob and Fritz's sons, Fritz Junior and Reinhard, and Johannes and Wilhelm Haar and a few Arab labourers. In April 1917 the mayor of the Temple settlement of Haifa, Abraham Dück, retired at seventy-one years of age and Fritz Beilharz was elected in his place. This primarily honorary position carried modest mayoral expenses of four Turkish pounds per month. During Fritz's absences in Damascus, his deputy Hans Bulach and the community's treasurer Johannes Pross Jnr. attended to civic matters as they arose.

On 23rd. September 1918 Indian troops under British command occupied the city, with which the settlement by then had merged. Aaron Rosenfeld, an official of the Rothschild Administration and later Consul and then Consul-General for Belgium, went to meet the invading troops under a white flag as they approached the city from Mount Carmel and from the Jaffa Road. He escorted their commander to the mayor of the German settlement, Fritz Beilharz, and then to Haifa's Arab mayor. The British General assured Beilharz that the German population would not be harmed if all remained calm.

However, it was not easy to meet the British demands for extensive quarters for their officers and men, The British billeting officers chose forty-three homesteads, which had to be wholly or partly vacated, affected families had to find accommodation for themselves and stables for their stock elsewhere, and the people gave up their homes with great reluctance. However, after the Armistice the British administration agreed to pay rent for the confiscated properties and made good all damage before the properties were returned to their owners.

Over time, a pleasant, even friendly relationship developed between the German settlers and the British army and administrative personnel, which lasted until the outbreak of the Second World War. As mayor, Fritz Beilharz displayed tact and great negotiative skills. Helped by the fact that he was fluent in both English and Arabic, he tackled his daily problems with quiet composure and was unperturbed by the difficulties of the times. With his calm confidence he won the trust of the British military administration and later that of the civil administration. His relationship with the first British governor of the Galilee region, who had studied at Heidelberg and spoke excellent German, was particularly good. The amicable stance between their mayor and the occupying power was to the advantage of all residents. A number of settlers even accepted employment on a railroad project on the coast, which followed the advancing British troops. Between 1918 and 1920 Fritz Beilharz supervised the construction of a wharf east of Haifa, it was equipped with rail tracks and could accommodate small passenger and cargo vessels.

He remained mayor of the German settlement until 1921 when he resigned from his position and embarked on an extended holiday to Germany. It is to his credit above all others that the Templer settlement Haifa survived the difficult post-war years relatively unscathed, and that the Templers returning from internment in Egypt, and the returned men from Germany, were able to make a new start under tolerable conditions. He died in Haifa on 18th. February 1937."

138:10

DIE WARTE.

PART 5.

MORE EXCERPTS FROM THE TEMPLER CHRONICLES

138:10. 'DIE WARTE' PART 5. MORE EXCERPTS FROM THE TEMPLER CHRONICLES

p. 171. 2.4.1874. "The External Conditions of the Colonists in Jaffa.

"A major difficulty with which the businessman is confronted at every step here consists of the fact that the foundations for his activity are absolutely totally missing. He cannot connect to anything that already exists, but has to create everything himself from new, in terms not only of the production but also of the distribution of whatever goods he makes. Each tool that he needs for his trade, most of the materials which he requires, all the large and small things that he would normally be accustomed to finding relatively close by and can acquire, are not available here in this country; he has to arrange to bring everything from Europe. When however he has managed to transport all that he requires across the sea and has established his factory nicely and firmly, he is still missing the main thing: A customer base. The inhabitants of the country are simply not used to the things he makes and do not even feel any need for the things he works on; Furthermore those objects for which the Arabs do have an interest can be imported through the Levant trade so cheaply that the craftsman cannot compete with them. In consequence the craftsman sees himself bound hand and foot in whichever direction he goes; it is therefore hardly to be wondered at that until today the Orient remains largely a closed field for the Western industrial approach. To this must be added that the government does nothing for the improvement of trade and industry and is usually more involved in obstructing than supporting it.

