

# GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



July - September 2016





# DEAR READERS!

Welcome to the 148th edition of the Golan Journal which is our third of the year and covers the period from 01st of July to the 30th of September 2016. This has been a challenging period for many of the Troop Contributing Countries who have undergone their troop rotations. A big welcome is extended to new arrivals to the Golan Heights from Fiji Batt, Indibatt, Nepbatt and the FRC and we bid farewell to their colleagues who made a very positive contribution to the mission during their time in UNDOF. The media cell welcomes Major Bijay Bhandari from Nepal who arrived in the Golan Heights on the 14th of July 2016 to take up the appointment of SO PR. This period has also seen the departure from the media cell of WO-1 Ratan Pal Singh to India and the departure of Sgt Ben Taoi to Fiji. Sgt Tom Delana from Fiji is also welcomed into the media cell as a replacement for Sgt Taoi who returns home to get married in September and all his UNDOF colleagues would like to wish him many years of happiness together with his wife Stella. The new additions to the media cell have immediately taken up the task of enhancing the UNDOF website which is one of the many functions of the media cell in UNDOF.

This edition of the Golan Journal will feature the country of Fiji who contribute almost 300 Officers and Personnel to the UNDOF mission many of whom; are deployed along the Area of Separation, take responsible for the security and administration of Camp Zi-

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ouani and have staff and personnel making important contributions in many appointments within



Maj Bijay, Comdt Toye, Sgt Delana

Their strength, good will, humor, loyalty and jovial high spirit are important values which have a very positive impact of all their UNDOF colleagues. This edition also helps inform UNDOF personnel on how to maintain operational effectiveness during the harsh winter conditions in the Golan ensuring that sound advice and tips are available to deal with the environmental challenges so that troops can function to their optimum in UNDOF. The media cell would also like to use this opportunity to promote its second website at <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/undof/> which is administered and updated from United Nations Headquarters in New York. It is planned that improvements will be initiated imminently on all United Nations websites and readers are advised to expect alterations in due course.

<http://undof.unmissions.org>

Yours sincerely,  
Comdt Patrick Toye  
SSO Media & PR



[www.undof.unmissions.org](http://www.undof.unmissions.org)

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# Force Commander/HOM's Message

As time passes quickly by in the Golan Heights, I am once again delighted to have the opportunity to address my UNDOF colleagues and Golan Journal readers. As the Force Commander and Head of Mission let me acknowledge the dedicated contribution of all the UNDOF team who continue to meet expectations in a manner which is most complimentary of the United Nations values.

Over the last few weeks UNDOF have been welcoming new faces into its team as the Troop Contributing Countries have rotated their personnel resulting in fresh troops arriving into the mission from Fiji, India, Ireland and Nepal.

We welcome our new comrades to the Golan Heights and wish them a very safe, fulfilling and successful tour of duty. I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to all our comrades who have returned to their homes having served UNDOF with pride during their stint in the region.

It is with sadness and regret that UNDOF has lost a comrade since the last Golan Journal. On behalf of all in UNDOF I would like to offer my deepest condolences to the family, comrades and friends of Maj Jovilisi Cagilaba Sovita from Fiji who passed away in August. *"Mo ni qai gole ena vakacegu"* (may he rest in peace).

UNDOF's plans continue to move forward for the limited return to the Bravo side which has been further enhanced by the visit of the DPKO in August who are playing a supporting role in the forward planning of security, military and logistics/support requirements for this return.

Further challenges are being met for this move and preliminary steps are ongoing which include reconnaissance, cleaning, demining and the mobilisation of stores and resources. As UNDOF energetically pursues our objectives our personnel particularly those who have recently arrived in the mission area must always be mindful of local conditions, customs and practices and be conscientious in ensuring that we comply and adhere to border crossing rules which requires our personnel to ensure that national or language markings are not contained in goods or products entering Lebanon at the Rosh Hani-



kra crossing. The initiation of operational planning meetings at UNDOF HQ supports better integration between various sections and troop contributing countries ensuring that all our assets are aligned to strategic objectives of the Force.

The modernization of our internal processes is further evidence of UNDOF's progressive steps towards organizational development which will support the Force meet its present and future challenges. Finally I would like to remind our Commanders at all levels of our responsibility towards ensuring that the health, safety and welfare of our comrades continue to be the priority consideration as we strive towards fulfilling our mandate in an ever evolving climate.

As we move towards the end of another successful year in the Golan Heights it is critical that all our members are engaged in the UNDOF culture defined by our motto, One Mission, One Team, One Goal.

**Major-General Jai Shanker Menon**  
**Force Commander/Head of Mission UNDOF**





## DFC's Words



**D**ear colleagues and fellow peacekeepers!

Nearly four months have passed since my arrival to UNDOF and I have to admit that this time has passed very fast. Once again I want to express my gratitude to all of you for your overwhelming support on my early steps in this challenging task I received.

UNDOF is in the middle of hectic rotation period when all our Troop Contributing Countries have been or are about to rotate their units. I cannot over emphasize the importance of thorough handover/takeover of the tasks and duties during these rotations. The proper induction training and familiarization of the newcomers to their coming tasks is the only way to ensure continuity of the high level of performance demonstrated by our units.

The knowledge and experience gained by those who have served longer in the mission, must to be passed on to all the newly arrived soldiers and officers to help them to start their service without any unnecessary doubts or misunderstandings. With good familiarization we can maintain a safe working environment for all of us in this erratic UNDOF area of Operations. As we all know, UNDOF is moving towards an even more

interesting period. The International community has demonstrated their support to UNDOF on our pursuit to fulfill our mandate. We are preparing for our limited return to the Bravo side and once again our good cooperation and mutual understanding has proven how even the biggest challenges can be achieved when we all support each other in demanding tasks. Still, there is lot to do before we can celebrate our achievements, but I would like to congratulate you all on the work and say 'well done this far'.

At the same time I want to remind you of the fragile environment we are moving to and on the importance of safety and security of all UN personnel. Mission and task are important, but most important are the well-being and safety of peacekeepers performing their duties.

At the moment we are approaching the winter period in our mission area. The change in the nature and weather in the Golan Heights will be tremendous and it will have a large impact on our service environment. Proper preparations are needed to make us ready for the unpredictable winter period. One of the biggest hazards will be the road conditions and once again I would like to urge all superiors and commanders to ensure that all UNDOF personnel have a full understanding on the risks, the changing weather conditions may impose to our daily routines. All our personnel are also reminded to ensure the functionality of your vehicles, equipment and material!

On my arrival I asked you to support and enable me to support you. Now it's my time to do my utmost to support you to achieve your goals while conducting your tasks. If you have any doubts in your work, my door is always open, so do not hesitate to knock on my door, even for a chat.

