

Govt.-LTTE peace talks to be resumed next week. (1994, November 24). *The Island*.

# Govt.-LTTE peace talks to be resumed next week

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The second round of talks between the Government and the LTTE will take place next week in Jaffna, informed government sources said yesterday.

The agenda for the talks will focus on the re-opening of Sangupiddy-Pooneryn road for civilian passengers from the mainland as well as a ceasefire. The peace initiative by President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga to find a political solution to the problem in the North and East have not been abandoned and the peace team will explore the possibilities of reaching some understanding with the LTTE, sources said.

Meanwhile sources in the North said that Roman Catholics in the Jaffna diocese were keen to be present in Colombo for the visit of His Holiness Pope John Paul on 20th January and this too was also likely to be discussed.

The sources explained that the 'Voice of Tigers' monitored, had said that the government has sent a message asking the rebels to declare a one week official ceasefire so that the government forces could be asked to reciprocate by declaring a two week ceasefire.

The Tigers are likely to insist the government to inquire into what the Tigers allege as the 'atrocities' committed by the armed forces in the North during the unilateral ceasefire. The rebel radio also had quoted

Anton Balasingham saying the Tigers are still ready for talks but that the government will have to convince them that the armed forces will strictly observe any ceasefire declared by the government.

The re-opening of the Sangupiddy pathway, the armed forces would allow it only under the supervision of the UNHCR, who would screen the passengers for their bona fides. The army meanwhile, would remain inside the camp and observe the point of exit from the mainland, the sources said. But the Tigers have demanded the armed forces to move out from Pooneryn and allow the UNHCR alone to monitor the movement of people at the point.