A further problem arises when the European craftsman decided to work initially for the needs of the population, in order at least to earn something for his own sustenance. The difficulty which he now confronts comprises of the fact that there are already Arab craftsmen available for meeting the needs of the Arab customers and a European Master Craftsman simply cannot compete with them; not because he cannot perform the work just as good or even better, but because he cannot work as cheaply as can the Arab Master. The Arab requires unbelievably little for his own support and therefore calculates only a low price for his work. The European, who is accustomed to many requirements, has to set his price at double or triple this at least and therefore can in no way compete with the Arab on price. The European craftsman can therefore only concentrate on matters which the Arab Master does not understand, and is therefore restricted to fine artistic work; he therefore finds himself however active in a field in which the Arab population, by which is meant the lower classes of this people, have neither need nor interest in purchasing. So the European craftsman finds almost every street that he wishes to enter closed to him....

Trade.

Even if the level of trade in the Orient is not at the height it was in former times, it is still quite significant; many natural products are exported – grain, olives, sesame, southern fruits etc. whilst colonial goods and Western manufactures calculated for the needs of the Arab population are imported. Alexandria, Beirut and Smyrna are the central points of this Orient trade, which is mostly in the hands of Westerners and Greeks. Wholly missing however are all those trade goods which relate to the modern cultural life; With the exception of these semi-European cities one could until a few years ago not find in Palestine any of those goods without which a European can almost not live.

Of the current trading establishments two belong to the Tempel settlements and, if one excludes exports which are almost wholly in the hands of locals or some European trading houses, they take undoubtedly the first place. These trading establishments are the retail shop of Herr Friedel and the Flour and Timber business of Herr Breisch. Both businesses are not restricted only to the German settlers, but find their main customer base amongst the Arab population. Since the Splitter business was first established in Jerusalem (in 1856) and the Tempel established its settlement there, one can purchase all forms of European manufactured goods, so that it is seldom that one wishes for anything that one cannot find in the shops of Duisberg (formerly the Firma Spittler) and in Jaffa that of C. Friedel. These shops are almost the only ones and so in consequence they stock a wide variety of goods in terms of (Spezereien), Textiles, Porcelain goods and other items which in other places would be sold in separate stores. Without such shops, the German colonists could barely exist, and the same applies to the other Westerners here, such as the families of the missionaries etc. It has however come to pass that also the Arabs, namely the prosperous ones, are not insensitive to the western manufactures and even find a special thrill in furnishing in European style. Since this custom is growing, it has so developed that these stores now find the majority of their customers amongst the Arabs.

It is similar with the trade in timber. The country itself provides only firewood, comprising different forms of There are indeed in some places proper grown trees with trunks, especially oaks, but with the total lack of roads and freight wagons it is not possible to transport entire logs and so they decay on the spot where they grow or they are burned down, in order at least to get to their branches,

which can then be loaded upon donkeys and camels. The forest trees therefore appear to the natives to be wholly without use and they have no owners; anyone who wishes to can go and fell a tree and carry off as much as he is able to. Even if the ground on which the trees grow has been transferred from government to private ownership, an enquiry of the owner for permission to fell the tree is usually enough, for he will gladly allow this, since the timber itself is of no use to him.

Since however timber for construction and furniture is vital even for the most simple of life styles, there has for a long time been a business in wood in a small scale; for all wood that is necessary for such purposes has to be brought by ship over the sea. The Arabs or Greeks who originally set up this trade in wood do not know well the places of origin and also the consumption was too limited to enable a larger trade to grow from this. The timber trade, as it existed until then, was therefore more in the nature of an improvisation; one simply arranged for planks and beams to be brought with a steamer, from Trieste and other places, like all other wares. It is only through the house construction by the colonists, who require wooden floors, doors, shutters, windows, and much other wooden items, which the Arabs do not need, and so that other Europeans and even Arabs began to build larger houses in European style, that the demand for timber rose and the need for an organised trade in importing timber.

