

GOLAN

The UNDOF Journal



Jan - Mar 2017





DEAR READERS!



Welcome to the 150th edition of the Golan Journal which is the first publication of 2017 and covers the period from the 01st of January to the 31st of March. Nepal is the lead topic in this Journal which contains information on the country and how its troops in UNDOF meet the many challenges presented by the winter in the Northern Region of the Golan Heights. This edition also features articles on important medical issues such as Rabies and Hepatitis while people are reminded of the important contribution made by woman in the mission with a topic on how the Force marked International Woman's Day.

The delivery of the new PMVs (Protected Mobile Vehicles) to Fijibatt is covered and other events such as the Irish Contingents medal parade and the handover/takeover in Logbatt. Events in the mission which help share national culture have been included such as the Indian Contingents Holi celebrations and the Irish Contingents St Patricks Day. This Journal covers the important job being done by the Force Engineers in maintenance and also highlights the key role played by the Military Police in creating awareness of the hazards on the roads in our region. In this edition readers are informed of the many upcoming Regional Events that will occur in the next three month period. An understanding of these festive occasions may help people comprehend the traditions of the various communities and culture that one may encounter in their area. Obtaining an appreciation of these regional events is important so that the peacekeeper knows what

to expect in the area of operations and is valuable to the planning staff in UNDOF so that they can de-conflict



Maj Bijay, Comdt Toye and Sgt Delana

when organizing operational activities. The UNDOF website continues to be accessible to our Golan Journal readers who may still log onto the UNDOF website <http://undof.unmissions.org> which is controlled by the force's media cell. Visitors to our website can also visit the website managed by UN Headquarters in New York at <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/undof>. The Media Cell have started training for migrating the material from the mission's current website onto the new Drupal platform. Since I will finish my tour of duty with UNDOF in May 2017 this will be the last Golan Journal that I have the privilege to edit and present to our readers. I thank all the people who have contributed articles to the Journal during my time in the mission and I am honored to have had the opportunity to work with a very dedicated and professional media team. As I vacate my role I wish my successor the very best of luck during his tour of duty and hope he gets the same level of satisfaction that I have had during my time as editor of the Missions Journal. Most of all I thank our readers for their engagement and interest in the Mission and hope you continue to support UNDOF as it faces future challenges in the Golan Heights.

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The Golan Journal is the magazine of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force and it is intended to provide information about the Force and events within it which are of interest to its members. The UNDOF Media/Public Relations Office publishes the Golan Journal quarterly. While articles and photographs are welcomed from all members of the Force, the view and opinions expressed are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily coincide with those of the United Nations or the Force Commander.

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Force Commander/Head of Mission's Message



In what is the first Golan Journal production of 2017, as Force Commander and Head of Mission I am once again honoured to have the opportunity to address my UNDOF colleagues and Golan Journal readers.

The first three months of 2017 has been very successful for the mission with continued progress in Camp Faouar as UNDOF builds on our early success. Our UNDOF staff both Military and Civilian have been persistent and steadfast in their approach to ensure that the change in the Force's posture is firmly embedded.

Since the Mission's re-occupation of Camp Faouar in the later stages of last year the programme for improvement and upgrading on the Bravo side has been sustained. Force protection measures have been enhanced and infrastructure development has significantly added to the standard of facilities.

Meanwhile the Mission continues its focus on improving our practices and procedures which underpin force protection and security infrastructure. As

Phase 1 of the Missions return to Camp Faouar progresses, it is imperative that the endeavors, deeds and achievements of all our staff in the Force is acknowledged. I thank all our personnel and staff who are putting their shoulders to the wheel and channel their efforts towards team goals to ensure that UNDOF objectives are realised.

New faces have arrived in the mission over the last few weeks as some of our Troop Contributing Countries have begun to rotate their personnel with fresh troops arriving from India and Ireland. I welcome our latest comrades to UNDOF and wish them a very safe, rewarding and successful tour of duty. I would like to express my appreciation to all our comrades who have returned home having served in the Mission with honor during their time in the region. I wish you all a very happy reunion with your families and friends back home and hope that you can apply the experience that you have gained in UNDOF to support a successful and fulfilling career.

As we look to the future challenges, the next three months will see the start of better weather which challenges our leaders to mitigate against the impacts of climate on our operations, equipment, infrastructure and personnel. There are many upcoming significant regional events which place demands on our personnel to be respectful and considerate of local customs, culture and practices while ensuring that these events are factored into our planning.

The later stages of the second quarter of 2017 will see the conclusion of the implementation of Phase 1 of UNDOF's return to Camp Faouar while planning continues for Phase 2. I am confident that these future challenges will be met by the Mission in a manner that reflects the highest standards and values of respect, integrity and professionalism. I am assured that all our personnel and staff will be guided by these values to continue to work together as a Unit that reflects our motto, One Mission, One Team, One Goal.

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



FC/HOM UNDOF



DFC's Words



Dear colleagues and friends. The first quarter of 2017 has already passed and we are heading towards an extremely interesting spring and summer. As I mentioned in the previous Golan Journal we have been writing an important page in UNDOF's history. The preparations for UNDOF's incremental return to the Bravo side is proceeding and further planning continues as you read this Journal.

I want to thank you all on your tireless support as we combine our efforts to bring UNDOF back to its original disposition. But the whole history is not yet written and we need to keep focused on the current situation to meet upcoming challenges while we continue our determined work to ensure success.

Clear focus and proper planning are key elements to mitigate against a fluid and fragile situation to ensure safe and seamless progress in all stages of our deployment in our Area of Responsibility. I have no doubts that every member of the UNDOF family understands the importance of full dedication to their role although it might look like this role

is just a small part in a bigger picture. The mission will be accomplished only when we all understand the meaning of One Mission, One Team, One Goal.

It is not only the UNDOF personnel that makes up the One Team since we have the full backing of the United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ) staff who are supporting our planning for the incremental return to the Bravo side. The visit from UNHQ to conduct joint planning in the beginning of April is living proof of our real joint effort. For some of us the return to Camp Faouar is just part of the future planning, but for many, especially those, who have lately arrived to the Mission the return will mean a total change in our service environment during their tour of duty. The UNDOF Force Headquarters (FHQ) will have a new, more functional structure: new staff members will join the Mission and the FHQ will start the first phases of returning back to Camp Faouar - its original home. We need to view this coming phase with an open mind and see it as an opportunity to make our Mission even better.

