What’s 740km in size, flies 400km a day, and eats more food than 25 camels?

A swarm of hungry desert locusts will devour everything in its path — which is why Saudi Arabia is on high alert

It is considered one of the world’s most dangerous pests and its ability to reproduce rapidly, by vast distance and devastating crops. Now the desert locust is threatening large swaths of Saudi Arabia in one of the worst outbreaks of recent times.

Last month, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) issued a red alert over the surge in desert locust numbers threatening the Aral Sea, Pakistan and particularly the Kingdom. The UN alert follows heavy rainfall in eastern Sudan, which created favorable conditions for locust reproduction and migrations.

And while the organization praised Saudi Arabia for its advanced national programs to combat outbreaks of the dangerous insect, international experts warn that the weather conditions that encouraged recent swarms may be a symptom of climate change that could lead to a mark on food security worldwide.

“One of the scenarios under climate change is an increase in the frequency of unusually heavy and short-lived rainfalls,” Keith Creesman, senior locust forecasting officer at the FAO, told Arab News. “If this is the case, then it could result in a greater frequency of favorable breeding conditions for outbreaks to develop.”

The FAO said last month’s locust outbreak in Sudan and Ethiopia spread rapidly along both sides of the Red Sea to Saudi Arabia and Egypt, threatening crops.

“Good rains along the Red Sea coast in Ethiopia and Sudan have allowed two generations of breeding since October, leading to a substantial increase in locust populations and the formation of large, mobile swarms,” it said.

At least one swarm crossed the northern coast of Saudi Arabia in mid-December, with further swarms a week later.

Atif N. Ommar, assistant professor at the National Institute of Sustainability and School of Life Sciences, and director of the Global Locust Initiative at Arizona State University, said the Red Sea coast is a common area for winter/spring breeding, as an outbreak is not unusual for this time of year.

However, he warned that global warming could lead to further plagues of locusts, with devastating effects on agriculture, in the future.

“Bees and butterflies are typical the same temperature as their environment (in their life people), small changes in temperature can have a dramatic effect on population,” said Creesman.

“Using temperatures can last 15 minutes to more frequent locations in a shorter period, and can also allow locusts to spread to different locations.”

In general, locust outbreaks are expected to become more frequent and severe under climate change.

Locusts are harmless when solitary, experts say. Problems arise when they congregate in groups, becoming more abundant and migratory. A desert locust swarm can cover 740 sq km, with up to 80 million insects, and can move up to 400 km a day.

In the immature adult phase, a locust can consume up to 1 kg of food in 24 hours, according to the FAO. A small part of an average swarm can eat the same amount of food in one day as 25 camels, 2600 cans of 2,500 people.

In Peru, swarms can threaten crop production. “Desert locusts are known to attack farmers’ fields and can eat out crops in a single night,” said Creesman.

When a locust swarm lands, they can cause crop losses of between 80-100 percent.

“...this is particularly devastating for subsistence farmers, who depend on their crops to feed their families.” said Creesman.

The FAO said rain from two cyclones in 2018 had triggered locust breeding in Saudi Arabia’s Empty Quarter, near the Empty Ocean border, and swarms from two generations had reached the 13th and southern tributaries.

Despite advances in technology, communications and awareness, there will be times when locusts increase in number due to favorable climatic and ecological conditions.

Creesman said: “Unusually good rains on the Red Sea coast have led to a good rain in eastern Sudan at the end of last winter created favorable conditions for locust reproduction.”

Each generation, said Creesman, lasts about three months, and locust numbers increase 20-fold. As vegetation dries out, locusts concentrate in greater vegetation to form hopper bands and adult swarms.

In January, a massive swarm of locusts descended on Mauritania, forcing experts to send specialized emergency crews to tackle the plague.

“We have launched all efforts available to speed up the eradication of the insects in the interest of public safety and comfort of people’s life. Military and public health authorities have been and are still active,” he said.

Creesman said the FAO Desert Locust Information Service maintains contact with all countries and monitors the situation carefully. But the next few months will be a testing time.

“An agricultural output along both sides of the Red Sea, as well as swarms that are not detected or controlled with an extremely small margin can lead to the spring breeding areas of the country of Sudan and the Empty Quarter of Saudi Arabia,” he said.

“Both countries are on alert. Similarly, a more secure and sustainable information and early warning system in the Red Sea coast of Iran, which is also another area of breeding during the spring,” he said.