Following repeated requests from members of the Tempel colony Herr Breish decided to make a trial with timber importation; this has now run for over a year and has already reached such an extent that a larger storehouse must be built for it, which is one of the larger constructions now in the middle of the Colony. The wood, cut, beams, planks in all sizes and thicknesses, are brought partially from Mersena (Mersin) in Asia Minor, where formerly some Tempel members operated a leasehold, and partially from Trieste, and indeed on sailing ships which are hired specifically for the timber trade. There are it is true some difficulties with importation of timber by sailing ship, for Jaffa's harbour has a poor reputation amongst the ship owners and is considered dangerous. Nevertheless some weeks ago a ship from Trieste landed and brought its cargo safely to land. One must be astounded at the carrying capacity of such a ship, for the goods which came covered all the free space in the colony so that one could barely walk through. Now the storehouse has been filled with it and the colony has regained its former more spacious appearance.

This timber trade is a good deed for the entire country and meets an urgent need of the colonisation. The woodworkers now find the required timber for their woodworking businesses and get this for a reasonable price. Also our farmers get some use from this through their wagons, in that they transport the timber from the landing place to the colony and later once more from the warehouse to its eventual destination.

(to be continued)

p. 173. Correspondence. Jerusalem. 13. February 1874.

"The last storm and snow a month ago led to people freezing on the streets and in their houses, for especially the fellahin are not accustomed to planning for cold and heavy rain and so there is great need. In Jerusalem over 100 old houses and arches have collapsed and many will need to be demolished due to large cracks. This number will surely increase

when things dry out again. In the country this is even more the case since the fellahin build their houses of clay and the deep snowfall weakens everything. They do remove the snow as quickly as possible from the roofs but the great dampness leaves no dry place over in their hovels."

"The result is that prices of everything, especially meat, coal and wood, have increased greatly. Also the arrival of so many Jews in the last year or so, for over 200 families came one after the other, so rents went up enormously. They also buy whatever houses and land they can, so here too prices have risen by 80% compared to last year. Moreover the Jews claim that their number will soon increase further. From Southern Russia alone 1,000 families are anticipating coming....."

The increase in costs is also aided by the Jews who are often not satisfied with the doubled or tripled price of the coal and therefore purchase the entire supply at the burning places. Fortunately the government has established limits on such speculation through police regulations in that they took up all the coal (already more than 100 camels) and had it sold at a reasonable price.

Due to the conflicts in Bethlehem last year the Turkish government decided to have a barracks built next to the Church of the Nativity on the cemetery there, but this has not been completed. One no longer believes indeed that it ever will be completed, for it has been so badly constructed that actually one ought to start again from the foundations. The military is therefore still quartered within the Nativity Church itself. From here there is a telegraph line to Bethlehem. It is not known how the conflict will find its end. Since the main persons causing it were led off to Constantinople, there is a relative peace here. Nevertheless until now the Greek-Arab population visits neither the Monastery nor the Church of the Sepulchre but holds its services separately." (Chr. Eppinger?)

p.174. 16.4.1874. The Life of the Colonists in Jaffa. (*Continuation*).

Travel Industry.

A further branch of industry whose importance one understands more here than elsewhere, is that of guest houses and hotels. This entire industry is absent totally here, and facilities such as guest houses and inns are only encountered inasmuch as they have been established by Europeans and are used by travellers. One finds guest houses therefore only in the larger cities, where Europeans live and travellers make their pauses. Otherwise one finds in the Arab places only coffee houses, where only coffee is drunk and one smokes the nargileh or water pipe, which is also provided by the landlord. For overnighting one uses the *khans*, empty houses in which one can stable one's animals and, if one so wishes, lie down next to them. If therefore one deviates from the normal traffic routes of the foreigners and wishes to look around the country, one has to bring tents or rely upon the hospitality of the local inhabitants. For the rich Englishmen and Americans, who are those who mostly travel round Palestine, there are especial guides, called dragomans, who lead the caravans of the foreigners for horrendous prices, provide tents and provisions and show the notable sites of the country according to the tastes of the travellers. It is however obvious that clean and hospitable facilities would suit their requirements better; therefore those which do exist are well used by foreigners. The Templers have so far established three such, one in the colony in Jaffa, called the Jerusalem Hotel, one in Haifa, the third in Ramleh."

