

## BRIEFLY

**Snowstorms hit Japan:** Heavy snowstorms hit central and northern Japan Saturday, dumping unusual amounts of snow on Tokyo and disrupting land and air transportation. AP reports from Tokyo.

Weathermen said a cold air mass moved over Japan overnight, bringing up to 100 centimeters (40 inches) of snow to northern Japan.

In temperate Tokyo, snow began falling before dawn, and by midday up to 20 centimeters (8 inches) had accumulated. It was the first time in two years that a snowfall exceeded 10 centimeters (4 inches) in the capital.

### Benazir to visit Britain:

Minister Benazir Bhutto will visit Britain in June to attract foreign investment in Pakistan, the official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) reported Friday. APP says from Islamabad.

Quoting Yusuf Raza Gilani, speaker of the lower house of parliament, the news agency said the prime minister had been invited by investors in Britain.

"The visit will help stimulate British investment in Pakistan," it said.

**Cubans clash with police:** Hundreds of Cubans clashed with police as they tried to enter the US diplomatic representation in Havana Friday, apparently after hearing that the United States was offering visas, witnesses said, AFP says from Havana.

About a dozen people were arrested in the failed attempt to get into the US interests section, witnesses said. No injuries were reported.

A spokesman for the US representation said the visas rumor was false and had probably been spread to cause a disturbance. No one got into the building, which is guarded by US marines, the spokesman said.

### Akihito in Iwojima Island:

Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko arrived at a local airport on Iwojima island yesterday to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the return of the island to Japan by the United States, AFP reports from Iwojima.

During their trip the imperial couple will pay their respects at a memorial for the dead on the island, where some 20,000 Japanese and 7,000 US soldiers died in bitter fighting during World War II.

It is the emperor's first trip to the island in the western Pacific some 1,000 kilometers (650 miles) south of Tokyo.

**Actor William Conrad dies:** Actor William Conrad, the star of two hit television series and a long-running radio show, died of a heart attack Friday. He was 73, AFP reports from Los Angeles.

Conrad became ill at his home and died at the Medical Centre of North Hollywood, a hospital spokeswoman said.

The portly actor played district attorney J. L. "Fatman" McCabe on the 1987-1992 TV series "Jake And The Fatman" and the detective in the TV detective series "Cannon," which ran from 1971 to 1976.

**Quake rocks Japan:** A moderate earthquake, measuring 4.5 on the Richter scale, rocked large areas of eastern Japan yesterday but there were no immediate reports of casualties or damage, the meteorological agency said, AFP reports from Tokyo.

The epicenter of the quake, which occurred at 2:50 am (1750 GMT Friday), was located 100 kilometers (62 miles) northeast of Tokyo.

The agency also said there were no fears of Tsunami seismic tidal waves from the earthquake.



African National Congress President Nelson Mandela stares out of the window of the prison cell he occupied for much of his 27-year incarceration during a visit to Robben Island Prison Feb 11. — AFP photo

## Rabbani accepts OIC call for ceasefire

ISLAMABAD, Feb 12: Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani has accepted an appeal for a ceasefire in factional fighting during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, the Afghan ambassador to Pakistan said on Friday, reports Reuters.

The appeal for an unconditional ceasefire during Ramadan, which began on Friday, was made by the secretary-general of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), Hamid Al-Gabid, during a visit to Pakistan to meet the representative of warring Afghan factions.

Afghan ambassador Sardar Mohammad Roshan told Gabid in Islamabad that Rabbani had accepted his appeal. Pakistan's official APP news agency reported.

It quoted Gabid as saying at the end of his trip that he hoped other factions would also accept his appeal. There was no immediate information about the response of Rabbani's opponents, led by Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and northern warlord general Abdul Rashid Dostum.

Red Cross officials have seen some 800 people have been killed and more than 10,000 injured in the latest round of factional fighting that erupted on the new year's day in the Afghan capital Kabul.

Both sides have ignored previous appeals for truce from the United Nations, the OIC and neighbouring countries.

More than 10,000 people, mainly civilians, have been killed in previous rounds in the battle for supremacy in Kabul among the rival factions in the fractious Islamic coalition government set up after the guerrillas took power from the former communist government in April 1992.

Gabid visited officials of both sides in the northwestern Pakistani town of Peshwar.

He urged leaders of both sides to hold their fire during the month of fasting and to seek a permanent solution to their differences.

# Russia calls for demilitarisation of Sarajevo

## 12 more US warplanes to join NATO air strikes

WASHINGTON, Feb 12: US Defence Secretary William Perry Friday ordered 12 additional warplanes sent to Italy to join 65 American jets already there as part of an allied force keeping watch over Bosnia, the Pentagon said, reports Reuters.