When the Mission is evolving, there will be large scale changes to the work of all personnel. I strongly recommend that all in the Force think clearly, how the return will impact on you or your successor's requirements and ensure that all preparations are made accordingly.

The commanders and superiors must keep their staff and troops fully aware of future planning and create an awareness of how the Force's return to the Bravo side will impact on our daily routines.

In the middle of the hectic renovation process I encourage you to pause for a while and look around you. The sights of the Golan spring is a vision to behold as the bright colors of the new season begin to emerge. The changing nature of the Golan is breath taking and we should take a moment to enjoy the beauty of the local scenery and always be aware of the impacts of our activities on this beautiful environment.

As mentioned in the beginning, we will have an interesting season ahead of us and I'm looking forward to working with you to accomplish our joint venture. I wish you all a productive and memorable spring.

"Safety First" "Look good, Do good"

Brigadier-General Mauri Tapani Koskela
Deputy Force Commander

New Faces



Colonel Chok Bahadur Dhakal from Nepal joined UNDOF in January 2017 to take over the role of COS (Chief of Staff) in the Force Headquarters. He was born on 18th of July 1968 and was commissioned into the Nepalese Army on the 22nd of September 1989. During his military career, Col Chok held many appointments in the Nepalese Army which include the Chief Operations Officer, Directorate of Military Operations, Assistant Chief of Staff (Ops) at Infantry Division, Military Assistant to the Chief of Army Staff, Nepalese Army Directing Staff in the Army Command and Staff College, Commander of an Infantry Battalion and an Independent Company, Commandant in the Military Intelligence School and Commandant in the Birendra Peace Operations Training Centre. Prior to arriving in UNDOF Col Chok obtained valuable experience in mission abroad in different appointments such as Staff Officer in UNPROFOR with the Nepalese Contingent, Military Information Officer in UNIFIL HQ and

Military Observer in UNOCI. He has also attended training and seminars abroad to mention a few such as the; Arms Embargo Training at UNOCI Force HQ in the Ivory Coast, annual conference of the Association of Asia-Pacific Peacekeeping Training Centers in New Zealand and the annual conference of the International Association of Peace Operations Training Centers in Brazil. Throughout his Military career, Col Chok completed many courses which include the; Higher Command and Management Course at the Nepalese Army War College, Senior Officers Leadership and Management course at the Civil Administrative Staff College (Nepal), International Intelligence Fellows Program in the National Defense Intelligence College at Bolling Air Force Base in the US, Advanced Command and Staff Course at the Joint Command and Staff College in the UK, Command and Staff Course at the Nepalese Army Command and Staff College, Psychological Operation Officer Basic Course at the US Army Special Warfare School and Centre in the US, Military Intelligence Course, Intelligence in Combating Terrorism at the US Army Intelligence School and Centre in Arizona and Junior Command Course in India. Col Chok has obtained a Masters of Arts in Defense Studies from the Kings College, University of London, UK and a Masters of Arts in Security Studies (Civil-Military Relations) from the Naval Post Graduate School, Monterey, California, US. Col Chok is happily married to Laxmi Panta and is blessed with a Son and a Daughter.



Lt Col Marc Souman arrived in UNDOF in February 2017 to take up the appointment of Liaison Officer (LO) on the Alpha Side. Prior to his appointment Lt Col Souman worked as a staff officer at the office of the Inspector General of the Defence forces which is an institute that acts as a special advisor to the Minister of Defense and to the ombudsman for the Defence

personnel, including reservists and veterans. Lt Col Souman started his career in 1986 as a Logistics officer and has served in a range of appointments in logistics and personnel branches at Battalion and Brigade level in the Netherlands and in Germany. In 2000 he served as a Company Commander of a transport company and served as the Second in Command of a Logistics Battalion from 2003 to 2006. After performing the role of project leader in the Human Resource Management branch of the Army Staff, he was promoted to Lt Col in 2012. He has served overseas in Iraq in 2005 and in Afghanistan in 2010. Lt Col Marc Souman has two sons, Lars (25) and Luuk (22) and lives in Deventer with Heleen and her two sons, Joep (15) and Guus (13). His hobbies include sports in general and particularly enjoys volleyball and tennis. He also enjoys traveling, a good glass of wine and being among friends.





New Faces



and Veterinary College. During his 12 years of commissioned service in the Indian Army he has held many challenging appointments.

He has served as Detachment Commander for two tenures in highly active Counter insurgency Operational areas and has led a K-9 team in the Federal contingency force of India (National Security Guard) for more than two years. During his National Secu-

Lt Col Rajendra Singh Yadav arrived in UNDOF in Feb 2017 to take up the appointment of Force Hygiene Office (FHO) for a period of 12 months. Lt Col Rajendra started his Military career in Jun 2005 after graduating from Rashtriya Military School

rity Guard tenure he conducted various Sanitization and Render safe procedures (RSP) Operations and was awarded DG NSG Commendation Card for his outstanding and distinguished service. Before joining UNDOF he served as an Assistant Remount Officer in Remount Training school & Depot.

He is a keen academic and has been awarded a University Gold Medal in Graduation. He holds Post Graduate Diploma in Human Rights and has been conferred with the "Global Human Rights protection Award" in the Year 2014 for promoting Human rights education.

He has undergone various courses of instructions during his military career in the training establishments of the Indian Army which include the; Young Officers course, Army Dog trainer course, All Arms Basic Riding course and Bomb Disposal course to name a few.

He is an avid horse rider, loves playing squash and travelling long distances to explore new areas. He is happily married and blessed with a four year old daughter.



in Indian Army and has a variety of experience in different appointments in all sectors of India.

Lt Col Sadeep Khawas has held the logistics appointment in Siachien Glacier (Operation MEGHDOOT) in inhospitable climate where logistic support was the backbone of the opera-

Lt Col Sadeep Khawas, joined UNDOF on 17th March 2017 to take over the appointment of Commanding Officer of LOG-BATT. He was born on the 16th of September 1975 and hails from the hill town of Darjeeling. He has 19 years of service

tions. He has gained experience as a Company Operating Base (COB) Commander in Operation RHINO in the dense jungle terrain and has also commanded a Sub Unit in desert and riverine terrain. Lt Col Sadeep Khawas has successfully completed many Military courses in the Indian army which includes the Advance Gunnery and Junior Command Courses and has delivered training to Para Military forces in jungle warfare.