Since we recognised at the outset that the travel facilities, to which also well-ordered accommodation also belongs, have an important part to play in the improvement of the country, it was therefore one of our wishes that when we established our Tempel outpost in Jaffa (1869), amongst the houses that we purchased that had been left behind by the Americans there should be a Guest House and we did not neglect to purchase this from the house of Spittler & Co. into whose possession it had come. We also decided that ownership of a guest house was in conformity with our missionary work, in that the travellers who come here from all countries of the Earth and spend some time amongst us in our colony do not only go merely to revere the holy places and similar antiquities but that they believe in the prophets and work on the promised renewal of the land

The Jerusalem Hotel, which has been for three years in the ownership of the current occupant, Herr E. Hardegg, also enjoys a frequent attendance by travellers, to the extent that it has had to be expanded by a large three-storey wing. This establishment has encountered some competition recently, for it is here just as it is everywhere else that where there is a profit to be made competitors gather so as to take the booty from one another. Only this past summer an impressive building has been erected on the road which leads to our colony and before one reaches the orchard; it is said it has been built with capital from Beirut and it will be equipped as an elegant hotel. Whoever wishes to come to the Jerusalem Hotel will therefore have to pass this Arab hotel first; nevertheless the first-named with its elevated situation and its new wing with a tiled roof, rising high above the orange trees, will not remain unnoticed. Should however the tourist traffic not only continue in the extent to which it has already reached but even grows further, something which may be confidently expected with the increasing interest in travel and the steadily-growing means of transport, then two such guest houses can certainly exist next to each other here. In addition the level of order and cleanliness in a European-served guesthouse will always be superior to that of an Arab one. The attractive situation of the Jerusalem Hotel in the middle of a peaceful and orderly community, surrounded by orange orchards and provided with a wonderful view over the city, the orchards and the sea will also be recommended to those Europeans who wish to spend the winter in a mild climate. After much experience that we have gathered, we can assert that the climate here is especially beneficial for those with chest problems. We can provide examples where such people, who had already been given up by their doctors, were so cured by their stay here that they were able to return later to their professions.

The Tempel Guest House C. Bohnenberger in Ramle, that in most respects should also be classed as part of the Tempel community of Jaffa, is an Arab building, provided with a courtyard, which is protected by a high wall against the road and gives the whole place the impression of a fortified property. From this courtyard, that also serves as a stall for the horses, one enters immediately the arched ground-floor rooms and into the kitchen. The second storey also has a small open area that rests upon the rooms of the lower storey, that is protected against the outside by a breast-high wall and, representing the entrance, leads into the rooms of the upper storey, each of which is domed. Whilst the architecture is therefore wholly Arab, the furnishings and the kitchen is European, so that the travellers can feel very comfortable and familiar. There is indeed in Ramle also a Latin monastery and a Russian Hospice where one can be taken in; but the tourists normally prefer to get down at the guest house, for they will not be bothered here but will be provided with their needs in a friendly and cheap manner. This guest house, which also takes in overnight guests, is well-visited for hardly any traveller goes from Jaffa to Jerusalem without stopping in Ramleh.

As well as these guest houses which serve the tourist trade the Templar colony also has public houses, which serve for the social life amongst the colonists themselves and which have been understood to fill a real need. The farmers at the property in Sarona are often on the road, busy with buying and selling. They have their base at the colony and therefore require a place where they can sit down and get something to eat for themselves. For this purpose Frank the Elder has opened a bar canteen at the Jaffa Colony and Sonderecker one in Sarona.

p.176. "The travel industry requires not only hotels but also roads and travel opportunities. However these latter are missing in almost the whole of Turkey, especially in Palestine. A small substitute, which our farmers try to offer, will be dealt with in the article on Sarona. The Jaffa - Jerusalem road, the only road in the country, is in a state of great decay and one yearns for a visit by a King or a Kaiser, because without this pressure from abroad this country's government will do nothing to repair the roads. In the past the pasha of Jerusalem had indeed turned to the Templar Society and asked if they would be prepared to take on the repair of the road and the provision of a postal service for passengers and goods, but the matter soon came to nothing, for two reasons; firstly the enterprise would be too big for the resources of the Society, and then the government had imposed so many conditions in its own interest, that we had to distance ourselves from the idea straight away. They demanded for instance a large annual tax, with the argument that we could charge tolls for use of the road; we however wanted the State to handle all toll matters and requested for the sake of the general good the allocation of land on both sides of the road for the provision of traffic 'stations'.

