

Marine police nab Aussie-bound asylum seekers

Malaysiakini.com

November 2, 2011

by Hazlan Zakaria

Malaysian marine police stopped a group of Indonesian smugglers who were taking eight people to Australia from Indonesia, newspapers reported yesterday.

The refugees including an infant were spotted in a boat off the coast of Malacca late on Monday, state police chief Chuah Ghee Lye was quoted as saying by The Star newspaper.

Authorities chased and seized the boat manned by an Indonesian skipper and four-man crew.

The emigrants were four Afghans, including two men, a woman and a young child, and four Pakistani men.

Chua said the crew had been arrested, and the passengers will be placed in detention camps pending investigations.

Despite the government's efforts to combat people smuggling, Malaysia's position at the heart of South-East Asia makes it a key transit country for asylum seekers.

Tens of thousands of emigrants are currently living in Malaysia, where they are not permitted to work and have no laws to protect them until they are relocated to another country.