I would like to conclude by welcoming all new members to our Mission and wish you a joyful and safe tour of duty.

**"Safety First"**

**"Look good, Do good"**

**Brigadier-General Mauri Tapani Koskela  
Deputy Force Commander**



**L**t Col Mary Carroll arrived in the Golan Heights in Sep 2016 as the Officer Commanding 54th Infantry Group, IRCON for its deployment with UNDOF as the Force Reserve Company (FRC). From the West Coast of Ireland, Lt Col Mary Carroll was until recently Officer Commanding, 1st Infantry Battalion in Mellows Barracks, Galway and is the first woman to have held this prestigious appointment. She is also the first woman to hold the appointment of Officer Commanding an Irish contingent deployed overseas. After her graduation with an Honours Social Science Degree from University College Dublin in 1982 she joined the Defence Forces Cadet School as a member of the 59th Cadet Class. She was commissioned in 1984 to the Fifth Infantry Battalion in Collins Barracks, Dublin. Lt Col Carroll has served in a range of challenging operations, training and staff appointments at home and abroad. She has served overseas in military missions in South Lebanon, Afghanistan, Kosovo, and with the EU Training Mission in Somalia. Lt Col Carroll holds a number of post graduate qualifications from a number of Irish educational institutions, including University College Dublin, National University of Ireland, Galway, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, the Irish Management Institute, the Institute of Public Administration as well as the Defence Forces Military College. She also completed specialised training with the US Air Force. She is most recently a graduate of the Defence Forces Command and Staff School. She is married to Vincent Henry and has two adult children, Conor and Alanna, who are at present International Commerce students in NUI Galway.



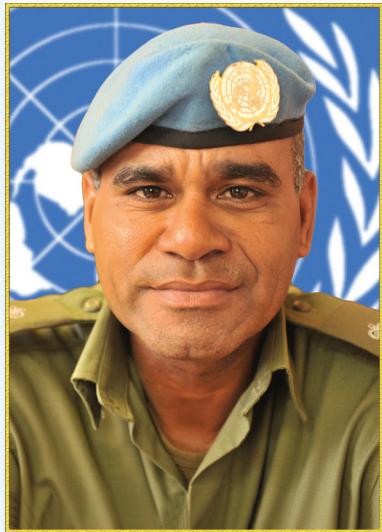
**L**t Col Vinay Kumar Gautam from India arrived in UNDOF to take over the appointment of OC Logbatt in August 2016. He was born on 1978 at Hathras (Uttar Pradesh). Lt Col Gautam has completed more than 19 years of service which includes 4 years of training.

Lt Col Gautam was commissioned into the "Regiment Of Artillery" in 73 Medium Regiment in 2000 and has served in all kinds of terrain in Operations in India varying from high altitude and snow covered mountains, Desert, Obstacle Ridden Jungles to Plains.

Lt Col Gautam has also served in intense Counter Insurgency and Counter Terrorism operations and has performed the duties of Gun Position Officer, Observation Post Officer, Logistics officer, Battery/Company Commander, Battalion Second-in-Command. Lt Col Gautam has the experience in managing a wide range of logistics from Ordnance such as Artillery and Small Arms Ammunition to Provisioning and Accounting for Rations, to Vehicle Maintenance and Transport.

Lt Col Gautam is a Master of Science and has completed many military courses such as the Junior Command Cse, Intelligence Staff Officer's Cse and Long Gunnery Staff Cse. He is an alumnus of National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla Pune.

Lt Col Gautam's hobbies include Paragliding, Parasailing, Kayaking, Wind surfing and plays Basketball, Volleyball, badminton and Squash. He is married to Ms Vandana Gautam and blessed with two sons Dhruv, Krishiv and a daughter Chinmayee.



Lt Col Daunivakasala Ravunakana joined UNDOF in August 2016 as the Commanding Officer of Fijibatt. He was born in 1972 in the Nanukuloa, Ra province, Fiji and attended Queen Victoria School before enlisting in the Republic of Fiji Military Forces in 1992. He completed his Officer Cadetship with the Royal Military College in Duntroon (Australia) and was commissioned in 1993. After commissioning he has served at all levels of command at home and abroad. Prior to joining UNDOF he was holding the appointment of the Territorial Force Brigade Chief of Staff. Lt Col Ravunakana has completed many military courses which include the Basic All Arms Instructors Cse, the Southwest Pacific Communication Officers Cse in Melbourne Australia, the Junior Staff Officers Cse (Non-Ops), Grade 3 Staff and

Tactics Cse, the Infantry Captain's Career Cse in Fort Benning, USA, the UN Military Observers Cse in Malaysia, the ADF Combined Defence Intelligence Research and Analysis Cse in Australia, the International Liaison Officers Cse in Israel, the UNs Military Contingent Officers Cse and the Logistics Officers Cse both in India, the Grade 2 Staff and Tactics Cse and the UN Contingent Commanders Cse in Bangladesh. In 1994 he received an Associate Diploma in Personnel Management from the Royal Military College of Australia and completed the Command and Staff Course, in Nanjing Command College of CPLA in China in Jul 2013. Lt Col Ravunakana has served in various overseas peacekeeping missions. He has served in UNIFIL on several occasions in the appointments of Platoon Commander, Press and Military Information Officer and Troop Commander.

He has served as a Coy 2IC in East Timor with UNTAET and in Iraq with UNAMI as the Ops Liaison Officer. He has served in the Sinai in Egypt as a Force Liaison Officer in the HQ MFO and as the Senior Staff Officer Operations in UNDOF HQ. Lt Col Ravunakana is married to Arlene Rosi Ravunakana and has six children. He is a keen sportsman and his hobbies include rugby, socialising and spending time with the family.



after his commissioning served as a Field Engineer Platoon Commander.

Lt Col Basanta has held several staff officer appointments in the Nepalese army, at Army HQ, Div HQ, Bde HQ and Battalion HQ

Lt Col Basanta Bahadur Khadka joined the UNDOF Mission on the 28th of September 2016 as CO of NEP-CON at the Mount Hermon Complex. He Joined the Nepalese Army as an Officer Cadet in 1992 and

levels. During his career he has commanded a Brigade Field Engineer Coy, an Independent Infantry Company, and an Independent Engineer Battalion. As a peacekeeper he has served in the UNAMSIL mission from 2003 to 2004 as an Engineer Platoon Commander.

He held the appointment of Chief Operations Officer in the MONUC in DR Congo mission from 2009 to 2010 and has served as a Military Observer in the MONUSCO in DR Congo mission from 2011 to 2013.

During his Military service, Lt Col Basanta has visited India, Pakistan, USA, Malaysia, Japan and Philippine for Military Training and Seminars.