Lt Col Sadeep Khawas has a wide variety of operational experience and has been awarded with Sena Medal for his valiant action against insurgents in inhospitable jungle terrain of North Eastern India. Lt Col Sadeep Khawas is an avid football player who has represented Indian Army at national level.

He enjoys an active life and likes to keep fit. His hobbies include travelling and cooking. Lt Col Sadeep Khawas is married to Monika and they both have two beautiful daughters named Sneha and Nimisha.

Proactive Policing in UNDOF

Our Role, Your Safety

UNDOF's Military Police with the support of the Mission's Transport Cell continue to play a proactive role and are key enablers to promote road safety in the mission. During the month of February and March the Military Police supported by Transport staff in UNDOF have been busy promoting a road safety campaign targeting all road users both in the Alpha and Bravo sides. The objectives of this campaign is to create awareness of the hazards on our roads and to promote ideal driver habits. Maintaining desirable driving practices will help prevent accidents which often have far reaching consequences and may even be fatal. As part of this road safety campaign the Military Police have been monitoring speed, checking the roadworthiness of vehicles, informing drivers of the hazards and promoting sound behaviors such as the wearing of seatbelts. This proactive approach to policing acts as a continuous reminder of the hazards and the dangers on our roads and support driver education to shape our driving habits to achieve optimal outcomes for our safety and wellbeing.



Education on speed limits within UNDOF's area of operations

Driver Education

A pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling at 50 kph has a 50% chance of surviving.

A pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling at 60 kph has only a 10% chance of surviving.

If you wear a seatbelt your chances of survival from an accident increase by 50 %.

Driving with lights on during the day reduces the risk of a fatal accident by up to 15%.



Campaign leaders of the Road Safety Week

Article by Captain Ian Cowley

Drivers Guide to Ideal Habits

- Do a service check before operating the vehicle
- Check Vehicle Tyres have at least 2mm thread depth.
- Check ALL vehicle lights are working.
- Check fluids are at the correct levels including the windscreen wash.
- Check that wipers are operational.
- Check that seatbelts are operational for all passengers.

Driver Behaviour:

Drive at a reasonable speed appropriate for the road conditions and visibility. Stay within the UN speed limits. Drivers and all passengers must wear seatbelt. Drive with your vehicle lights on 24 hrs a day.



MILITARY POLICE





Engineer Works in UNDOF

Sustaining Effective Service

Force Protection remains a priority in UNDOF as the Engineer Platoon continue their work in building protection walls in UN positions in the Golan Heights. However the engineers have also been focused on plumbing maintenance and repair works including replacing light fittings and installing electrical fittings in the various new offices, accommodation and facilities throughout UNDOF. Engineer assets have been assigned to the programme of repairs and routine maintenance at Position 22 while other auxiliary works such as replacing parts in washing machines and dryers in Camp Ziouani are just many of the various roles that the Engineers perform during the winter months in the Golan Heights. Members of the Engineer Platoon continue to be in demand due to the effects of the Golan winter on certain infrastructures. The Plumber and Heating experts have responded to requests for the repair of geyser, under-

ground waste water pipes and plumbing works in Camp Ziouani and other positions throughout UNDOF. Additional demands are the norm for the Carpenters and Joiners who can always be relied upon to resolve infrastructure issues due to the cold winter conditions.



Sgt Buli re-aligning the sewerage pipes in Position 80



Engineer Staff Sergeant Qoro conducting maintenance work



Cpl Sorby fixing plumbing works Article by WO2 Korovavala



FIJIBAT RECEIVE NEW APC'S

Mobility, Protection, Communications and Support

In March 2017 Fijibatt received seven new Protected Mobility Vehicles (PMVs) in the mission. The arrival of these APC's made by Bushmaster in Australia will help enhance the Units capability in the Mission. These armoured vehicles will offer greater mobility, protection and support while also hav-



Capt (N) Humphrey and Lt Col Luveni (Fiji) hands over the PMVs to Nicoleta Verestiuc, DCMS, UNDOF. Photo also features Joanna Cameron, Movcon, UNDOF, HE Glenn Miles, Australian Ambassador to Lebanon and Col Brick from the Australian Army

ing the capacity to function as mobile command centre. The PMV's have the capacity to transport a Section of troops. Its armour offers personnel high levels of blast and bal-



First Bushmaster departing Rosh Hanikra for Camp Ziouani



Bushmaster convoy heading towards Golan Heights

istic protection from many types of direct and indirect weapon systems. Its main weapon system helps provide a more mobile and accurate fire support capability to the Unit while the communications assets in the vehicle helps support command and control, offering many advantages to the contingents leaders. The Bushmaster PMV is designed to perform a diverse range of tasks and the several variants include troop carrier, command, patrol, support, weapons deployment and ambulance. These seven PMV's were delivered to UNDOF by CFN/DPSO, Capt. (N) Humphrey Biutilomaloma Tawake, and the Military Adviser to Commander Fiji Military Forces/Director Peace Support Operations, Lt. Col. Pacolo Tiko Luveni.

NEPAL

The Country of our Comrades

NEPCON

The Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal is located in South Asia with an area of 147,181 square kilometers with varied geographical distribution- hills, mountains, plains and valleys. It has a total population of approximately 28.5 million and is a landlocked country that shares territorial borders with the People's Republic of China in the North and the Republic of India in the South, East and West. Kathmandu is the nation's capital and Nepali is the official language. It has diverse castes, ethnic groups and religions with Hinduism being the major religion. Nepalese people are well known for their simplicity, hospitality and bravery as 'GURKHAS'. Nepal is known for its exquisite natural beauty, with the iconic Himalayan Mountain ranges running across the northern and western parts of the country. Out of the fourteen peaks above 8000 meters in the world, eight are located in Nepal. Mount Everest which is the highest peak in the world (8,848 meter) lies in Nepal. Tourism is one of the major income-source in the country after Agriculture. Amongst the captivating tourist destinations "Trekking" is the best way to get into the interesting and remote mountain



Wonderful summer view of Nepal

villages of Nepal and to enjoy views of famous peaks together with the local people, cultures and lifestyles mostly untouched by modernisation. Everest Base Camp, Annapurna Base Camp and Ghorepani Poon Hill are some of the world's most famous adventurous trekking destinations. Mountains are the origin of several perennial rivers that provide the country with great hydropower potential along with the possibility of river-rafting also known as "white water adventure" which is another major tourist attraction of Nepal.