The next three months will be “crucial” to bringing the locust situation under control before summer breeding starts, Creesman said.

Swarms are considerably better equipped to deal with locusts than earlier before and now, he said, thanks to more sophisticated control and monitoring systems.

He praised Saudi Arabia for introducing stringent measures to protect crops from the pests. “The FAO and the regional locust control program have spent decades building up the national capacities of countries to manage outbreaks. “Twelve outbreaks in the past five years over all countries have been successfully controlled,” he said.

Creesman said that success showed that countries such as Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia and Saudi Arabia have learned from each other and trained manpower to cope with such threats.

Ceesman said that monitoring and treating vast deserts of dry land by swarms of juvenile locusts before they reach the adult stage is crucial.

“Once they are adults and can fly, locusts become much more difficult to track, manage and stop from flying into urbanized areas,” he said.

Managing locusts requires a "massive team effort" of individuals working together across sectors and borders.

Without that, locusts — which can swarm and breed in hundreds of countries and threaten food security in wealthier nations.
TEN FACTS ABOUT THE GAME BOY

1. The Game Boy Advance SP was originally supposed to support 3D.

2. Its creator, Gunpei Yokoi, was hired by Nintendo as an electrician to maintain their assembly lines.

3. The original Game Boy line was discontinued in 2003.

4. The cover for singer Neil Young’s album “Silver and Gold” was taken with a Game Boy camera.

5. The Game Boy had a different name in Korea. Nintendo teamed it through Samsung and sold it under the name Mini Combat.

6. The Game Boy was the first video game system in space. Russian cosmonaut Oleg Kononenko, aboard the Mir space station in 1993, was allowed to take his Game Boy, but with the weight restriction he was only allowed one cartridge: “Tetris” was his choice.

7. The original name of the “Kirby” game was “Think Pop,” but was changed as it was decided it would not sit well with American consumers.

8. The Game Boy made “Tetris” a global phenomenon. It is still played to this day.

9. Original Game Boy games can be played on Nintendos’ PlayStations through a small device called the Gold Finger, which plucks into the base of the PlayStations.

10. You could only play the original Game Boy for 10-30 hours before its AA batteries died.

TOP 5 GAMES

- “Mario Land”
- “Kirby’s Dream Land”
- “Legend of Zelda”
- “Tetris”
- “Donkey Kong”

Nintendo was arguably the top form of entertainment for Saudi kids in the 1990s, to be more knowledgeable about the worth of retro games. Local retro shops in Saudi usually sell items for exaggerated prices, and they have loyal customers.

Nintendo also released the top form of entertainment for Saudi kids in the 1990s, whether it was the Game Boy or the Nintendo 64. Although discontinued in 2005, more than 200 million Game Boys were sold worldwide.

“I had all versions of the Game Boy,” said Sarah Fabiak, founder of the ArabXtreme motorbike brand. “Every year it just had to be the latest Game Boy.”
Spotlight

Saving the coral kingdom

Saudi Arabia is stepping up efforts to protect one of its natural wonders — the dazzling marine habitats of the Red Sea.

Regulations need to be enforced and environmental rangers employed to preserve our reefs.

Coral reef types

300

Hard coral species

10+

Shark species

1,200

Species of fish, 10 percent of which are "endemic" to the Red Sea

5,000-7,000

Age of fringing reefs of the Red Sea

1,850 km

of reefs stretch parallel to the Saudi coastline

2,500

meters, maximum measured depths of the Red Sea

Environment

SAUDI’S RED SEA CORAL HABITATS

The Khadlan bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation, founded by Saudi Prince Mishaal bin Sultan (left), conducted the world’s largest coral reef survey, including these areas of the Red Sea.

Eilat, Israel

International

Marine

Organizations

International Council for Research on the Ocean (ICRO)

Gulf of Aden

International

Research

Organization

International Coral Reef Initiative

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International Coral Reef Initiative
Juhayman: 40 years on

On the anniversary of the 1979 attack on Makkah's Grand Mosque, Arab News tells the full story of an unthinkable event that shocked the Islamic world and cast a shadow over Saudi society for decades.

An Arab News Deep Dive
The most unholy outrage
A plan to attack Islam's holiest place
INSIDE MAKKAH’S GRAND MOSQUE

RUKN AL-YAMANI
The southwestern corner of the Kaaba that Muslims believe will absolve sins when touched.

