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Remainder of bogus asylum seekers agree to disembark the ship

(By: Walter Jayawardhana)



The remainder of the original group of 78 bogus asylum seekers, after a three week stand off agreed to leave an Australian customs ship moored of near the Indonesian island of Bintane on Wednesday (Nov 18), Australian newspapers reported.

The 78 asylum seekers were picked up by the Australian ship Oceanic Viking in International waters while they were on their way to Australia.

When they were to be taken to Bintane, they refused to disembark demanding that they be sent only to Australia.

Last week part of the asylum seekers agreed to go to Bintane when they were promised the speedy processing of their 'refugee' claims by the United Nations refugee agency, the UNHCR.

Indonesian officials have promised to send the last batch of 56 to Bintane island processing center and detain them only for one month.

An official was quoted as saying, "They would be detained for one month after their claims are processed by the UNHCR before they could be sent to a third country willing [to take them in]."