"Later there came the project for the construction of a railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem; a French company which had managed to acquire a firman for the line's construction, had surveys for the line carried out and for a moment it seemed as though the line would really be built. However, for half a year now it has all gone very quiet and all the engineers and other employees have departed again. However the situation might really be, this much is certain: That this railway construction, once the idea had finally begun to be taken seriously and had been properly based, would sooner or later be built in connection with larger, wider railway enterprises. In recent times there has been the rumour of a railway construction project which would connect to the Egyptian railways and go via Gaza and Jaffa to Jerusalem and be extended to other places.

"If only the Jerusalem road were to be restored to a good condition, that would be of enormous value to our settlement as the freer flow of persons and goods would enable our activities to grow and be a stimulus to the development of the land."

p.177. 28.5.1874. Manufacture and Industry.

"If there is any country in which the basic requirements for manufacture of goods is wholly missing, then it is the area under Turkish domination and especially here in the Holy Land. All products of the country that require mechanical or chemical treatment cannot be worked here. The raw olive oil is sent to France, so that it can be refined there and brought to sale; a part of this is then brought back here and sold to the more prosperous people, for the common people must be satisfied with the unrefined oil.

"In the same way raw animal skins are exported overseas, whereas leather is imported. In general many Western products which serve for clothing or household needs, as well as many foodstuffs, such as wine, beer, cheese, sugar wares etc. are imported from the West.

"Should any industrial enterprise which requires technical apparatus attempt to establish itself it soon goes away or sinks down. In the Audscheh [the Yarkon] near its mouth there still stand the remains of a steam machine which was intended to bring the sweet water of this river to Jaffa whereby it could then be used for watering the gardens; but the plan was not carried through to fruition, although the conditions for such an enterprise were good, for the use of water pumps for the wells to water the gardens around Jaffa costs each year an enormous sum. In Jerusalem a steam mill had been standing idle for many years, until it was purchased by the Templar Society. As soon as any piece of any machine requires repair, there is no place in the entire country where such a repair can be carried out, so the machine stands still and the business goes under. Hundreds of thousands have already been wasted in this manner and so in general any industrial activity in the Orient is considered to be impossible.

"Here also the Templers are taking an initiative and indicated a change of approach and announced initially an enterprise for the most necessary of all the products, for the milling of flour. Templer people are now setting up a steam-powered mill in Jaffa, a windmill in

Haifa and two treadmills, one in Jerusalem, one in Ramleh, whilst a further treadmill is to be set up also in Nazareth.

"The Arabs still use hand mills just as in the most ancient times. So one sees, as one can read in Matt. 24:41, how two women sit at a hand mill, pitiable creatures whose arms are almost falling off, and turn the stone from morning till evening, which crushes the wheat, in order to protect themselves at least against starvation. [Two women will be grinding at the mill; one is taken and one is left." Matt 24:41.] Horse-powered mills are very rare, and the watermills which can be found on some rivers are exceedingly primitive. The turning upper stone at the upper end of a vertical stake and a horizontal concave shovel stone at the lower end, moved by a stream of water at the side, comprise the entire milling machinery. If several milling procedures are to be carried out by water power, as is the case on the Audscha, then each mill requires its own water wheel, for the concept of transmission of power is unknown here. The wheat is merely crushed, the bran is not separated; finer forms of flour are even more seldom separated from the less fine.

"All water power and all watermills are government property; the miller is therefore a lessee and has to pay a large sum for the lease, a sum which he knows however how to reduce in that he remains always behind with his lease payments and then, when the sum owed becomes too high, he simply withdraws and leaves the mill still, which will in turn be leased to a new lessee. He will then follow the same procedure as his predecessor. The Government of course receives nothing much from all this yet is at the same time preventing industrial growth and is keeping the population in its poverty. That under such circumstances the erection of a proper modern mill would be of great benefit to the entire country speaks for itself and also the fact that flour milling is the industry that should first be introduced and attempted here.