Map of Nepal



Scenic views of Nepal

Nepal offers award winning wildlife reserves, conservations and national parks. The great one-horned "Rhinos" which is among the world's most endangered species is found in the jungles of Nepal. The Country is a famous destination for bird lovers. 879 species of birds have been recorded in Nepal, which is about 8% of the total bird species found worldwide. Pokhara, a most popular city with lakes, provides opportunities for fishing, boating, paragliding and sightseeing with the panoramic view of Annapurna Himalayan range. Kathmandu Valley constitutes three cities namely Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur. It has several historical memorials, old palaces and temples which are in the list of World Heritage sites. Nepal is the land of Lord 'Shiva'. The holiest Hindu temple in the world 'Pashupatinath' is in Kathmandu. 'Lumbini' which is the birthplace of lord "Buddha" lies in Nepal and is popular with pilgrims. The Kathmandu valley is the most developed and densely populated place in Nepal

where the majority of government offices and headquarters are located, making it the economic hub of Nepal. The country is also distinctly known for its colorful vibrant festivals. Most of them have religious connotations and some are based on important events from ancient mythology and epic literature. Dashain, Tihar, Chhat, Indraajatra, Mahashivaratri and Buddhajayanti are a few of the mostly celebrated festivals that represent unique culture with religious belief. Nepal is a country of natural beauty with a majestic culture that offers spiritual living and truly is a piece of heaven on earth.



People of Nepal - Article by Capt Dr Rajiv Sitaula, MO Nepcon V



NEPCON V

UN Peacekeepers on the Highest Terrain

The Nepalese Contingent is deployed on the Hermon Complex in the northern part of the Golan Heights. One of its five positions known as Hermon Hotel (HH) is the highest UN held position in the world with a height of 2814 meters above sea level.

occupied these positions between the 25th of June 1974 and the 25th of June 2013. After the departure of Austrian troops the Hermon Complex was occupied by a Philippine Battalion for almost four weeks. Nepcon I deployed to the Mount Hermon Complex



Nepcon ski Unit training in Mount Hermon

The Mount Hermon Complex is located in the tri-border region between Syria, Israel and Lebanon. Prior to the arrival of Nepalese troops to the mountainous complex it was the Austrian Battalion that

for the first time on the 18th of July 2013 and since then four additional contingents of Nepalese troops have served in the area. Nepcon V started its mission in UNDOF on the 28th of September 2016.



A Section of Nepcon soldiers conducting a routine patrol in Mount Hermon

Nepcon's activities

Our regular activities include morning physical training, patrols (foot & vehicle), water

and ration re-supply, regular convoys, manning OPs 24/7, constant monitoring and situ-



ational reporting. In special occasions the Unit has conducted VIP escorts and security. The Unit maintains effectivity by conducting various train-

ing that include weapons handling, shooting, mountain refresher training, medical evacuation drills, firefighting and rapid response training.

Facing the weather challenges

Some of the challenging situations in the summer include driving conditions in sandy steep roads with sharp turns where minefields sometime exist to both sides, with extreme wind speed adding another dimension. In winter from mid-December to March the conditions are even more challenging. Heavy snowfall, extreme wind (110 km/hr and above) and fog reduces visible to almost 3 meters. These conditions have an impact on most routine activities and can affect movement in particular.

However, Nepcon are well equipped to deal with these challenging conditions. The Pisten Bully is the Units life-line and is a vital element at Nepcon's disposal. This special snow vehicle can open



Pisten bully clearing the snow on the roads to Nepcon positions

access routes, transport vital materials and personnel. Focussing on winter preparation is vital for Nepcon to remain effective during the cold winter months in the Mount Hermon Complex.



The impacts of winter on transport



Casevac Exercise in Mount Hermon

Winter preparation

- Snow and avalanche poles were erected along the road-side as markers to follow during road clearing operations by the Pisten Bully.
- Mountain refresher training was conducted.
- Adequate food, water and fuel stock (at least for 28 days) was stored in each position.
- Troops strength was readjusted.
- Proper clothing and equipment was distributed such as goggles, shovels and large buckets etc.
- Ski orientation and training was conducted on the Pisten Bully and other contingent vehicles such as Skidoo ride used for patrols.
- Medevac and casevac exercises were conducted before and during winter.
- Lessons learned from training were implemented.
- Regular medical fitness assessment was conducted on all troops.
- Mental preparedness and counseling was instigated.



Nepcon soldiers carrying a block of ice to be melted down for water



Snow harvesting in the Mount Hemon Complex provides a water source

Daily survival

Snow is collected in large blocks and melted in bins to provide water for bathing, flushing toilets, washings and other daily routines. A water heating system is also used to maintain the room temperature. Fuel tanks are heated to help start cold and frozen engines in vehicles and snow chains are used on tyres. Snow clearance activities are carried out on roads using a Dozer and the Pisten Bully. The Units work continues as normal with regular Skidoo patrols and Ski patrols ensuring the operational tempo is maintained. Maintenance works are prioritised to ensure the infrastructure and the facilities continue to function as normal while group and team building games and activities are prioritized to maintain morale.

Team Building Initiatives

Indoor games, outdoor events and recreational tours are planned and organised.



Sentry on duty at an observation post in Mount Hermon - Article by Major Dr Raj Kumar Thapa, SMO Nepcon V

SAINT PATRICKS DAY IN THE GOLAN

Medal Parade and Culture Exchange in UNDOF

The members of the 54 Infantry Group of the Irish Defence Forces turned the Golan Green for St. Patrick's Day which is pronounced in the Irish Language as 'Lá Fhéile Phadraig'. Celebrating St. Patrick's Day is a very important event for Irish soldiers based overseas where they get an opportunity to showcase aspects of the Irish culture.