He has also completed the Para Basic, Commando Course and the Mountain Warfare Basic and Advance Courses. He is Graduate from Command and Staff College in Nepal and is married to Anju Khadka and blessed with son Abhishek and daughter Arika.

# FIJIBATT's Handover/Takeover Parade

During an official ceremony in Camp Ziouani on the 29th of August 2016, Lt Col Daunivakasala Ravunakana's took over as Commanding Officer of the 4th Fijian Battalion in UNDOF from Lt Col Seremaia Tuikoro who has completed his one year tour of duty.

Deputy Force Commander Brigadier General Mauri Tapani Koskela officiated at the hand over/takeover ceremony and addressed the parade welcoming the newly arrived Fijian troops and expressed the importance of working together within UNDOF to achieve the mammoth task at hand. Brig Gen Koskela said he was optimistic



*Fijibatt CO handing over the 1st Fiji Infantry Regiment colour to RSM WO1 Aminiasi Lepolo*



*1st Fiji Infantry Regiment Colour marched onto the Parade Ground*

the Fijian Battalion would contribute positively to the UNDOF mission and focus on the UNDOF vision of "One Mission, One Team, One Goal" while gearing up for its transition process from the occupied Golan territory to the mandated area of separation.

Lt Col Ravunakana told the 18 officers and 270 men and women of the Fijian Battalion to work as a unit to achieve UNDOF goals saying "I remind you that camaraderie, teamwork and dedication to duty are important aspects in undertaking our peacekeeping role to achieve the UNDOF mission". The signing and handing over of authority from Lt Col Ser-

emaia Tuikoro to Lt Col Kalitabua Ravunakana was officiated by the FC/HoM and Maj Gen Jai Shankar Menon at Keterpal Hall. Lt Col Tuikoro said he was confident his successor will continue to maintain and uplift the standard of the Fiji Battalion in UNDOF. The Force Commander in his speech commended Lt Col Tuikoro for a job well done and welcomed Lt Col Ravunakana to his leadership role. He also highlighted that he is looking forward to the Fiji Battalion crossing over to the Bravo side. This is the pinnacle of the UNDOF mission which is to establish its forces within the area of separation.



*FC/HoM Maj Gen Jai Shankar Menon welcomes Fijibatt Commanding Officer Lt Col Kalitabua Ravunakana*



# History of Fiji

Fiji is situated approximately 4,450 km southwest of Honolulu and 1,770 km north of New Zealand. Fiji consists of a group of volcanic islands in the South Pacific with 332 islands and 522 smaller islets making up the archipelago of which about 106 are permanently inhabited. Viti Levu is the largest island and covers about 57% of the nation's land area. Accounting for some 69% of Fiji's population Viti Levu contains the two official cities of Lautoka and Suva which is the capital and also contains six other major towns, including Nadi where the international airport is located. Vanua Levu is located 64 km to the north of Viti Levu

sheltered by the mountains and have a well-marked dry season favorable for crops such as sugarcane.

## History

The Fijian people emerged from Southeast Asia via the Malay Peninsula led by the legendary chief Lutunasobasoba. A highly developed society had been established on the Fijian Islands long before the accidental discovery of the islands by the Europeans in 1643 by the Dutch explorer, Abel Tasman and English navigators, including Captain James Cook who further explored the island from 1774. Captain William Bligh mapped the islands when he



and covers just over 30% of the land area and accounts for 15% of the Fijian population. Its main towns are Labasa and Savusavu. In the northeast it features Natewa Bay, carving out of the Loa peninsula. Fiji is rural based with about 60 per cent of the population living in the rural areas. Both islands are mountainous, with peaks up to 1300m rising abruptly from the shore, and covered with tropical forests. Heavy rains (up to 304 cm or 120 inches annually) fall on the windward (southeastern) side, covering these sections of the islands with dense tropical forest. Lowlands on the western portions of each of the main islands are

sailed through Fiji after the mutiny on the Bounty in 1789. Shipwrecked sailors and runaway convicts from the Australian penal settlements were the first European settlers to live among the Fijians before traders and missionaries started to arrive from the 19th century onwards. From 1854 missionaries started to gain an influence on the island which ended tribal warfare and converted the people to Christianity. Fiji was ceded to Great Britain in 1874 after which epidemics nearly wiped out the population. However, normality was eventually restored and the Colonial Powers supported initiatives aimed at empowering the indigenous



# History of Fiji

population. Land sales were forbidden and health campaigns implemented which supported population growth. At the turn of the 19th and 20th Century Indians arrived to work on the sugar plantations and agriculture, eventually established themselves as independent farmers and businessmen to the extent where they comprise 43.6 per cent of the total Fijian population but regard Fiji as their home. During the 20th century Fiji developed a major sugar industry and established productive copra milling, tourism and secondary industries.

As small-scale industries emerged, the economy is strengthened and revenues provide for expanded public works, infrastructure, health, medical services and education. Fiji gained its independence in 1970 and

currently plays a major role in regional affairs and is recognized as the focal point of the South Pacific.

## Culture

Despite the influence of external cultures and economics there are many signs that traditional Fijian Culture has survived. Fiji is a positive example of a multi-cultural, multi-racial and multi-religious society living in harmony made up of Indians, Part Europeans, Chinese and other Pacific islanders supported by strong legislation which maintains healthy race relations. Fijians make up slightly over 50 per cent of the total population. English is the main language, while Fijian and Hindi are taught in schools. Indigenous Fijians have their own dialects specific to their area.

**FIJIBATT**



## Tribute to a fallen Peacekeeper



**U**NDOF was saddened by the loss of Major Sovita who passed away while serving in UNDOF on the 16th of August 2016. Our deepest sympathies are extended to Maj Sovita's wife, children, family, friends and colleagues on their terrible loss. Maj Sovita was born in 12th of November 1967 in Yaro, Kia Is, Macuata and was educated in the University of the South Pacific before enlisting in the Fijian Military on the 23rd of October 1987. After completing Cadet Training in Sandhurst UK he

was commissioned to the rank of 2/Lt on the 13th December 1991. Throughout his Military Career he completed a vast amount of courses which included Junior Leadership Cse, Junior Non-Commissioned Skill at Arms Cse and the Section Commanders Cse and the Reserve Officer Cadet Training Cse. Maj Sovita received the Overseas Cane for the best Officer Cadet while attending the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst, UK and went on to complete the Junior Staff Officer Cse and the Regular Officer Grade 3 Staff and Tactic Cse. During his career Maj Sovita served his country with pride in Lebanon with UNIFIL and with the MFO in the Sinai in Egypt before serving in the Golan Heights within UNDOF. Maj Sovita is survived by his wife Ledua and his two children. '*Mo ni qai gole ena vakacegu*'

## Father and Son serving in UNDOF



*Major Vutikalulu (son) left and WO2 Vutikalulu (Father) right*

Major (BSM) in the Territorial Force Brigade and Force Sergeant Major (FSM) in the Republic of Fiji Military - Land Force. Major Vutikalulu has made it through as a career officer for the last 11 years and was appointed Engineers Project Officer in the rehabilitation of the Fiji Islands after the Cyclone Winston.