KAABA
Islam’s holiest site, built by Abraham and his son Ishmael, faced by Muslims in daily prayers and circled seven times during pilgrimage.

THE BLACK STONE
A relic dating back to the time of Adam and Eve, viewed through a portal in the Kaaba’s eastern cornerstone.
INSIDE MAKKAH'S GRAND MOSQUE

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The southwestern corner of the Kaaba that Muslims believe will absolve sins when touched.

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Islam's holiest site, built by Abraham and his son Ishmael, faced by Muslims in daily prayers and circled seven times during pilgrimage.

THE BLACK STONE
A relic dating back to the time of Adam and Eve, viewed through a portal in the Kaaba's eastern cornerstone.

ZAMZAM WELL
Containing the holy water that is believed to have sprung up for Ishmael and his mother Hagar.

ABRAHAM'S STATION
An imprint of Abraham's feet on a stone as he and Ishmael were building the Kaaba.

SAFA - MARWA PATHWAY
Contains the path between the two hills that Hagar travelled seven times in search of water.
HOW JUHAYMAN’S GROUP TOOK OVER THE GRAND MOSQUE

Bullet from a sniper nearly hits Prince Turki Al-Faisal when he arrives at the Shoubra Hotel.
YOUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO HAJJ

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, all measures are in place to ensure the health and safety of pilgrims.

2,489,406 Pilgrims in 2019

Performing the Hajj

1. Pilgrims head to Makkah, ritual walking between Jalls and Marwah seven times.
2. Pilgrims perform Tawaf Al-compiled, followed by Sa’im, before returning home.
3. Pilgrims reach Al-Ma’rok, then head back to Makkah to end their pilgrimage.
4. Pilgrims throw seven pebbles at the first pillar, Al-Jamarat Al-Awsa (middle pillar).
5. Pilgrims throw seven pebbles at the third pillar, Al-Jamarat Al-Saghir (left pillar), then head back to Makkah to end their pilgrimage.
6. Pilgrims throw seven pebbles at each pillar.

The Grand Mosque

When pilgrims reach Makkah, they head to the Holy Mosque and circle Kaaba seven times (Tawaf), starting from the Black Stone. They walk counter-clockwise as the Kaaba stands on their left.

Al-Jamarat

Before the sun sets, pilgrims head back to Mina to perform a ritual known as Al-Jamarat. Pilgrims throw seven pebbles at each pillar.

Minah

Pilgrims will be transferred to Mina by bus, and maintain a safe distance between different groups. Pilgrims will remain in Mina for seven days and nights for accommodation. Pilgrims chant the Takbir in faith and only.

Muadilafah

After sunset, pilgrims head to Muzdalifah between Mina and Arafat. There, they offer evening prayers (Maghrib and Isha), collect pebbles, and spend the night between the 64th and 65th pillars.

Arafat

Pilgrims should gather between 20 and 60, with no previous experience performing the ritual.

1,000 is the number of pilgrims expected for 2020.

ARAB NEWS HAJJ APP EXPLAINED

WHAT IT IS

The ARAB NEWS Hajj app is a free, user-friendly application designed to help users plan their pilgrimage. It offers information and contact details related to their pilgrimage. The application includes a Hajj Tracker, which allows users to receive latest news, check on friends and family, and perform Hajj. The app features include location updates, prayer times, and weather updates, and can also be used to access the latest news and updates from Arab News.

WHAT IT DOES MAIN FEATURES

Hajj Information

All you need to know about Hajj is right here. From prayer times and weather updates, to finding out about the latest news and updates, Hajj information is just a tap away.

Latest News

Pilgrims no longer need to worry about missing out on the latest news. The app delivers breaking news and updates, right to your phone. Stay informed and up-to-date with the latest news.

Media Gallery

Stay up-to-date with the latest news and updates from ARAB NEWS. From around the world, we bring you the latest breaking news and updates.

Download ARAB NEWS Hajj App for iOS and Android
How Saudis can stop social distancing from getting them down

Saudi government has taken several measures to check the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) to ensure public safety.

As Saudi Arabia entered its seventh week of the coronavirus outbreak, people throughout the Kingdom were facing up to the prospect of working and studying from home for the foreseeable future.

With gatherings such as conferences and weddings banned, all government employees working remotely, and mandatory ski leases now officially available for those susceptible to the virus, the government has been urging citizens to stay at home and only venture out when absolutely necessary.

