

Migrant crossings to UK hit new record, heaping pressure on Sunak

LONDON, March 27 (Reuters) – More than 4,600 asylum seekers have arrived in Britain on small boats so far in 2024, a record total for the first three months of the year and giving Prime Minister Rishi Sunak a fresh political headache.

Provisional data from the Home Office, or interior ministry, showed on Wednesday that 4,644 people had been detected arriving across the Channel on small boats such as inflatable dinghies up to March 26 this year.

That compares with 3,770 for the same period last year and 4,162 for 2022, the previous record high.

Sunak is hoping his flagship scheme to deport those arriving in Britain without permission to Rwanda will deter people from making the dangerous cross-Channel crossings. Legislation which aims to get that plan up and running after a series of legal setbacks is due back in parliament next month.

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