**M**ajor Sanaila Biau Vutikalulu who was commissioned into the RFMF Officer Corp in 2005 joined UNDOF in September 2016 and will serve alongside his father WO2 Silivenusi Vutikalulu who enlisted into the RFMF Regular Force in April 1982. Both will serve together for the next year in the Golan Heights. They have also served together in Iraq with the United Nations Mission Assistance in 2008. WO2 Vutikalulu (whose father served as a Lance Corporal during WWII) has held various appointments including Regimental Sergeant Major

# Challenges for the new LOGBATT

## Communicating, Moving and Protecting

The Signals Platoon have been focused on upgrading the communications infrastructure in UNP 80. This programme involved the installation of new



*Upgrading communications at UNP 80*

access points into UNDOF's Wifi and included new parts for the Corporate Network, Cobra Pipes and cables etc. The Signals Platoon are a vital asset in supporting UNDOF's move to the Bravo side and have been very active in the repair of communication sets



*Maintenance platoon during a brief regarding logistic support*

for operational use. The highly skilled Signals Platoon have also been engaged in ensuring that the surveillance infrastructure in UNDOF Positions is installed to maximize observation of its AO which plays a vital role in the missions mandate.

The Maintenance Platoon upon arriving in the Golan Heights quickly became aware that the Indian contingent had been assigned the demanding challenge of providing the logistics support to a force who are maintaining stability in a region where the situation is fluid and often unpredictable. Since the crossings between the Alpha and Bravo side are closed along the AOS, UNDOF must travel through Lebanon to link up with its forces on the Eastern side of the Area of Separation. This adds considerable mileage, wear and tear to the vehicles within the Force's fleet.

The maintenance section has a very important role in ensuring the UNDOF's vehicles are ready to provide



*Convoy leaving for UNP 80*

the capability, mobility, sustainment, reliability and protection needed to support our Infantry troops carrying out daily operations. Immediately upon deploying to the Golan Heights the Platoon set about their task of relocating the workshops to a more modern facility. The maintenance staff were also presented with the challenge of working on vehicles with which they were unfamiliar such as the Nyala APC's, while there was an urgency to quickly develop an understanding of the new Galileo software management system. Dealing quickly with these new challenges demands leadership, positivity, drive and energy to ensure that the Platoon reach timely optimum efficiency to support the Commanders vision of One Mission, One Team, One Goal.

The Engineer Platoon continue to make great progress in enhancing key infrastructure within UN positions and over the last few weeks and have completed the construction of several OP's inside UNDOF outposts. Along with the completion of perimeter improvement works this construction project has helped enhance security infrastructure for personnel deployed in positions on the Bravo side. The Engineers have been making great prog-



*Newly completed bunker in an UNDOF position*



*Engineers digging drainage to prepare for winter*

for the local Commander which supports operational effectiveness during all types of scenario's. The Engineer Platoon have also been very busy enhancing drainage around the external perimeter which includes the installation of outlet pipes and the digging of drainage trenches which helps in ensuring that UNDOF positions are ready for the Golan winter.

ress in enhancing the force protection by completing a new ventilated bunker while existing bunkers have undergone improvements. The addition of wooden seating and electrification works will not only ensure that modern robust protective installations are providing the best force protection for our troops but also serves as a safe command and control center



*UN OP under construction*

# LOGBATT's Handover/Takeover Ceremony

On the 01st of September, the Logbatt hand over/takeover ceremony was conducted at Khetrapal Hall in Camp Ziouani. Those in attendance witnessed the outgoing Lt Col Vivek Chaudhary handing over to Lt Col Vinay Kumar Gautam. Deputy Force Commander, Brigadier General Mauri Tapani Koskela officiated at the ceremony while the Chief of Mission Support, Mr. Bernard Lee was also in attendance.



DFC Brig Gen Koskela officiating at the hand over of command

## INDCON's Longest Serving Member



W<sup>O</sup>1 Hans Raj Sharma is the oldest member of the Logbatt from India who joined UNDOF to serve with the maintenance platoon for 12 months in Feb 2016. He was born in 1963 in District Rajouri of Jammu & Kashmir, in the northern most state of India. Prior to joining the Army he graduated from University of Jammu. Following his father's footprint he joined the Indian Army in 1985 and has served in North East sector of Manipur and Nagaland with the Rashtriya Rifles Battalion. He also served in the Northern sector of India conducting Counter Insurgency and Counter Terrorism Operations.

## LOGBATT's Induction Training

Induction training for the newly arrived INDCON officers was conducted by the Training Branch under UNDOF's SSO Training, Maj Milan Janhuba.

The officers visited various Positions and were briefed on the operational challenges pertaining to UNDOF, the Mission and functioning of the forces many elements



Logbatt Officers receiving a brief during their induction training

# INDCON's WW1 Commemoration

During the First World War a large number of Indian soldiers lost their lives in the region which encompasses present day Haifa. Almost 900 Indian Nationals are interred in cemeteries across Israel. The Indian Army commemorates Haifa Day every year on the 23rd of September, the day in 1918 when elements of Indian cavalry units fighting under General Edmund Allenby helped liberate Haifa. On that day the Jodhpur Imperial Service Lancers, supported by elements of Mysore and Hyderabad Lancers, as part of 15th Imperial Service Cavalry Bri-

gade, captured the fortified town of Haifa in the dark cavalry charge. Major Dalpat Singh Sekhawat MC, who gallantly led the Jodhpur Lancers in battle, fell during the charge. To commemorate the sacrifice of these Indian soldiers, a ceremony was organized by the Municipality of Haifa and the Indian Embassy at Haifa on the 22nd of Sep 16. The guard of honour was provided by LOGBATT from the Indian Contingent. Maj Gen Jai Shanker Menon, FC/ HoM UNDOF and Mr Pawan Kapoor, Ambassador of India to Israel were the chief guests attending the event.



FC/HoM, His Excellency the Indian Ambassador and INDCON Officers at the Haifa Day Commemoration

## INDCON's Medal Parade

19th Rotation of LOGBATT conducted their medal parade on 19th of July 2016 at Camp Ziouani. The parade was commanded by Lt Col Vivek Chaudhary and reviewed by Maj Gen Jai Shanker Menon,

FC/HoM UNDOF. In attendance was many military and civilian staff members of UNDOF and Mr Pavan Kapoor, the Indian Ambassador to Israel and Gp Capt Tejpal Singh, Defence Attaché.