"We’re all part of this. Citizens, and residents from this country. All the steps and precautions are in the interests of this country, to protect us from the outbreak of this virus," he said.

However, with illness such as social distancing, self-quarantine, and isolation being bandied about, many people have become confused as to what exactly the terms mean in relation to reducing infection.

According to the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in the US, the expression social distancing means to deliberately increase the physical space between people to avoid spreading illness, in other words staying at least 6 feet (1.8 meters) away from each other.

All the steps and precautions are in the interests of this country, to protect us from the outbreak of this virus.

Dr. Mohammed Al-Abd Al-Aziz, Health Ministry spokesman.

Other people at all times. Self-quarantine is for individuals who have been exposed to the coronavirus, perhaps through travel or work, and are at risk of contracting the COVID-19 disease. In most cases a quarantine period of 14 days should be enough time to determine if a person will become ill and therefore contagious to others.

Staying at home, not having visitors, and keeping 14 meters away from people in your household are all part of self-quarantine.

Those confirmed to have COVID-19 should be isolated, which means keeping infected individuals away from those not infected. Isolation can take place at home, self-isolation, in a hospital, or at a care facility.

However, some also make their mother’s name, with the idea of keeping a distance from others, imitating resembling how much importance Saudi culture attaches to social interactions.

"If you are a Saudi and you are social, you are social because you want your children and your parents more than anything. One irresponsible person can bring destruction to hundreds of others. Please consider other people before you are good."

Others are finding it difficult adapting and disciplining themselves to working from home. Salman Al-Ghanim, an architect, said that while being out of the office environment he was struggling not to slip into ‘vacation mode’ when he got up in the morning.

"What I’ve found works for me is to get up when my alarm goes off, shower and dress for work as if I was actually going to the office. I have set up a temporary workspace in my dining room, since we’re not using it for guests right now," he added.

Marwa Qatar, a mom of three boys, said she had drawn up a schedule that gave each of them a hobby, a fun activity, and a set time to learn a new skill each day in an effort to keep things fresh.

"In the morning, I take care of business while they attend their virtual classes and do their homework. In the afternoon, we state chores and each boy gets one task to do, helping to clean, picking up their toys, dishes, and things like that. Then they get to do an activity of their choice, playing video games or doing arts and crafts.

"We spend the evenings trying to pick up new skills. One is learning to cook with me, another is trying to get better at swimming, and there is also learning a new language," she added.

"You are protecting yourself, your loved ones, and other people by choosing to practice social distancing, and if you try to take it as an opportunity to re-furnish your family bonds and spend quality time with them, you will start to see it as more of a blessing than a curse," Qatar said.

TECHNOLOGY

SFDA uses artificial intelligence to facilitate medical attention

The ideal way to receive medical advice during the current health crisis is through digital means, a recommendation emphasized by Saudi authorities while a nationwide lockdown is in force due to the coronavirus outbreak.

The Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA) has launched electronic services that contribute to promoting health awareness and interactive communication, while also tightening control and facilitating the performance of businesses.

The services include a WhatsApp chatbot called Sarah and an app called Tammam, in cooperation with the National Digital Transformation Unit, which uses AI, business intelligence, and an electronic inspection system.

Sarah works around the clock and communicates directly with consumers through WhatsApp and Telegram. It allows users to inquire about drugs, send a complaint, makes a request for similar products, and contributes to increasing health awareness as well.

The mobile app Tammam aims to provide accurate and easy information about all the products supervised by the SFDA.

Abdallah Al-Deibah, said the app aims to build a chatbot because it was the most common female name in the Kingdom. It is used in 90% of cases for the sake of privacy.

"I don’t think there is a household in the Kingdom without the name Sarah," he said. "It is definitely someone’s daughter, mother, or sister. It is a very common name, it is present in every region in the Kingdom, it is even popular globally. The name Sarah is derived from the Arabic word sawa, which means equal and that is what we want to bring to everyone."

He explained that the same idea lay behind Tammam, which means restructure.

"We want to restructure about our food, drugs, cosmetics, and medical devices," he added.

A common question the authority received was why the two services were not rolled into one app. Al-Deibah said the SFDA wanted the services to reach everyone inside the Kingdom and outside.

"That is why we diversified the platforms. We chose WhatsApp because there is a statistic that said 20 million people in the Kingdom use WhatsApp. Tammam is a mobile application and apps are popular among the youths."

