

**Links between human trafficking and drugs trade being probed.
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Links between human trafficking and drugs trade being probed

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The governments of Britain and Canada have launched investigations into the activities of Sri Lankan Tamils involved in the booming 'human trafficking trade' after evidence that they were also engaged in the highly profitable narcotics business and gold smuggling.

Colombo based diplomats revealed that they are currently inquiring into the activities of men engaged in the smuggling of Sri Lankan Tamils into foreign countries following indications of their involvement in the narcotics trade.

Thousands of Tamils arrive in various countries through false travel documents pro-

vided by Tamil agencies in Colombo they said.

British and Canadian investigations come amidst reports of new measures to combat the illegal entry of Sri Lankans into foreign countries. The Canadians have already introduced new passports with additional security features in a bid to combat the false travel document trade controlled by Sri Lankan Tamils living there.

"The Island" learns that some other countries may shortly initiate their own investigations into the links between the 'human trafficking trade' and narcotics trade.

"A lot of countries are cooperating with each other to combat the threat posed by travel

agencies engaged in narcotics," one said.

Some believe profits of the narcotics and 'human trafficking trade' are used to secure more arms, ammunition and equipment for the LTTE.

Foreign officials are conducting investigations both here and abroad to assess the links between the two trades.

Meanwhile a multinational delegation which visited Colombo in February this year to explore ways and means of preventing Sri Lankans from abusing international travel documents in a report states that 280 personnel were trained to improve their capability to identify false documents. The trained personnel were attached

to 20 airlines operating out of Katunayake, Immigration and four personnel from the Australian, Canadian, German and Netherlands embassies, the report added.

The report reveals that the delegation had a crucial meeting with Colombo based diplomats of Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, South Korea, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland and Britain to discuss ways to combat the 'human trafficking trade. Colombo based diplomats are currently engaged in efforts to introduce and plan further measures against the 'human trafficking trade' "The Island" learns.