"For this purpose the Templer Society is well placed inasmuch as back in 1869, by the purchase of Mezler's property, we came into possession of a steam-powered mill. This had been rather clumsily erected and was operated by a stationary steam machine which soon wore out and required frequent repair. Since for such repairs the machinery manufacturers of Berg near Stuttgart, who had provided the machine originally, had to be used, the mill was often out of action for months at a time. The situation grew so serious that one had to make a decision whether to give up the milling business entirely or whether the machinery should be improved and enlarged. The latter was decided upon. Another steam-powered mill that was standing uselessly and with a ruined mobile steam boiler was acquired from Jerusalem and at the same time we ordered a steam boiler which could work both sets of machinery. Since the milling machinery has been so expanded it needs to work day and night without interruption and this has been done. The coal for fuel is brought either direct from England or from Port Said, where there are large stores of coal. This mill works mainly for the inhabitants of the country, Christians, Jews and Mohammedans, and is combined with a flour shop which also sells Russian flour. The local wheat flour when mixed with the Russian flour provides excellent bread whereas the local bakers, at least the European ones, do not wish to use the local flour alone.

"The treadmill in Ramleh has just been erected and so I will not go into detail, even though the small Templer colony in this town, situated some four hours from Jaffa, counts as a part of the local community here. One can however say that the inhabitants of Ramleh seem to be pleased to have a mill in their town and so it seems that good business will be made here.

"There are many other forms of industry which are lacking in this country – for example a tannery, soap-making, production of tiles and pottery, wine production and much more. However these forms of manufacture are not as urgently required as is the production of flour and so it would be recommended to develop this further, albeit with great care. The more the Templer colonies grow, the sooner one can begin to consider introducing new manufactures."

p. 179. 11.6.1874. Industry.

"No people that wishes to haul itself above the level of animals can exist without a certain capacity for industry, and so amongst the local Arabs here one also finds certain tradesmen: bakers, butchers, shoemakers, carpenters, stonemasons etc.; but these craftsmen carry on their business in such a natural way, without any mechanical aids, that one can only be amazed at their skills, whereby they are in a position to create things that our own people could not make without their tools. On the whole however the Arab craftsman is of low status and delivers products which are inadequate for the standards of Europeans. When one excludes these rather primitive Arab industrial activity, one can say that what one understands in other lands as hand work is something which has not yet arrived amongst the Arabs. On the whole one can say that it will really be something new should the Templer people and other Europeans introduce industry according to the European style.

"No craftsman can work for a people which goes barefoot, is only half-clothed, needs no equipment, not even a spoon, fork or knife; however as well as the poor Arabs there are wealthier ones who do show concern for beauty and elegance, who dress colourfully from head to foot and are also concerned for decorations and comfort in their homes. The members of this more prosperous class are however, due to their lack of intellectual training and any awareness of the higher purpose of life, even more open to that which merely pleases the senses. The childlike Arabs of the ruling class have a fascination with anything that glitters. Apart from this higher class of Arabs, who just after the external glitter of Western culture and some of whom have gained their education in Paris and other European cities, there are also the monasteries which are built in European style and therefore also understand the requirements of Western culture. It is this segment of the local population

for which our craftsmen can mainly work, apart from any work they undertake for the Europeans who live here.

"The Templer Society requires all forms of industry for its colonising work, but in the beginning phase it requires everything that belongs to the area of construction. Therefore masons and joiners are especially numerous and a carpenter also finds employment, although wood is used very economically here. Here and in Sarona there are four Master Stonemasons – Imberger (father and son, who work together) and the two Wennagel brothers, who also work together; the first pair live in the Jaffa colony, the other two in Sarona, though the work is not divided between their living places. Each of these Masters works with various assistants and apprentices, not counting the Arab masons who are also called upon in numbers as required. For many tasks the Arab masons have an especial talent, for example the completion of waterproof storage chamber roofs; also they work for a lower wage than European masons. Whereas the masons until now have found their employment almost exclusively in the Colonies, the joiners work also for the Arabs. Each of the two Masters Frank and Fast has five or six apprentices; the former works mainly in building construction, the latter devotes himself more to making furniture and spends about half his time working for Arabs.