The electronic inspection system contributes to reducing violations and maintaining the safety of citizens and residents in the Kingdom through direct follow-ups from the inspection operations room, updating field data, arranging the inspection directly, and electronic scheduling of periodic inspections.

As of Sunday Saudi Arabia had confirmed 206 new coronavirus cases and five deaths, bringing the total to 2,383 infections, 36 deaths and 489 recoveries.
**Spotlight**

**THE WORST EPIDEMICS IN HISTORY**

![Image of the worst epidemics in history]

**CORONAVIRUS**

*Coronavirus is a large family of viruses that can cause diseases ranging from the common cold to SARS, MERS, and COVID-19.*

**FAST FACT**

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause diseases ranging from the common cold to SARS, MERS, and COVID-19.

**If anything is going to kill more than 10 million people in the next few decades, it’s most likely to be a highly infectious virus.**

**The clock is ticking for humanity to get its priorities right as it pays a high price for not being prepared for COVID-19.**

Virus with direct contact with camels identified as a risk factor for human infection. All cases of MERS have been linked — either by travel or residence — to countries in and near the Arabian Peninsula. Now, much of the Middle East is under lockdown owing to the threat posed by a different coronavirus.

So far, there is no indication that certain groups of people in the Middle East are more prone to the COVID-19 virus than others.

Dr. Sturdee Eipperman, an Abu Dhabi-based microbiologist, said the new coronavirus poses a threat to all communities and knows no borders.

However, he said that it is too early to say “whether people who have already been exposed to other strains of coronavirus may be less symptomatic than others.”

Local medical experts are also conscious of the debate surrounding the possibility of a cured coronavirus patient becoming infected a second time.

The human body’s antibody response seven to 10 days after the onset of an infection “means it is unlikely that patients who recover from COVID-19 can be re-infected so soon after contracting the virus,” said Eipperman, who is also chairman of infection control at the UAE’s Burj Khalifa.

He said there is still no clarity on what kind of immunity a recovered patient has from the infection — temporary or long term.

Eipperman attributes the steady increase in the number of confirmed cases in the Gulf region to the scale and reach of mass testing programs.

The UAE has carried out more than 460,000 tests in a population of 9.5 million people, while as of April 19, Saudi Arabia had completed 500,000 tests.

“Mass testing helps to detect cases that are asymptomatic or had contact with positive COVID-19 patients,” Eipperman said.

Mass testing is useful in identifying infected people before they can spread the virus and in providing them with the necessary treatment.

Eipperman believes ramped-up testing is particularly helpful in detecting infections among health workers.

The hope is that precautionary measures such as social distancing, effective handwashing, and the use of face masks and protective gloves will help “flatten the curve” of infections over time.

**The clock is ticking for humanity to get its priorities right as it pays a high price for not being prepared for COVID-19.**

“Masks may help. But experts keep returning to social distancing as the single best tool to stop the chains of transmission,” he said.

Lockdowns, cancellation of events, working from home and school closures also will slow the spread of the virus.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has emphasized that social distancing restrictions are only part of the response and are not cost-free.

“Abstention” and “lockdowns” can slow COVID-19 transmission by limiting contact between people, but can have a profound negative impact on individuals, communities and societies by bringing social and economic life to a near stop, a WHO spokesperson told Arria News.

Such measures disproportionately affect disadvantaged groups, including people in poverty, migrants, internally displaced people and refugees, who must often live in overcrowded and under-resourced settings, and depend on daily labor for subsistence.”

The WHO believes that public health measures can be balanced with “adaptive strategies that are implemented with the full engagement of all members of society.”

**Such an approach aims to**

- **encourage community resilience and social connection, protect incomes and secure the food supply,” the spokesperson said.**

- **While the fight against the coronavirus continues, the scale of the contagion has left many wondering if any action plan was in place, and whether a contingency strategy exists for future contagions.**

- **There is no denying that humanity had been warned — in the form of science-fiction novels, Hollywood films and lectures by leading thinkers.**

- **In a TED Talk in 2005 that went viral after the coronavirus outbreak in China, Microsoft co-founder and leading philanthropist Bill Gates cautioned that the world was “not ready for the next epidemic.”**

- **Misplaced government funding and lack of investment has resulted in under-strength health care systems and virus-fighting capabilities, he said.**

- **“If anything kills more than 10 million people in the next few decades, it’s most likely to be a highly infectious virus rather than a war — not missiles but microbes,” he told the TED Talk audience.**

