

NEWS TODAY

NAME OF PERIODICAL

29 OCT 1985  
DATE OF PUBLICATION

FILE NO.

- ★ JR meets Israeli Prime Minister to seek 'ties & arms'
- ★ Tel Aviv lets the cat out on Lanka's betrayal of Arabs

# Mossad spectre grows

## Big increase in defence budget causes concern

From Our Special Correspondent

New Delhi, Oct. 29:

Official circles here who are actively involved in the process of a negotiated settlement between the Lankan Government and the Tamil groups, have been taken by surprise at the reported meeting between Lanka President J.R. Jayawardene and Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres in Paris last week.

While the Colombo authorities were maintaining total secrecy over the meeting, keeping it under very tight wraps, the Israeli radio has confirmed the meeting. According to Tel Aviv, the two leaders talked about renewal of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

It is well-known that such ties already exist at an informal level. Close on the heels of anti-Tamil riots in June, July 1983, the Jayawardene's UNP Government allowed Israel to open an "interests section" in Colombo in the U.S. Embassy. The Israeli secret service Mossad is actively involved in Colombo Government's anti-Tamil military operations. The Mossad is also engaged in spying on Tamil leaders in India.

Sri Lanka broke off diplomatic ties with Israel in 1970 when Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike came to power and formed a coalition Government with Lanka's Sama Samajam and Communist parties. This was done as a protest against Israeli aggression on its Arab neighbours and the denial of a homeland for Palestinians. Jayawardene Government's present move is therefore directed not only

against India which is championing the cause for a Palestinian homeland but also against all Arab and Islamic countries.

### Timing significant

President Jayawardene has been blowing hot and cold. Even while appearing to support a political settlement with the Tamils, in recent days he has assumed warlike postures against Tamils. He told the British newspapers that he would crush terrorism within a year. He also alleged that the Tamil terrorists in league with terrorists in the South were planning to take over the whole country. In this background the Lankan President's attempts to woo Israel is considered very significant.



Shimon Peres



Jayawardene

### Direct blow

Lanka's move deals a direct blow to the non-aligned movement which has repeatedly castigated Israel as the outlaw of the world. Most of the non-aligned countries have broken off relations with Israel.

It remains to be seen how Sri Lanka will reconcile its current togetherness with Israel and the public stance taken by the non-aligned movement. The opinion here is that the Lankan Government has already negotiated a secret military deal with Israel to crush the Tamil nationalist upsurge in the island.

### More arms for Colombo

According to another report reaching New Delhi, some of the Commonwealth countries at their just concluded summit at Bahamas have reportedly

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promised Sri Lanka "more effective military hardware to combat terrorism".

The sketchy report says that the Colombo Government earmarked Rs. 5.83 billion for strengthening the defence forces with modern weapons. This worked out to nearly 12% of its budget, the highest for any developing country.

New Delhi has taken notice of the reports appearing in the Colombo newspapers which have reported on Commonwealth help to Lanka's democracy. These reports had not identified the countries but it is known that the major supplier would be the United Kingdom. Australia, Canada, and New Zealand have refused to help.

The Colombo Government already has contacts with the South African Government. South African arms are being carried to Colombo on the flag carriers of other countries to avoid suspicion.

PTI adds: Reporting the allocation for defence, the "Daily News" said Rs. 3.72 billion of the total bill would be to meet the recurring expenditure and the balance for capital investment.

**Last chance**

In weekly political round up, the "Daily News" said that the Nasseau meeting between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lanka Prime Minister Junius Jayawardene indicated that while no effort would be spared to arrive at an accord, "failure to achieve this would leave no alternative but a relentless war to root out terrorists".

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