The eight F-15s and four C-130s were sought by supreme NATO military commander General George Joulwan along with 12 additional British, Dutch and Turkish jets. The 24 additional craft would bring the total allied air force in and around Bosnia to 160 planes.

"The Secretary of Defence has approved the deployment of additional US aircraft to Italy for participation in NATO operation over Bosnia," said Air Force Major Bob Potter, a Pentagon spokesman.

Potter said the eight highly sophisticated F-15s ground-attack jets were being sent from Britain to Aviano air base in northern Italy. Two heavily armed AC-13 attack planes will

go from Hurlburt field in Florida to Brindisi, Italy. The two EC-130 electronic warfare planes will also go to Brindisi but from Keester air force base in Mississippi.

Defence officials said that Joulwan and US Admiral Jeremy Boorda commander of southern NATO forces based in Naples, asked for the 12 US jets in addition to four British Jaguars, four Dutch F-16s and four Turkish F-16s.

The United States, Britain, France, the Netherlands and Turkey already have warplanes in Italy but there was no immediate word on when the 12 additional allied craft would be sent.

The request for more aircraft came two days after NATO issued an ultimatum to Bosnian Serbs to cease shelling the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo and remove their heavy guns from around the city within 10 days or face air attacks.

AFP adds: Russia has presented four western countries at the United Nations with a

draft resolution calling for the demilitarization of Sarajevo, diplomats said.

The plan would authorize use of force if shelling resumes within 20-kilometre (12 miles) area around Sarajevo and calls for a withdrawal of heavy weapons around Sarajevo, diplomats said.

The text calls on the Security Council to enact Wednesday's UN-NATO plan to stop the shelling of civilians and effect a withdrawal of heavy weapons from around Sarajevo, diplomats said.

Any attack on the zone around Sarajevo or effort to hinder UN operations would be considered action against the United Nations and would be responded to with all necessary measures, according to the text.

Russian ambassador to the United Nations, Yuli Vorontsov, said the Russian plan was made because Moscow was not a party to the North Atlantic Treaty alliance (NATO) deci-

sion, diplomats said.

The draft was given to the British, French, Spanish and US ambassadors to the United Nations on Friday, diplomats said.

The four countries said the plan is redundant.

UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali asked NATO to develop a plan to stop the shelling of Sarajevo and NATO has threatened air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs if they do not pull back their heavy weapons 20 KMs (12 miles) from Sarajevo by February 21.

On Friday, ITAR-Tass, quoting Russian President Boris Yeltsin's press service, said Yeltsin had stressed Moscow's view that the UN Security Council, NATO, should make all decisions on Bosnia.

The United States supports air strikes while Russia opposes them and has called for the UN Security Council to meet to discuss the 22-month siege of Sarajevo.

### IAEA installs 2 cameras at Iraqi N-sites

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has set up two cameras at an Iraqi nuclear site under UN resolutions for the long-term monitoring the country's arms programme, an IAEA official said here Friday, reports AFP.

"Two close-circuit cameras have been installed and activated in an engineering facility at Um Al-Maarik (mother of all battles), 20 minutes from Baghdad, with two film cameras as a back-up," said Gary Dillon, a Briton, about the site that was part of Iraq's enriched uranium production programme.

"The work was carried out without a hitch and the Iraqis were cooperative," said Dillon about his seven-member IAEA team that just completed a week-long mission in Iraq.

### S Africa opens mission in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 12: South Africa has opened an embassy in Malaysia following Kuala Lumpur's decision last November to establish diplomatic ties with Pretoria, the official Bernama news agency said today, reports Reuters.

The mission, housed temporarily at a hotel, was set up last December, its second secretary Andre Lizamore said.

"Appropriate premises are being sought for the chancery and official residence," he said. South Africa's embassy in Singapore had previously handled Malaysian affairs.

Malaysia has moved to boost trade with South Africa after the United Nations lifted a 30-year trade ban on Pretoria last year.

### Kanpur situation still tense

KANPUR, Feb 12: The situation in some parts of Kanpur was today described as "tense" but under control as authorities relaxed curfew for 12 hours in five police station areas, while soldiers and paramilitary forces continued patrolling the riot-affected areas, reports PTI.

Authorities said curfew had been relaxed from 0600 hours to 1800 hours. Indefinite curfew continues in the other 10 police station areas.

Curfew was clamped on Wednesday following violence across the city after a former BJP corporator Kala was killed in a powerful bomb blast.

More than 125 persons have been arrested in connection with the incidents violence, while two were arrested in connection with the killing of Bachha.