The FRC began the day in the traditional style with a Shamrock parade. St. Patrick often used the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity, three parts the father, the son and the Holy Spirit, belonging to the same being, God. Shamrocks are still used to this day to represent St. Patrick and is the emblem of Ireland. St. Patrick's Day is held annually on the 17th of March and is traditionally marked by the wearing of shamrocks and involves the celebration of Irish culture, language and music. Celebrations not only take place in Ireland but all across the world where the Irish diaspora and emigrant communities celebrate this national Irish holiday. After the 54th Infantry Group received their Shamrocks, several VIPs arrived to attend the Irish Contingents Medal Parade. In attendance was the Irish Minister for State with responsibility for



CO FRC Lt Col Mary Carroll accompanies the FC/HoM as he inspects the parade



DCO FRC escorts Minister Paul Kehoe on parade



Irish Contingents Medal Parade on Saint Patrick's Day

Defence Mr. Paul Kehoe TD, Irish Ambassador to Israel Ms. Allison Kelly and Deputy Chief of Staff of the Defence Forces Major General Kieran Brennan. The guests were greeted by a Guard of Honour commanded by Lieutenant Brian Lane before attending a Force Reserve Company capability display. A bilingual (English and Irish) religious service was conducted by Fr. Paul Murphy to mark the feast day of St. Patrick. The inclusion of the Irish language in the service was another means of sharing the Irish culture with our international colleagues in UNDOF. A medal parade was held after the religious ceremony where all personnel in the Irish contingent received the Mission's Medal for their service with UNDOF. The medal parade was commanded by Lt Col Mary Carroll, the first woman to lead an Irish Defence Forces Contingent in UNDOF.



Maj Gen Kieran Bennan presenting medals to troops on parade

Lt Col Carroll escorted the FC/HoM Maj-Gen Jai Shanker Menon as he inspected the parade. During the ceremony medals were presented to those on parade by the FC/HoM Maj-Gen Menon, Minister Paul Kehoe and Maj-Gen Brennan. Minister Paul Kehoe and the FC/HoM Maj-Gen Menon both addressed the parade highlighting the challenges faced by the mission in implementing its mandate, the evolving situation in the area and the contribution made by the Irish Contingent as the Force implements change to face the current security environment. Many people



FC/HoM presenting UNDOF medals to Irish troops on parade

from the local community and their families attended the medal parade which was followed by lunch that included the traditional Irish stew. Following the formalities, the cultural programme continued with Pte Owen Donnelly providing traditional music on the bagpipes while the Fijian band played a mixture of tunes which included the popular Irish song 'Whiskey in the Jar'. Guests had also an opportunity to enjoy the All-Ireland Club Hurling and Gaelic Football Finals played in the background. Hurling and Gaelic Football are two of Ireland's national games and are played all over the country with the Club Finals traditionally held on St Patrick's Day. As the FRC will begin rotating shortly the Officer Commanding Lt Col Mary Carroll reflected on a great day adding "The unit has been working exceptionally hard over



Irish Colour Party marches onto parade

the past five months of our deployment. Today is not just about reflecting upon and celebrating Irish culture but also being able to celebrate a job well done. Our priority now is to see that job through to completion and hand over to our successors in the coming weeks."

LOGBATT's HOLI CELEBATION

Sharing Tradition in UNDOF



Contingent leaders and the UNDOF family celebrating HOLI

HOLI known as the festival of colours was celebrated by Logbatt on the 13th of March 2017. This event is widely observed throughout India. Logbatts festival was attended by troops from all contingents in UNDOF, international staff, civilian employees and the Mission's Leadership including FC/HoM Maj Gen Jai Shanker Menon, DFC Brig Gen Mauri Tapani Koskela and the COS Colonel Chok Bahadur Dhakal. Holi is an ancient Hindu religious festival which has become popular with non-Hindus in many parts of South Asia, as well as people of other communities outside Asia. It

is celebrated at the approach of the spring equinox, on the Phalguna Purnima (Full Moon). The festival date, which is determined by the Hindu calendar, varies from year to year on the Gregorian calendar, usually in March, but sometimes in February. It is primarily observed in India, Nepal, and their diaspora in other regions throughout the world. In recent years the festival has spread to parts of Europe and North America as a spring celebration of love, frolic, and colours. It usually involves the dusting or scattering of a variety of shades or colours of nonhazardous powder, paints or dye on guests.



Traditional Bhangra dance by Logbatt personnel

LOGBATT'S HANDOVER/TAKEOVER

New Unit takes up the Challenge

LOGBATT



DFC UNDOF Brig Gen Mauri Tapani Koskela oversees handover/takeover procedures

On the 27th of March, the Logbatt handover/take over ceremony was conducted at Khetrupal Hall in Camp Ziouani. This event marked the 20th and 21st rotation of the Unit. Those in attendance witnessed the outgoing Lt Col Vinay Kumar Gautam handing over to Lt Col Sadeep Khawas. DFC, Brigadier-General Mauri Tapani Koskela officiated at the ceremony.



Lt Col Gautam hands over to Lt Col Khawas



INTERNATIONAL WOMAN'S DAY IN UNDOF

Woman's Contribution Celebrated

On the 8th of March UNDOF celebrated International Woman's Day on the Alpha and Bravo sides to respect, honour and highlight the contribution made by woman in the mission to support peace in the Golan Heights. Presently there are 68 woman serving in various capacities throughout the mission which include national, international and military staff. Gender equality and empowerment for women is the subject of Sustainable Development Goal 5 and embedded throughout the 2030 Agenda which recognizes that women and girls are indispensable for durable peace, true justice and sustainable development. When they advance, societies advance with them. The priorities of women and girls are enshrined in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 1325

Global Review on Women, Peace and Security, and the Paris Agreement on climate change. Collectively, these global commitments constitute a historic "gender equality compact" and will lead to Planet 50-50 by 2030. The event was marked with speeches highlighting the significance of International Woman's Day (08th March 2017) as outlined by the Secretary General United Nations followed by a tree planting ceremony, music, dance, food, bowling and an endurance run. Both events were well attended by many in UNDOF which included Deputy Force Commander, Brig-Gen Mauri Tapani Koskela, Deputy Chief Mission Support Nicoleta Verestiuc, Commanding Officer FRC Lt Col Mary Carroll, Commanding Officer of Indcon, Lt Col Vinay Kumar Gautum and Commanding Officer from Fijibatt, Lt Col Daunivakasala Ravunakana.





Article by SSO Media Commandant Patrick Toye



Prevention of Waterborne Diseases

Know how to stay effective

Introduction

Waterborne diseases causes illness reducing force effectivity. The aim of this article is to promote awareness and educate people on how small but sound habits can make a difference to force effectivity. According to WHO data waterborne diseases account for an estimated 3.6% of the total daily global burden of diseases and is responsible for 1.5 million human deaths annually. Waterborne diseases are caused by pathogenic micro-organisms that most commonly are transmitted in contaminated fresh water. These includes most of the enteric and diarrheal diseases. Infection commonly results during bathing, washing, drinking, in the preparation of food or the consumption of food that is infected. Outbreaks of waterborne diseases often occur after a severe precipitation events such as rainfall & snowfall.