DFC Brig Gen Koskela presenting UNDOF service medals on parade

# MEDICAL ADVISORY

**Serving effectively at 2700 metres in the Golan Heights this winter**

UNDOF peacekeepers are gearing up to operate in the thin air of the Highest United Nations Post in the World again this winter season and their preparation is vital to support effectiveness during the most extreme weather conditions in the Mountain region. Modern

Science has demonstrated that High Altitude Illnesses are potentially preventable if troops enforce and observe preventive measures to survive in these areas. The article aims to provide comprehensive instructions on the prevention from High Altitude Illnesses and Cold Injuries.

**What is High Altitude?** High Altitude is defined as altitude of 2700 meters (9000 feet) and more, above sea level.

**What are the adverse effects of high altitude?** The adverse physiological processes are the lowered atmospheric pressure of air (commonly referred to as 'thin air') and consequent lowered partial pressure of oxygen in the air. Low temperature and humidity, wind chill factor, increased intensity of sunshine and isolation under monotonous mountain conditions, also contribute to the health hazards.

**When operating in high altitude what are the potential health hazards?** The health hazards encountered at high altitude are – Acute Mountain

Sickness (AMS), High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPO), High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACO) and Cold Injuries such as Chill Blains and Frost Bites.

**What are the effects on physical performance?** Even after complete acclimatization to high altitude and training thereafter, the physical efficiency will never be as good as at sea level. The performance level will continue declining with increase altitude. For every 1000 meters increase in altitude, the exercise capacity decreases by

# Now that's cold

**What happens to your body in extreme temperatures**

## What is frostbite?

- **Severe** condition; both skin and underlying tissue (fat, muscle, bone) are frozen.
- Skin appears white and waxy; is hard to the touch.
- No sensation – the area is numb.

## What is hypothermia?

Being cold over a prolonged period of time can cause a drop in body temperature  
Normal body temp: **37°C (98.6°F)**

**Mild hypothermia:** Body temp: **36.9-35°C:**  
Shivering: numb hands, feet

**Moderate:** Body temp: **35-32°C:**  
Sluggish movements; confusion

**Severe:** Body temp: **32.2-25.6°C:**  
Blue skin; can't walk; low pulse rate and respiration

## Death

Body temp: **25.6-23.9°C**

## Wind chill

**Cold temperatures and wind can become deadly**

Wind Speed	Temperature (°C)	Wind chill temperature (°C)
0	0	0
-5	-5	-5
-10	-10	-15
-15	-15	-21
-20	-20	-27
-25	-25	-33
-30	-30	-39
-35	-35	-45
-40	-40	-51
-45	-45	-57
10 km/h	-3	-9
20 km/h	-5	-12
30 km/h	-6	-13
40 km/h	-7	-14
50 km/h	-8	-15
60 km/h	-9	-16
<b>0 to -9°C</b>	<b>-28 to -39</b>	<b>-40 to -47</b>
Low risk of frostbite	Skin can freeze in 10-30 min.	Skin can freeze in 5-10 min.
<b>-10 to -27°C</b>	Risk of frostbite increases	High risk of frostbite
Low risk of frostbite or hypothermia if outside for long periods without adequate protection.	Hypo-thermia risk increases	Hypo-thermia risk increases
		<b>-48 to -54</b>
		Skin can freeze in 2-5 min.
		<b>-55 &amp; colder STAY INDOORS</b>

## What is frostnip?

- **Mild** form of frostbite; only skin freezes.
- Skin appears yellowish or white, but feels soft to the touch.
- Painful tingling or burning sensation.

## Why does your nose run when it's cold?

In trying to warm up cold air on the way to lungs, extra blood flow within nostrils leads to more mucus production.

## Finger control

12°C is the critical air temperature for good manual dexterity. 8°C for touch sensitivity.



Sources: cbsa.ca; Environment Canada

SUSAN BATS福德, GRAPHICS EDITOR, TWITTER @SBATSF; INFOGRAPHIC BY MEGAN DUNN/CON AGENCY

10 per cent. So soldiers should make realistic estimates of the physical performance, while planning the climb/logistics.

**When are people at the highest risk?** Most cases of high altitude illnesses and cold injuries tend to develop within the first week of induction into high altitude.

**How can I recognize the early symptoms?** The early symptoms of Acute Mountain Sickness are headache, nausea, vomiting (often described as bad hang-over), mental irritability, and loss of appetite, lack of sleep, breathlessness, and irritable cough.

# ADVICE TO DRIVERS

## Drivers Check List

**Lights** - All indicators and headlamps should be cleaned and working correctly.

**Liquids** - Water reservoir should be filled up to the maximum mark and correctly mixed with anti-freeze. It may also be necessary to top up your coolant and screen wash.

**Oil** - Check oil level and top up if necessary. Look for signs of leakages under the vehicle.

**Electrics** - Check the dashboard before and after starting the engine. Listen for a weak battery and have fitter staff replace if necessary.



*Challenges for drivers in UNDOF*

**Windscreen wipers** - should be cleaned regularly and replaced if necessary.

**Tyres** - Check tyre treads and pressure, including the spare. While the minimum legal limit is 1.6mm, a minimum tread of 3mm is advised for winter driving

**Safety Assist** - Be familiar with the vehicle type and know the safety assist technology e.g. ABS.

## Responding to Weather Warnings

UNDOF or the local authority may issue weather alerts during the winter season to help to notify those who are at risk because of their location and/or activity, and to allow them to take preventative action. These are the three types and their meanings:

### Weather Alert - Be Aware

This is a Low level weather alert to warn of weather conditions that do not pose an immediate threat to the general population, but only to those exposed to risk by nature of their location and/or activity.

### Weather Warning - Be Prepared

This is a medium level alert to warn of weather conditions which have the capacity to impact significantly on people and implies that all recipients in the affected areas should prepare themselves in an appropriate way for the anticipated conditions.

### Severe Weather Warning - Take Action

This is a high level severe weather warning and implies that recipients should take action to protect themselves and/or their properties; this could mean that those in affected area may need to move out of the danger zone temporarily, or stay indoors or take specific actions aimed at mitigating the effects of the weather conditions.



