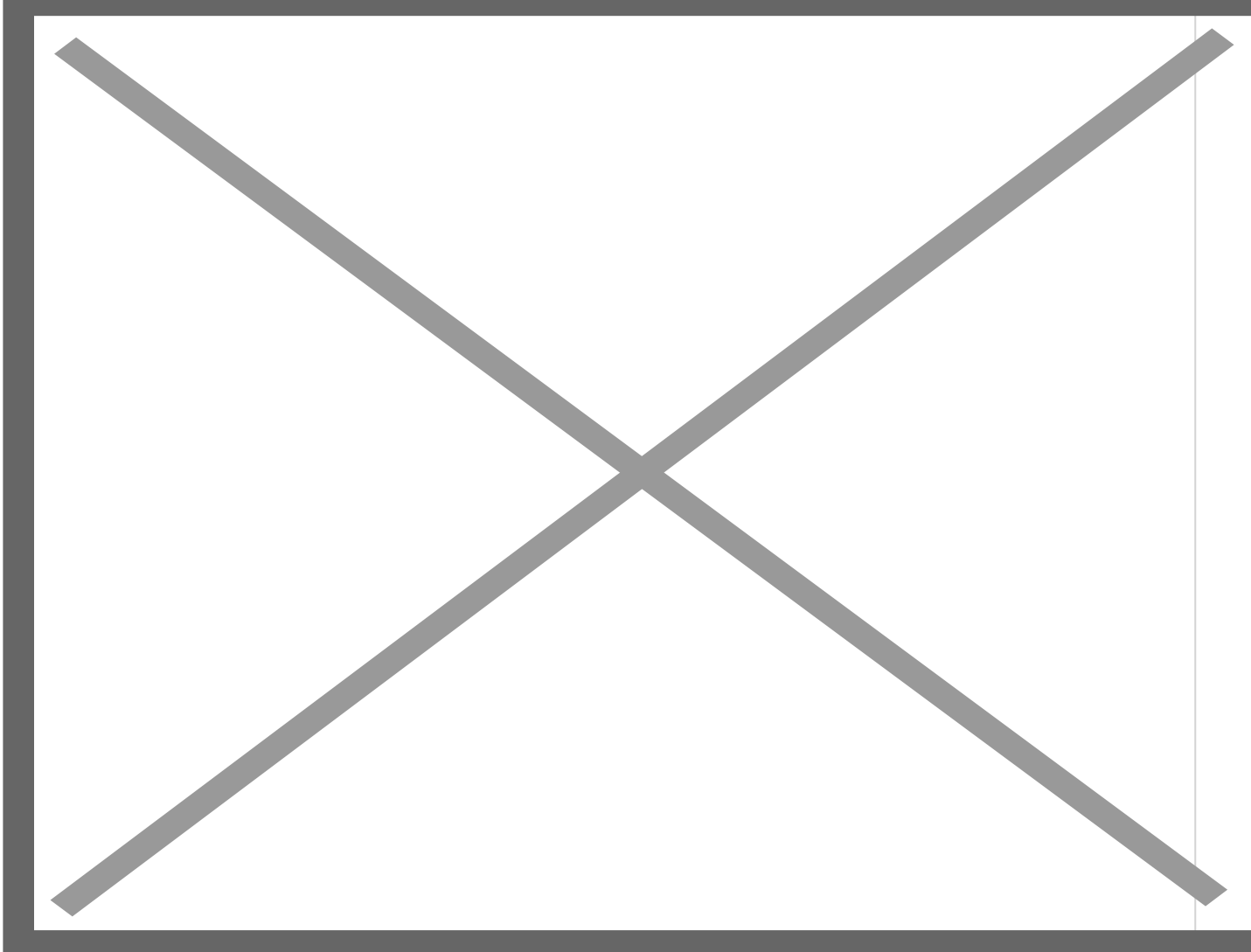


UN says urgent aid needed for 3 million refugees in northern Syria

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Displaced Syrians at a squatter camp in Idlib. (Photo: Burak Kara / Getty Images)

United Nations, November 26 (RHC)-- The United Nations says urgent relief aid is needed for three million Syrian refugees, saying the recent rains in northern Syria have damaged hundreds of tents in displacement sites in the provinces of Idlib and Aleppo.

A third of the displaced Syrians, estimated at 6.7 million refugees, lack adequate shelter and the essentials for cold weather such as heating fuel, blankets and clothes.

The UN's Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator Ramesh Rajasingham on Wednesday said in a briefing to the Security Council more than 9.3 million people in Syria were suffering from food insecurity, an increase of 1.4 million people over the previous year. He said the number was expected to increase.

According to Save the Children charity, in the last six months, the number of children facing hunger has risen to more than 4.6 million. "We know this is a combination of 10 years of conflict, a very weak health care system, the COVID-19 outbreak the dire economic conditions that affected Syria all those factors children are not getting nutrients need to grow up healthy," Sonia Khush, Syria response director at Save the Children, told Al Jazeera.

The collapsed economy has led to soaring food prices and the government has begun reducing subsidies on bread. "We distribute food across 1,600 distribution sites across the country and there is high increased pressure on these sites with people coming pleading to be taken up in our lists so that they can receive assistance at some point," Corinne Fletcher, country director at the World Food Program Syria, said.

The nine-year war has displaced millions and killed nearly 500,000 people, leaving Syria – which had a prewar population of 23 million – torn into rival areas controlled by different groups, backed by regional or international players.

Some 5.6 million Syrians were also forced to flee their country. The Syrian refugee crisis remains one of the largest humanitarian crises since the end of World War II.

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