"Three Master blacksmiths are active; two, Klenk father and son, live in the Colony and until now work mainly for the Colonists; the third, Würst, lives in the town and works almost exclusively for Arabs.

"The painting of rooms and wagon construction are two industries recently introduced by the Templers and until now these trades were unknown in the country. Since there are usually no windows or shutters in Arab houses and in general there is very little made of wood, they require neither an oiler nor a painter; in the same way wagon-builders were totally unnecessary since until the Templers came there were no wagons to be seen in Jaffa. Our farmers require these craftsmen therefore all the more, for they possess wagons for goods and carriages for persons. At least one Arab now drives a wagon, which he decided to acquire from our people, and he drives his mules onwards with cries of '*Hoti! Hist!*' as he attempts to make progress over the poor roads. As soon as the government does something about the roads the transport industry will soon enter a new stage of progress and will have a major influence over all other industries.

(p. 181) "Among the trades connected to clothing it is the shoemakers who have the best prospects in this country. Even before the Templers came a European cobbler had established himself in Jaffa, Herr Vogenroth, who later joined the Templers. Recently a second shoemaker named Sigler has established himself in the town and works with 5 or 6 Arabs and Greeks almost wholly for the wealthier Arabs. In order to understand this one must know that Arabs are very fussy about luxurious footwear. As well as these we have two other shoemakers, Kopp and Knoll, who work in Sarona; on the other hand we have only one master tailor, Baldenhofer, who has enough to do just meeting the needs of the Templer colonists. A tailor would have difficulty serving the Arabs for the Arab clothing is very different to the European in colour and fashion.

"The bakery is run by two Templers as a subsidiary occupation; they deliver a good bread, white and black. One can however also find European-baked bread at a Greek and a French bakery. The latter works together with the Arab hotel and has only been here a few months. The Arabs stick with their *koppes*, thick bread cakes which form a major part of their diet.

"Butchery is a difficult trade in this country and requires a man's total energy. We have only had our own butcher – named Feil – for about a year, who slaughters an animal every day, usually a sheep, less often a cow or pig. Properly pastured cows are not to be found here yet and will not be until our men have improved the agricultural practices and animal husbandry. Instead one makes do with poultry which are kept in large numbers by the Arabs and can be purchased for a relatively cheap price, or also with eggs, which are very cheap (4 – 10 for 1 piastre depending on season).

"The Templer settlement has also brought Jaffa a clockmaker (Herr E. Aberle). Although the Orientals are not particularly bothered about exactness of time, he nevertheless does most of his business with the Arabs. Of course the clocks must be equipped with Arabic numbers and must be set according to the Arab divisions of time; except, even when this is the case and the change of day is set not at midday but more at 6 o'clock in the morning and the evening, the Arab still does not understand why his clock will not always match the sunrise and sunset and it appears to him that his clock goes too fast or too slow, depending on the longer or the shorter days, because the sun comes up or goes down before or after 6 o'clock. But then he sets aside such scruples and purchases the clock anyway as a glittering ornament and toy. In order to meet this market need the clockmaker is required to combine his shop with a trade in bijouterie.

"The Jaffa Colony has a laundry with an apparatus constructed by the Maschinenfabrik zu Berg. This occupies the family of Joh. Klenk and several servant girls and provides an important service for the hygiene and health of the settlers. For supply of underwear here, where one sweats so much, can be a difficult matter and involve much labour, which causes much suffering to the servants and can also lead to illness, whereas a family that occupies itself fully with this business and has equipped itself with the right machines has less to suffer. The school with its pupils and personnel, the hotel with its requirements during the tourist season and several families make use of this laundry and in this way lighten their own workload...."



138:1 | Freight in The Negev