*Article by Logbatt SMO Major (Dr) Ritesh Goel*

# IRECON's Medal Parade

On the 21st of Sep 2016 the 52 Inf Gp, Irish Contingent held their medal parade in Camp Ziouani. UNDOF service medals were presented by the FC/HoM UNDOF Maj Gen Jai Shanker Menon with assistance from Irish Deputy Chief of Staff Operations Maj Gen Kieran Brennan, the Deputy Force Commander UNDOF Brig Gen Mauri Tapani Koskela and the Irish Ambassador to Israel Her Excellency Alison Kelly. 130 personnel of the Force Reserve Company (FRC) received their medals which included 42 Defence Forces personnel on their first deployment and two senior NCO's who are on their last mission abroad namely Sgt Maj Derek Lamb and BQMS Pat Maguire.



*Her Excellency Alison Kelly presents medals on parade*



*General salute accorded to FC/HoM*



*FC/HoM inspecting the troops on Parade*

## Irish DCOS Ops visits UNDOF

Maj Gen Kieran Brennan, Deputy Chief of Staff Operations from the Irish Defence Forces met FC/HoM Maj Gen Jai Shanker Menon in UNDOF HQ on his visit to the Irish troops in the mission and also presented UNDOF

service medals to the Irish Contingent. During his visit, Maj Gen Brennan complimented the Irish troops on their contribution to the mission's continued success and paid tribute to the soldiers' families for their support at home.



*Maj Gen Kieran Brennan presents Sgt Ben Murphy with the UNDOF Service Medal*



*Irish DCOS Ops inspects the Honour Guard at Camp Ziouani*

# FRC Handover/Takeover

The Transfer of Command between the 52 Infantry Group (Inf Gp) and the 54 Inf Gp took place on Monday 3rd of October when the 54 Inf Gp took over the responsibility for the Force Reserve Company (FRC) of UNDOF. The handover/takeover (HOTO) ceremony was presided over by the DFC, Brigadier General Mauri Tapani Koskela. Lt Col (OF 4) Mark Hearns handed over command authority of the FRC to Lt Col Mary Carroll of the 54 Inf Gp. The colour party and Honour Guard of the 52 Inf Gp was marched on parade, awaiting the arrival of the outgoing unit commander, the incoming unit commander and the DFC.

As the DFC arrived on parade, the 52 Inf Gp colour party rendered military honours and were quickly joined on parade by the colour party of the 54 Inf Gp. Both colour parties exchanged salutes after the Transfer of Authority letter was signed and the colours of the 52 Inf Gp left parade in Camp Ziouani for the last time. The 54 Inf Gp now begin a challenging and demanding six months as UNDOF's FRC. The one hundred and thirty troops of the 54 Inf Gp are drawn from all Corps of the Defence Forces and have a vast



*Transfer of Command from  
Lt Col Mark Hearns to Lt Col Mary Carroll*

array of experience both at home and abroad with a total of three hundred and one individual tours of duty overseas to missions including ISAF, UNIFIL, MINUSCO, MINURCAT, UNTSO, UNMEE and UNFCYP. Go n-éirí an t-ádh leis an 54ú nGrúpa Coisithe, (the very best of luck to the 54 Inf Gp).



*FRC handover/takeover parade at the Camp Ziouani*

## BSM Lamb's contribution to Peace



Sergeant Major Derek Lamb of the FRC 52nd Inf Gp completed his last tour of duty overseas in October 2016. He has served in the Irish Defence Forces since 1975. Sergeant Major Lamb has completed 22 overseas tours of duty abroad which include seven tours to Lebanon, two to Cyprus, two to Kosovo, three to Sarajevo, six to Brussels with the EU and two to Syria. Sgt Maj Lamb is married to Colette and they have seven (7) children, Lisa, Sharon, Pamela, Jennifer, Nichola, Sandra and Derek. He also has 15 grandchildren.

# Care and Maintenance of Weapons

A personal or mounted weapon must always be in a state of readiness to provide the user with protection in a crisis, therefore care and attention should be paid to all component parts. Weapons are composed of complicated mechanisms that provide the user with single, burst or automatic fire capability.

Always treat a weapon as a machine that requires cleanliness from dirt and use oil for the lubrication of moving arts. More specialised assemblies such as the sighting system should always require due care as they are susceptible to damage from accidental impact.

As an example, the STEYR AUG MOD 14 personal assault rifle of the Irish Defence Forces must be cleaned on a regular basis and immediately after firing. The components requiring cleaning include:

- Barrel assembly
- Gas regulator assembly
- Piston rods
- Bolt assembly
- Main body of weapon

Apart from personal weapons, vehicle mounted weapons in a mounted or fixed state must always be covered when not in use and this protects the gun assemblies



*Important to keep dust and rain off the weapon when not in use*

from attack by dirt and dust which is one of the main factors responsible for damage. For systems such as the Kongsberg M151 Remote Weapon Station (RWS), optical and thermal sensors can be affected by extreme weather conditions such as heat, humidity, extreme cold and precipitation. All of the aforementioned conditions exist in UNDOF and must be protected with issued

protective covers. The risks due to heat may affect the sensors whereby adhesives and rubber seals used in the internal assemblies can become damaged if exposed for prolonged periods of time. Grenade launchers mounted



*Cleaning the weapon and ensuring the mechanism is functioning prior to deployment*

on the RWS and APC turrets have a protective rubber cap which must always be in place to prevent unwanted debris from entering the tubes and ensure complete serviceability.

If a weapon is not cleaned and lubricated properly, the following effects will occur in a relatively short interval of time:

- Barrel wear due to the build-up of propellant residue which is corrosive and will be absorbed into the parent metal within the barrel bore.
- ‘Coppering’ effects occur every time a weapon is fired and is a result of the projectile material being removed by the bore rifling. The excess material becomes embedded in the bore rifling and is difficult to remove.
- Excessive build-up of propellant residue in the gas regulator solidifies and blocks the apertures necessary for the regulation of optimum gas volumes required for recoil actions.