- **The clock is ticking for mankind to get its priorities right.”**

**Feeling overwhelmed by the scale of the crisis? Call the COVID-19 support hotline (800 210 1165).**
Saddle up... it’s race day

Inside All you need to know about the inaugural $20m Saudi Cup in Riyadh, the world’s richest horse race
The richest horse race in the world

As Saudi Arabia embarks on a new sporting era, a stellar line-up chases a record $292 million in prize money — and a place in history.
**HUMANITARIAN FALLOUT**

Beirut blast aftermath recalls Lebanon’s civil war: MSF head

Lebanon’s diaspora steps up to provide assistance following massive explosion

By Samer Seikaly

Lebanon’s diaspora is stepping up to provide assistance following the massive explosion that devastated Beirut, with many calling the situation reminiscent of the country’s civil war.

**FIRST EXPLOSION**

There was an initial explosion on the port area around 1:00 (18:00 GMT) on Tuesday, followed by a fire and small blasts that some witnesses said sounded like fireworks going off.

**SECOND EXPLOSION**

The explosion was reportedly heard far away on Cyprus, about 204km across the Mediterranean Sea.

"Everyone, both Lebanese and non-Lebanese, wants to help," added Alkki, along with other organizations such as MEAL and Life Lebanon, who have set up an emergency fund that will raise much-needed money and channel it to reliable and reputable organizations in Lebanon.

Many Lebanese expats, who almost all have loved ones or friends impacted by the disaster, have individually or through their organizations given more than $3 million.

"As a first step, my wife Hala and I will match at least $50,000 so we can provide more help toward rebuilding and other projects," said Rabih Harb, a tech entrepreneur and member of LeBNET based in Boston, Massachusetts.

He said many fellow expats are doing the same, channeling their grief and anger toward helping their family and friends, which before the blast was already reeling from a deep economic and political crisis that has left more than half the population living in poverty.

"They’re asking Lebanese immigrants around the world to try and help," said Marouf Deeb, owner of a Lebanese restaurant in Sao Paolo, Brazil, that has an estimated 7 million people of Lebanese descent.

He’s trying to help with something he believes he can do: "Everyone is not very good in this country, but we can do much better than those over there," Deeb said.

Even before the tragedy, Lebanon was already relied on its diaspora for cash remittances but these inflows have seen a steep decline due to the country’s political crisis.

Exports also usually visit home every summer, injecting much-needed cash into the economy, but many have largely been absent because of the coronavirus pandemic that has become increasingly unusual and the ban on exporting by a company where corruption is widespread and permeates all levels of society.

**SYRIAN CONFLICT**

First COVID-19 cases reported in Al-Hol camp

Three health workers in a displaced persons camp in northeastern Syria have contracted the novel coronavirus, the UN said on Thursday, the first reported infections in the vast tented city.

The Al-Hol camp is home to tens of thousands of people, including the relatives of ISIS extremists. It is run by the autonomous Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which is backed by the US-led coalition.

On Aug. 3, three health workers reportedly tested positive for COVID-19 at the Al-Hol IDP camp’s" said a statement from the United Nations for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA).

"The contact tracing process is ongoing. As a precautionary measure, only critical services, with personal protective equipment, are allowed to operate inside the camp," said the statement.

We fear that the virus could spread to camp residents and visitors.

"First, to prevent the virus from spreading among residents, we have put in place a triage system at the entrance to the camp," said a statement from the UN.

"The latest infusions relate to: the number of cases of COVID-19 in Europe has increased significantly over the past few weeks, as the situation has stabilized in the rest of the world,

"About 40 percent of people are feared dead after a migrant boat sank off the coast of Mauritania, the UN refugee agency said on Thursday.

"A total of 25 people have died and many others are missing after the boat sank off the coast of Mauritania,

The boat sank off the northern city of Nouadhibou, Mauritania's second largest city, said Vincent Cochetel, the refugee agency's special envoy for the central Mediterranean.

"The boat sank off the northern city of Nouadhibou, Mauritania’s second largest city, according to Cochetel, without specifying when the incident happened.

"New shrimp off the coast of Étang de Nouadhibou (Mauritania) has been arrested and is in custody under the MDM Mauritania, a nonprofit based in the US that helps refugees, said the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees.

"UNHCR & IOM (International Organization for Migration) along with authorities and partners are trying to stop uprooting efforts to prevent such tragedies, but traffickers keep being deterred from their clients," Cochetel tweeted.

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