Waterborne diseases include:

Cholera, Amoebiasis, Giardiasis, Salmonellosis, igel-
losis, Leptospirosis, Hepatitis A&E, Viral Gastroen-
teritis, Cyclosporiasis and Cryptosporidiosis,

Impact of waterborne diseases:

Causes various types of enteric and diarrheal diseases which directly impacts on health, results in a burden to official and unofficial healthcare costs, working days are lost and force effectivity is reduced.

General Guidelines for prevention of waterborne diseases:

Avoid contacting soil that may be contaminated with human feces. Do not defecate outdoors. Dispose of diapers properly. Wash hands with soap and water before handling food. When traveling to countries where sanitation and hygiene are poor, avoid water or food that may be contaminated. Wash, peel or cook all raw vegetables and fruits before eating.

Preventive measures for the waterborne

diseases: Practice of drinking filtered/boiled water. Practice of storing water in clean containers. Practice of washing out water jars/containers daily. Practice of hand washing.

Activities carried out in UNDOF for prevention of waterborne diseases:

Water testing is carried out in the UNDOF Laboratory, Hygiene inspections are conducted regularly. Information is spread regularly to create awareness and education and enhanced knowledge which helps to improve habits.

Article by Major Dr Raina Chaudhary, Consultant, Microbiologist



Sample of water being collected for analysis by the Lab Chief



Hand hygiene is one of the most important life skills

VIRAL HEPATITIS

Build Awareness to reduce the risk

Introduction

Viral hepatitis is inflammation of liver caused by various viruses commonly by Hepatitis A, B, C, D & E viruses. Among them A & E have potential for outbreaks & epidemics whereas B & C leads to chronic disease in millions of people. Hepatitis B & C are also responsible for the liver cirrhosis and cancer. Clinically, it is presented with mild fever, loss of appetite, nausea & vomiting, abdominal pain and weight loss.

Mode of Transmission

Hepatitis A-E are transmitted through feco-oral route whereas Hepatitis B, C & D through contaminated blood and blood product. However, transmission of Hepatitis B by sexual mode is high.

Risk Groups

- People in household/sexual contact with infected persons
- Medical and paramedical personnel
- International traveler from developed countries to endemic zone
- Refugees in temporary camp
- IV drug user, Food handlers
- Intravenous drug users
- Promiscuous homosexual and heterosexual groups
- People exposed to unscreened blood or blood products

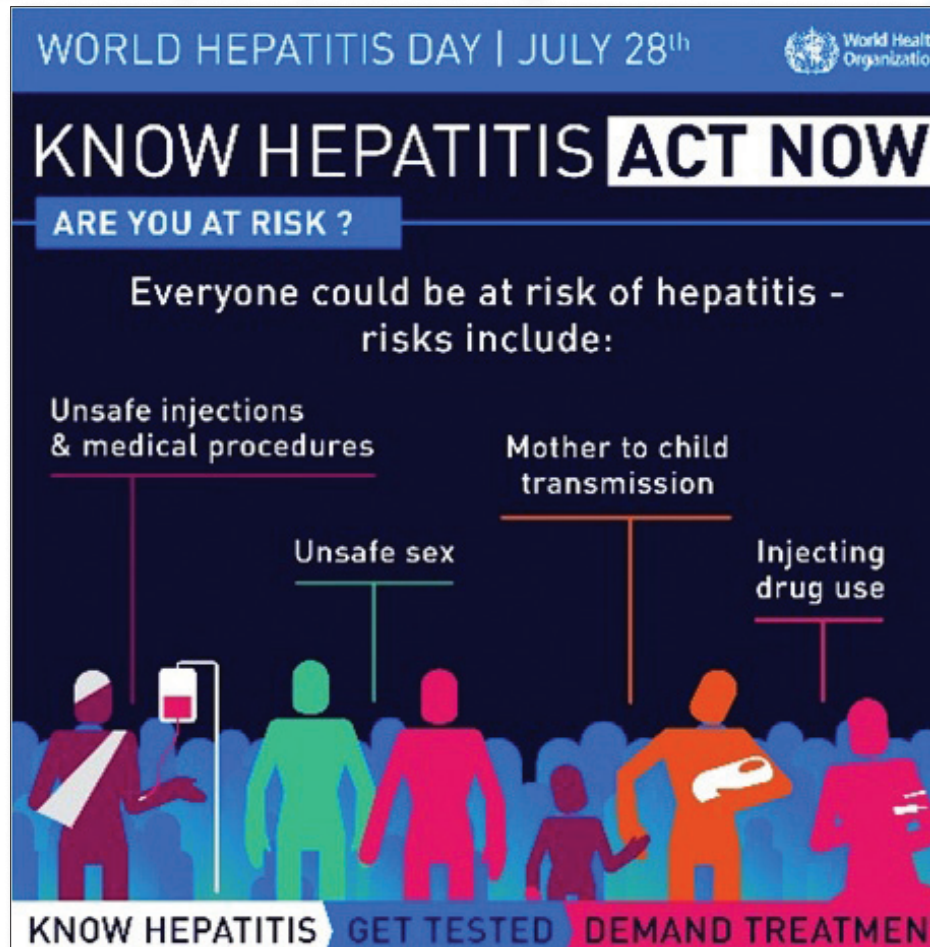
Preventative Measures

- General Measures: Hygiene & sanitation particular reference to hand washing practice.
- Blood & blood product safety, safe sex, practice, occupational safety.
- Specific Measures: Vaccines are available only for Hepatitis A and B.

Treatment

- For Hepatitis A & E there is no specific treatment, usually resolves within few days.
- For Hepatitis B Interferon is used as treatment.
- For Hepatitis C Peginterferon together with antiviral drugs are used as treatment.

Article by Dr Arju Singh Chand, Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist. FMO



UNDOF's APPROACH TO RABIES CONTROL

Prevention is better than the Cure

What is Rabies?