**Always remember: poor cleaning = poor performance.**  
**TOP TIP**

**‘If you take care of the gear, the gear will take care of you’**

*Article by Capt Tim Cunningham*

# NEPCON's Medal Parade



*FC/HoM Maj Gen Menon receiving the Guard of Honour*

NEPCON IV conducted their Medal Parade on 29th of August 2016 in Position 12A (Mount Hermon Complex), in presence of FC/HoM Maj Gen Jai Shanker Menon. The event was also attended by other military officers and Civilian staff. The itinerary for the event included a guard of honor for the FC/HoM followed by an inspection of troops. A history of Nepalese army and its contribution to all UN peace keeping operations was recounted to those who attended. As a troop contributing country to the UN Nepal ranks sixth in the world. Currently 4,374 soldiers are serving in 15 different missions around the globe. The UNDOF Medal recognizes the contribution of the soldiers to peace in the Golan Heights and is special to all the NEPCON peacekeepers who are mostly stationed in Mt Hermon which is strategically the most important UN position in UNDOF. After the ceremony, FC/HoM Maj Gen Menon addressed the parade highlighting the soldier's dedication, professionalism, hard work and devotion to the task which they have shown during their tenure in

Mt Hermon complex beyond the topographical, weather and operational challenges. Prior to the medal parade NEPCON organized their Interposition competition in Mount Hermon Complex. The purpose of this competition is to ensure that soldiers are motivated to stay physically fit and obtain a general knowledge about the situation pertaining to their area of operations which helps the soldier deal effectively with the geographical features, weather conditions and the unforeseen challenges at the Mt Hermon complex. The competition also helps maintain spirit de corps, morale and professional military skills of the NEPCON troops. The competition comprised of a number of physical challenging exercises, operational readiness challenges, a Rifle shooting competition, a hygiene and sanitation standards challenge and a military quiz. Lt. Col Antonius Gerardus (Tom) Smith and Lt Col. Harri Reini helped present the awards to the winners of different competitions while the overall Competition winner's prize was presented by FC/HoM Maj Gen Jai Shanker Menon.



*FC/HoM, distinguished guests and NEPCON after receiving the medal. Photograph by Lcpl Bishnu Bahadur Kumal*



# UNDOF's Inter Contingent Military

UNDOF conducted its military skills assessment and competition between the 08th and 09th of August 2016. While this event served as an inter-contingent competition it also helped the military leadership in UNDOF evaluate skill levels and identify areas for improvement through the lessons learned process.

For the UN Peacekeeper it provided a tough and robust challenge which was physically demanding but rewarding and helped to reinforce morale and team spirit while also developing junior leadership.

There were many challenges (skills assessment stands) during this event which included military knowledge, observation and recognition, combat first aid, casualty evacuation, timed wheel change on a vehicle, mine awareness and extraction, run and shoot and obstacle crossing. The teams taking part were all individually assessed at each skill assessment stand and points

were awarded in a variety of areas to include skill level, speed and command and control etc.

The two day event was won by the FRC (Irish Contingent), while the Fijibatt came second and the Logbatt (Indian Contingent) came third.



# Skills Assessment and Competition



MILITARY SKILLS



## Observer Group Golan on the Move

On the 7th of August 2016, UNTSO initiated their plan for the redeployment of OGG officers to the Bravo Side. Phase 1 began with the movement of key staff from Tiberias to Yafour where they took over their new accommodation before moving onto their Headquarters in Ismac House in Damascus. The officers in this initial group consisted of LTC Time Mellin, his deputy Maj Flavio Marchesi and Capt Sarah Brunner, Capt Reijo Makinen, team leader Capt Petri Heiskanen and Maj Lowame Lilo Fij who joined the



*OGG's Operational Recce on the Bravo side*

group a few weeks later. With a teamwork approach and the support from the UN civilian staff, the Nepalese Contingent and the OGG Damascus staff, these UNTSO staff Officers will further develop UNTSO operational capability which will in turn greatly enhance and support UNDOF's mandate. Since deploying to the Bravo side the OGG staff officers have completed phase 1 of the plan that included completion of operational reconnaissance's to identify areas for the location of observation posts. Phase 2 will now com-



*OGG members deploying to the Bravo side*

mence with the arrival and induction training of the Observer Teams on the 25th of September consisting of six members. Phase 3 will see the operational deployment of these team to selected OGG positions.

# Neta's interview with Denaida Kapetanovic

Denaida Kapetanovic is UNDOF's Civil Affairs Officer who liaises and communicates with both the Military and civilians in the mission area. With much elegance Denaida has found the time to answer Neta's questionnaire for this edition of the Golan Journal.

## Which places around the world have you been visiting as a UN staff member?

I have been working for the UN since 2004 in Kosovo, Sudan, Uganda and Syria. Owing to my work, I had the opportunity to travel on assignments to many other countries. Just to name a few: Ethiopia, Kenya, Congo, South Sudan, United States, and of course across the Middle East.

## Home leave is taken where?

Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.



## The best joke you have ever heard?

This is a tough question! Really funny jokes are the bad jokes. There is always something inappropriate or offensive about jokes so I will have to excuse myself from answering this question. I could share a few offline though!

## A person you wish to have coffee with?

I have a long list of friends whom I used to work with in the past and I would really like to catch up with them for a coffee. Somebody famous? I think I would like to have had a cup of tea with Virginia Wolf.

## If you were an animal, which animal would you like to be?

Some kind of tropical fish, exploring an ocean.

## 3 things you would have taken to an isolated island:

1. Gardening tools so that I can finally start my own vegetable garden.
2. Laptop. I would not go to a place from where I cannot Skype with my family.
3. Insect repellent.

## When was the last time you have been crying?

Couple of weeks ago while watching The Good Dinosaur with my daughter. We both had a good cry when the little orphan boy found the new family. I also shed a tear or two in frustration last week when assembling a piece of Ikea furniture.

## Your first childhood memory?

I remember vividly running away and looking for a good place to hide from my mother who was trying to comb my hair. My older sister, highly entertained by the situation, followed the pursuit closely. According to my mother, I was two years old at the time.

## Your favorite music album and favorite movie?

My favorite music constantly changes. I listen to a song until I cannot listen to it anymore. My favorite movie is Forest Gump and, because I'm a Bosnian, No Man's Land as well.

## The first thing you look at when you are looking at a person?



I look at the behavior and the body language rather than just appearance. I suppose the first thing I notice is height and posture.

## A person who had the strongest impact on you?

My parents of course, closely followed by my older sister. I grew up with unconditional love and undivided attention of my parents which gave me confidence and happy disposition. My sister was there to give balance and make sure I don't get very spoiled.

## Your wasted talent?

Painting. I spent hours drawing and painting while in elementary and secondary school. Painting was a joy for me. I am not quite sure if I was very good at it at the time but I learned later that people achieve best at things and activities they truly enjoy.

*While combining regional expertise and professional military skills, we might find one day that Denaida was painting colorful happy images of UNDOF onto a big canvass, with only a few expressionistic lines.*

Article by: Neta Norman Sivan



# Upcoming Regional Events

## 03 October 2016 - Rosh Hashana in Israel

Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year and is celebrated on the first 2 days of the Hebrew month "Tishrei". This is the only Jewish holiday which lasts for 2 entire days.



## 03 October 2016 - Muharram in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan & Egypt



The Islamic New Year is on the first day of Muharram, the first month in the lunar Islamic calendar, which differs from the Gregorian calendar. Shi'a and Sunni cultures do different things to mark Muharram and fasting varies among different Muslim communities. Some Muslims fast on or around the 10th day of Muharram, also known as the Day of Ashura. Some mosques have free meals (nazar) around the ninth to 11th days of Muharram. Islamic businesses and organizations may have altered opening hours and there may be traffic congestion around mosques on some days, particularly in the evenings, during Muharram.