## Off the Record



Frances Louise "Lu" Parker smiles Feb 11 as she is given her sash after winning the Miss USA pageant in South Padre Island. Parker will represent the US in the Miss Universe pageant to be held in Manila, May 20, 1994. —AFP photo

### Quake destroy Richter's belongings

LOS Angeles: Books, home movies and diaries of Charles F. Richter were destroyed by the after-effects of the earthquake that his invention measured, reports AP.

The items were incinerated when a fire caused by the January 17 quake gutted his nephew's house.

"I just feel terrible that we lost all his stuff," Bruce Waport said Thursday. "I've had earthquake insurance for years."

But we didn't expect a fire to burn it all down. "Richter, who died in 1985, helped invent the Richter Scale, which gauges the energy released by an earthquake as measured by ground motion recorded on a seismograph."

His lecture notes, manuscripts and letters are safe. He left those with the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena.

### Woman bites off man's tongue

NETZ, France: A Father of three was given a 12-month prison sentence Friday for beating a young woman after she bit off part of his tongue when he tried to kiss her, reports AFP.

He was ordered by a court in Sarreguemines near this Northeastern French city to serve two months in the remaining ten months suspended.

The man as led a blameless life until January 28 when he made his unwelcome advances to the woman. When she bit him, he punched her repeatedly and stole her handbag.

He was arrested in hospital shortly afterwards.

### Romantic couples to tie knot on Valentine's Day

LONDON: Britain's most romantic marriage register office — an old blacksmith's shop at Gretna Green in Scotland — will open specially on Valentine's Day by popular demand, reports Reuters.

The office, normally open only from Tuesday to Saturday, is already fully booked only on Monday with 21 couples traveling from all parts of Britain to tie the knot.

"We have been inundated with requests and we felt we couldn't let people down," said register Sheila Smith.

Gretna Green's romantic reputation began in 1754 when marriage by declaration was ended in England and Wales. After that only Scotland allowed lovers under age of 18 to marry without parental consent and the blacksmith's shop at Gretna Green was the first place couples reached after crossing the border from England.

The tradition ended 1940 when such marriages were outlawed in Scotland but the village has maintained its romantic attraction.

Britain's greeting card association estimated Britons would spend more than 23 million pounds (33.6 million dollar) on about 19 million Valentine's Day cards this year.

## Japan has no intention to develop N-arms: Hosokawa

WASHINGTON, Feb 12: Japan has no intention of developing nuclear weapons, Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa said Friday, rejecting accusations by North Korea, reports AP.

"I see no possibility that Japan would decide to become a nuclear power. Such a policy would be against Japan's national interest," Hosokawa said in a speech at Georgetown University.

He was responding to accusations by North Korea, which is facing international pressure to allow inspections of its own nuclear facilities. North Korea

has resisted efforts by the International Atomic Energy Agency to conduct inspections, leading to speculation that North Korea is in fact working on nuclear weapons. Some US officials believe it already may have at least one bomb.

Hosokawa, in Washington to meet with President Clinton on trade and other matters, said Japan "is working closely" with South Korea and the United States to secure North Korea's cooperation on the inspections. US officials have asked China to use its influence with North Korea, and suggested Tokyo bring similar pressure on Beijing.

Hosokawa said in a question and answer session after his speech that Japan will seek to get both Russia and China to pressure North Korea on the nuclear issue.

He also said at a news conference with Clinton that should sanctions be proposed at the United Nations to pressure North Korea into complying with inspections, Japan would support that move.

North Korea's Foreign Ministry last week said that Japan was planning to produce nuclear arms by securing large amounts of plutonium and that this was "creating an obstacle to the process of denuclearisation on the Korean peninsula."

A British newspaper, citing British intelligence sources, said last month that Japan had acquired the parts needed to make a nuclear weapon.