Rabies is an acute, fatal viral disease that attacks the central nervous system of most warm blooded animals and humans. The disease is generally transmitted by the bite of an infected animal after which the virus is spread through the infected saliva into the blood stream of the healthy animal or indeed a human. Dogs, cats, rats, bats, foxes, raccoons and skunks are commonly found to be the natural vectors of the disease. It can be prevented and treated by vaccination and controlled by the elimination of stray animals and the education of the public. Rabies has always been a public health problem for most of the Middle Eastern countries with the main source of human infection being dogs followed by cats. High incidence of rabies is common in the Mission Area of UNDOF.



Anti-Rabies vaccination carried out by Major Ram Ratan

What are the symptoms of Rabies?

Dogs or other mammals suspected of rabies become unduly ferocious and may bite or attack people and other animals.

What are UNDOF's prevention measures?

The FMO and FHO have developed an Anti-Rabies vaccination programme in UNDOF's AOR. This programme has been implemented by the FMO and FHO in collaboration with the local authorities. As part of this programme all dogs that are officially approved to be kept in various positions in UNDOF were vaccinated against rabies.



Anti-Rabies vaccination carried out by the medical section

What action should be taken by UNDOF personnel?

- Avoid contact with all stray animals. Feeding as well as keeping of stray animals in UNDOF facilities/compounds is strictly forbidden.
- Citing of any stray animals should be immediately reported to the office of the FMO or FHO.
- The FMO or FHO will pass on advice and give assistance.
- The FMO or FHO will plan for the removal of the animal.
- The animal should be immediately captured if possible.
- Persons handling the case must wear protective clothing.
- If a person comes in contact with the saliva from an animal suspected to have rabies then the individual concerned should immediately report to UNDOF's medical facility.

Article by Major Ram Rattan FHO

Upcoming Regional Events



14 April 2017 - Orthodox Good Friday in Lebanon

Orthodox Christians commemorate Good Friday on the 14th of April 2017 which is a Public Holiday in Lebanon. This is also known as “Great Friday” to mark the events that led up to Jesus' crucifixion. Most Orthodox churches have continued to use a version of the Julian calendar, which is different to the Gregorian calendar used extensively today. Therefore Orthodox Easter dates may differ from the dates used by western churches.

16 April 2017 - Orthodox Easter Day in Syria, Easter Sunday in Lebanon & Coptic Easter Sunday in Egypt

The Julian calendar is used by many Orthodox churches to determine their Easter date, which often differs from the Gregorian calendar that is used by many western countries. Therefore the Orthodox Easter period often occurs later than the



Easter period that falls around the time of the March equinox. Easter Sunday in Lebanon is marked by a Public Holiday on the 16th of April 2017 and is celebrated by Christian communities which include Maronite Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Melkite Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Syriac Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Syriac Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Chaldean, Assyrian, Coptic and Protestants that make up 40% of the population. On Easter Sunday, many families make a special lunch which includes turkey or chicken stuffed with nuts and served with rice. The afternoon is spent visiting friends and family members. Christian people greet by saying Al Massih Qam (Jesus is risen from the dead) while the other person answers Haqqan Qam (He has truly risen). On the 16th of April Coptic Easter Sunday is marked by a National Holiday in Egypt.

17 April 2017 - Independence Day in Syria

Independence Day in Syria is also called Evacuation Day. This is a national day commemorating the evacuation of the last French soldier and the end of the French mandate of Syria and its proclamation of full independence on 17th of April 1946. The day is marked in Syria by a Public Holiday on the 17th of April every year. Celebrations to mark the event include the ceremonial hoisting of the National Flag on memorial parks to honor those who died fighting in wars against French forces to liberate the country from foreign rule. Most people also get the day off from work while celebrations in major cities and towns in Syria may include firework displays.

17 April 2017 - Pesach VI (last day of Passover) in Israel

Pesach is the last day of Passover which marks the end of the Jewish holiday that commemorates the deliverance of Jewish people from slavery in Egypt. Passover is also known as Pesah, Pesach, or the Feast of Unleavened Bread and is a National Holiday in Israel.

17 April 2017 – Spring Festival in Egypt & Easter Monday in Lebanon

Egyptians have retained some of their ancestor's customs one of which is the annual observance of Sham El-Nessim, an ancient Egyptian spring festival that is celebrated on the 17th of April by Christians and Muslims in Egypt alike. Sham El-Nessim, translated from Arabic as “smelling the breeze,” and is celebrated every year on the Monday after Eastern Orthodox Easter. Although its date is determined by the Christian holy day, the spring celebration goes back 4,500 years to the time of the pharaohs, when it was called Shamo, or “renewal of life,” in reference to the beginning of the agricultural growing season. Ancient Egyptians celebrated this spring holiday by boiling, colouring and decorating eggs. Wishes were also written on eggs after which they would be tucked into baskets and then hung on trees or roofs in anticipation of answers from the gods. On the 17th of April Lebanon marks Easter Monday with a Public Holiday which is an extension or continuation of the Easter celebrations.



25 April 2017 – Sinai Liberation Day in Egypt

Sinai Liberation Day is a National Holiday in Egypt that commemorates the final withdrawal of the Israeli Defence Forces from the Sinai Peninsula in 1982, after 15 years of occupation. It is celebrated annually on the anniversary of the day the last Israeli soldiers left the peninsula on the 25th of April. On the 5th of June 1967, Israel carried out a pre-emptive strike on Egypt, Syria, and Jordan, starting the Six-Day War. As a result of the war, Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula from Egypt. Following the Israeli occupation of Sinai, Egypt refused to negotiate with Israel and began the War of Attrition that lasted from 1967 to 1970. When it ended with a ceasefire, Sinai was still controlled by Israel. Egypt once again tried to seize control over Sinai during the Yom Kippur War (known in Egypt as the October War) in 1973. In 1975, Israel and Egypt signed the Sinai Interim Agreement. In 1979, a peace treaty was signed in which Israel agreed to gradually withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula.

01 May 2017 – May Day in Syria, Workers Day in Lebanon & Labour Day in Egypt

May Day is marked by a Public Holiday in Syria. In Lebanon it is regarded as Workers Day and is a Public Holiday. The 01st of May is celebrated as Labour Day in Egypt and is a National Holiday. Labour Day is linked to the International Workers Day and marks the achievements of workers. It originated from the labour union movement which advocated among others an eight hour working day, with eight hours for recreation and the remaining eight hours for rest. May Day is an ancient northern hemisphere spring festival and is also a traditional spring holiday in many cultures. Dances, singing, and cake are usually part of the celebrations.

