



Cargo ship of asylum seekers heads for Canada

By Dan Karpenchuk in Toronto

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A cargo ship believed to be carrying hundreds of Sri Lankan asylum seekers is now in Canadian waters off the west coast.

Canada has become a target for international smugglers.

Rohan Gunaratna, the head of Singapore's Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, says this cargo ship was initially headed for Australia.

He says the ship changed course after the crew realised Australia had beefed up its refugee laws.

Canadian authorities say police will board the vessel as soon as it arrives.

Two Vancouver-area jails are being prepared to hold some of the migrants while they are being evaluated.

Officials in Ottawa say there may be Tamil Tigers on board, a group that has been designated as a terrorist organisation by the Canadian government.

There are also concerns that the Tigers are behind the human smuggling operation as a way to raise money.

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