## 06 October 2016 - Liberation Day in Syria

Often referred to as the October War Anniversary, Liberation War Day on the 6th of October, Syria commemorates the Army's successful advance into the Golan Heights during the 1973 October War. In October 1973, during the Yom Kippur War, Syrian forces attempted to retake the Golan in a surprise attack. Although initially promising, the Israelis quickly regrouped, mobilized their reserves and pushed the Syrians back. Not only did the Israelis regain all the lost ground, they pushed to within 20 miles and artillery range of the Syrian capital of Damascus. A United Nations agreement ended the war, and Israeli forces withdrew to the pre-war lines.



# Upcoming Regional Events

## 06 October 2016 – Armed Forces Day in Egypt

Armed Forces Day, is a public holiday observed in Egypt on the 06th October, celebrating the day in 1973 when Egyptian military forces launched a surprise attack on Israel and crossed into the Sinai Peninsula, marking the beginning of the October (Yom Kippur) War. Egyptian President Anwar el-Sādāt planned the attack in an attempt to regain control of the Sinai territory that had been lost to Israel during the June (Six-Day) War in 1967. The plan met with initial success when more than 80,000 Egyptian soldiers crossed the Bar Lev line - massive fortifications built by the Israelis to withstand such attacks. The Egyptian forces held the territory for two days before being forced to pull back after an Israeli counterattack entirely surrounded the Egyptian Third Army. Afterwards the 1977 Camp David Accords, brokered by U.S. President Jimmy Carter meant that the Sinai Peninsula was returned to Egyptian control. The day is marked by Military parades as well as patriotic television shows, songs, and fireworks displays. The holiday took on additional meaning after the 1981 assassination of President Sādāt during an Armed Forces Day parade in Cairo.



## 11 October 2016 - First Day of Ashura in Lebanon

The word "Ashura" means "tenth" in Arabic, since the holiday falls on the tenth day of Muharram, the first month in the Islamic calendar. The two major branches of Islam - Sunni and Shiite Muslims mark the day in separate ways. For Sunnis, Ashura is considered a day of fast to memorialize Allah's role in saving Moses and the Israelites from the Egyptian pharaoh. Some choose to fast for two days and choose not to participate in overt displays of happiness such as weddings. For Shiite Muslims, Ashura also commemorates the martyrdom of Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, in the year 680 at Karbala in modern-day Iraq. On Ashura, Shiite men and women dress in black, slap their chests and chant. Others reenact the Battle of Karbala with mourning rituals. Some Shiite men flagellate themselves with chains and cut themselves with knives on their foreheads as a way to mourn for Hussein in a ritual called "tatbeer."



## 12 October 2016 - Yom Kippur in Israel



Yom Kippur is also known as the Day of Atonement. It is the holiest day of the year in Judaism with the central themes being those of atonement and repentance. The Jewish people usually mark this event with an approximate 24-hour period of fasting and prayer, spending most of the day in synagogues. According to Jewish tradition, God inscribes each person's fate for the coming year into a book, the Book of Life, on Rosh Hashanah, and waits until Yom Kippur to seal the verdict. Yom Kippur atones for those who repent and does not atone for those who do not repent. Repentance in Judaism is done through a process called Teshuva, consists of regretting having committed the sin, resolving not to commit that sin in the future and to confess that sin before God. At the end of Yom Kippur, one hopes that they have been forgiven by God.



## Upcoming Regional Events

### 17 October 2016 - Sukkot in Israel

Sukkot is the longest Jewish festival in the months of September and October that usually last for one (1) week. This is a period for relaxation and enjoyment and is usually marked with enjoyable events and activities.



### 24 October 2016 – Shmini Atzeret in Israel

Shmini Atzeret is celebrated on the 22nd day of the Hebrew month of Tishrei in the Land of Israel. It directly follows the Jewish festival of Sukkot which is celebrated for seven days and thus Shemini Atzeret is literally the eighth day. Therefore, although a separate event it is a connected holy day devoted to the spiritual aspects of the festival of Sukkot.



### 08 November 2016 – Yom HaAliyah in Israel



Yom HaAliyah is a new Israeli national holiday officially passed into law on the 21st of June 2016 and is to be celebrated annually on the tenth of the Hebrew month of Nisan. The day was established to acknowledge Aliyah, immigration to the Jewish state, as a core value of the State of Israel. According to the biblical narrative Joshua and the Israelites crossed the Jordan River at Gilgal into the Promised Land.



# Upcoming Regional Events

## 22 November 2016 - Independence Day in Lebanon

Lebanese Independence Day is a national holiday celebrated in remembrance of the ending of the French mandate over Lebanon in 1943, after 23 years of colonial rule.



## 12 December 2016 - The Prophet's Birthday in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan & Egypt



Prophet Muhammad's birthday is commonly marked by religious lectures and readings of the Quran. Muhammad's birth was approximately in the year 570 (in the Gregorian Calendar). His uncle raised him after both the boy's parents died while he was very young. Prophet Muhammad learned the trades of the merchant and of shepherding. He began to preach around the age of 40. Eventually, he and his followers numbering around ten thousand took control of Mecca. Muhammad died from an illness in 632 after uniting Arabia into a single Muslim entity.



## 25 December 2016 - Christmas Day in Syria, Lebanon & Jordan

The 25th of December is the date when Christmas is celebrated which marks the birth of Jesus Christ who Christians believe is the son of God. The name 'Christmas' comes from the Mass of Christ – 'Christ Mass'. This service commemorates the death of Christ for his people and then came back to life. It is celebrated by family gathering and the exchange of gifts.



## Featured in the next Golan Journal

Date	Weekday	Event Name	Type
01 January 2017	Sunday	New Year	Syria, Lebanon & Jordan - Public Holiday
06 January 2017	Friday	Armenian Orthodox Christmas Day	Lebanon - Public Holiday
07 January 2017	Saturday	Coptic Christmas Day	Egypt - Public Holiday
25 January 2017	Wednesday	Revolution Day	Egypt - Public Holiday
09 February 2017	Thursday	Saint Maroun Day	Lebanon - Public Holiday
14 February 2017	Tuesday	Rafik Hariri Memorial Day	Lebanon - Public Holiday
08 March 2017	Wednesday	Revolution Day	Syria - Public Holiday
12 March 2017	Sunday	Purim (Tel Aviv)	Hebrew - National Holiday
13 March 2017	Monday	Shushan Purim (Jerusalem)	Hebrew - National Holiday

*"Use your talent to create the extraordinary."*