02 May 2017 - Yom HaAtzmaut (Independence Day) in Israel

Israel's Independence Day is celebrated on the fifth day of the month of Iyar in the Hebrew calendar to mark the formal establishment of the State of Israel. The "provisional government" read and signed a Declaration of Independence in Tel Aviv on this date. The original date corresponded to the 14th of May 1948. Most of the Jewish communities in the Western world have incorporated this modern holiday into their calendars. An official ceremony is held every year on Mount Herzl, Jerusalem on the evening of Independence Day which include speeches, artistic performances, flag raising and the ceremonial lighting of twelve torches. Israeli families, celebrate with picnics and barbecues. Israeli flags are draped or flown from balconies and small flags are attached to car windows. Israeli Television channels air the official events live and classic cult Israeli movies.

06 May 2017 - Martyrs' Day in Syria & Lebanon

Martyrs' Day is a public holiday in Syria and Lebanon. It is observed annually on the 6th of May to commemorate the Lebanese and Syrian nationalists executed in Beirut and Damascus on this day in 1916. At that time both Lebanon and Syria were ruled by the Ottoman Empire from 1516 to 1918 as part of the so-called Greater Syria. Following the Young Turk revolution of 1908, Arab nationalism in Greater Syria began to grow with the demand for greater autonomy in the Ottoman Arab provinces. Suppression of the Arab nationalism began culminating in the simultaneous public execution of 21 Arab Nationalists on the 6th of May 1916 in both Beirut and Damascus for alleged anti-Turkish activities. These executions inspired an Arab revolt. The date of execution is now commemorated as Martyr's Day in Lebanon and Syria. Sites of execution have been renamed Martyrs' Square in both cities.

24 May 2017 - Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day) in Israel

Yom Yerushalayim is a public holiday in Israel. Many Jewish organizations may be closed or offer a limited service so that special events can be held. The event is marked with a range of activities in many Jewish communities which include praise and thanksgiving prayers in synagogues, street parades, parties, singing, dancing and special meals. In Jerusalem, a public reception by the mayor, state ceremonies and memorial services are also held. In Israel, some people mark the occasion by traveling or even hiking to Jerusalem.

31 May 2017 - Shavuot (Pentecost) in Israel

Shavuot is known as the Feast of Weeks in English and as Pentecost in Ancient Greek and is a National Holiday in Israel. Shavuot occurs on the sixth day of the Hebrew month of Sivan and usually falls between the 14th of May and the 15th of June annually with its date being directly linked to that of Passover. The feast marks the all-important wheat harvest in the Land of Israel and it commemorates the anniversary of the day God gave the Torah to the nation of Israel assembled at Mount Sinai. On Passover, the people of Israel were freed from their enslavement to Pharaoh while on Shavuot they were given the Torah and became a nation committed to serving God. The word Shavuot means weeks, and the festival of Shavuot marks the completion of the seven-week counting period between Passover and Shavuot. According to Jewish law, Shavuot is celebrated in Israel for one day and the Diaspora (outside of Israel) for two days.

Upcoming Regional Events

26 June 2017 - Eid al-Fitr in Syria, Lebanon & Egypt



Eid al-Fitr means the 'festival of breaking the fast'. It is an important religious holiday celebrated by all Muslims worldwide that marks the end of 29 or 30 days of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting during which Muslims abstained from eating or drinking between dawn and dusk. The religious Eid is a single day during which Muslims are not permitted to fast. The dates of Ramadan change each year, and so does the date of Eid al-Fitr. Ramadan in 2017 will start on Saturday, the 27th of May and will continue for

30 days until Sunday, the 25th of June. Eid al-Fitr is marked by a Public Holiday in Syria and Lebanon on Monday the 26th of June. The day of Eid, falls on the first day of the month of Shawwal (10th month). The date for the start of any lunar Hijri month (Islamic Calendar) varies based on the observation of new moon by local religious authorities, so the exact day of celebration varies by locality. However, in most countries, it is generally celebrated on the same day as Saudi Arabia. In India, where the festival is commonly known as Eid ul-Fitr, Muslims celebrate it a day after it is marked in Saudi Arabia. On Eid al-fitr, or Eid ul-Fitr, Muslims wake up before sunrise and perform special prayers at mosques and open-air areas and thereafter families and friends host gatherings and feasts. Eid al-fitr is also a time of giving thanks to Allah for the strength to complete the period of fasting and forgiveness. It is also popular to eat sweet foods which has led to Eid al-Fitr being referred to as the "Sweet Eid". Donations and food are often given to those less fortunate in an act of thanksgiving. Gifts are also exchanged, with the common greeting of "Eid Mubarak", which translates to "Have a blessed Eid". From the 26th of June to the 28th of June 2017 Egypt celebrate Eid al-Fitr & Ramadan Day 2 & Ramadan Day 3 with three (3) National Holidays designated to mark the event.

30 June 2017 - June 30 Revolution in Egypt



The June 2013 Egyptian protests, also called June 30 Revolution is marked by a National Holiday in Egypt. The anniversary recalls the biggest protests in Egypt's history, with millions of people taking to the streets throughout the country. People paraded in favor of President Mohamed Morsi while others paraded against Morsi's rule which resulted in violent clashes between both groups. The June protest eventually led to the removal of Mohamed Morsi as president of Egypt on the 3rd of July 2013.

Date	Weekday	Event Name	Type
23 July 2017	Sunday	Revolution Day in Egypt (Revolution 1952)	National Holiday
15 August 2017	Tuesday	Feast of the Assumption in Lebanon	Public Holiday
01-04 September 2017	Friday - Monday	<u>Eid Al-Adha</u> in Egypt	Public Holiday
02 September 2017	Saturday	<u>Eid Al-Adha</u> in Syria, Lebanon	Public Holiday
21 September 2017	Thursday	El <u>Hijra</u> in Egypt	Public Holiday
21 September 2017	Thursday	Hijri New Year in Lebanon	Public Holiday
21 September 2017	Thursday	Rosh <u>Hashana</u> (New Year) in Israel	National Holiday
22 September 2017	Friday	Muharram in Syria	Public Holiday
22 September 2017	Friday	Rosh <u>Hashana</u> (New Year Day 2) in Israel	National Holiday
30 September 2017	Saturday	<u>Ashoura</u> in Lebanon	Public Holiday
30 September 2017	Saturday	Yom Kippur in Israel	National Holiday

Article By: Commandant Patrick Toye SSO Media & PR Photo: Supplied