### 4.8m Kenyans threatened with starvation

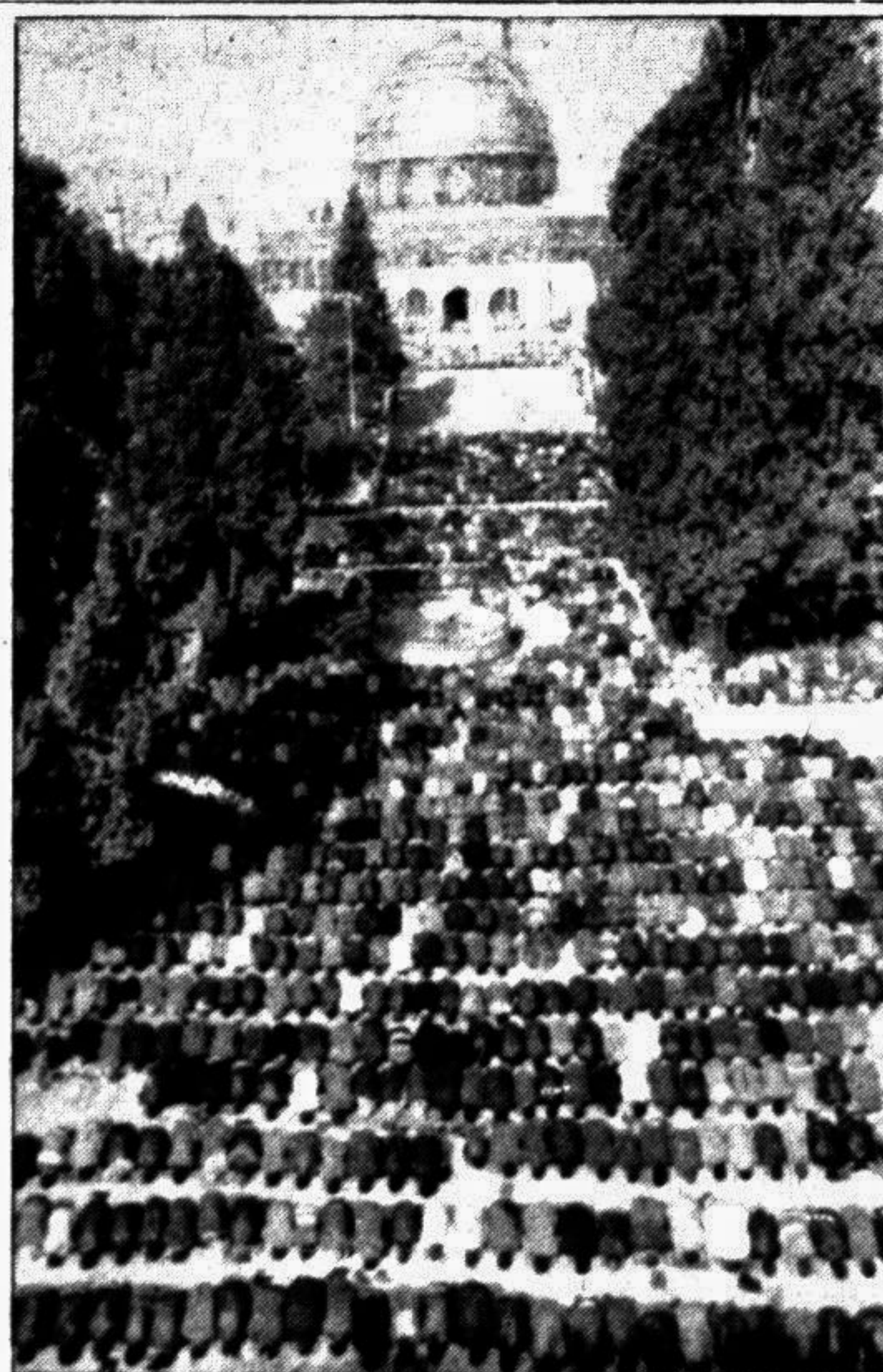
NAIROBI, Feb 12: Some 4.8 million Kenyans are threatened with starvation following a severe drought that has hit the country in the last three years, minister of state in the President's office Kipkalia Kones said here Thursday, reports AFP.

Kones, recently appointed by President Daniel Arap Moi to head a committee to oversee drought and famine measures, said the drought was so bad that Kenya had "no alternative but to appeal for assistance from international donors and wealthy Kenyans."

On Tuesday, Moi made an unprecedented appeal to wealthy Kenyans to donate foodstuffs and transport and storage facilities to their poor countrymen.

The appeal came as reports reaching here from all corners of the country indicated that famine had already hit many Kenyans. But Kones denied a claim that at least seven people had died of starvation in the southwest Kajiado district.

Food prices have therefore rocketed by more than 200 per cent in certain areas as grain and vegetables become increasingly scarce, marginalising the majority of the population unable to afford the higher prices.



Palestinian Muslims pray at the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem's old city Feb 11, on the first day of Ramadan. More than 80,000 people attended the prayer. — AFP photo

## Classrooms in US schools are getting caught in crossfire

ping into the wrong turf or even unsolicited looks that were once settled behind the school with epithets or fists are now drawing gunfire in school halls.

Last month, a student entered a chemistry classroom at Dunbar High School in Washington, asked the teacher if he could use the pencil sharpener and then pulled out a gun and fired on a student in the back row.

The bullet missed the intended target and the teacher ordered the panicked class of 20 students to dive for cover on the floor. Moments later, gunfire spilled outside the school building where 14 shots were fired.

Last year, a third grader in Chicago pulled a gun out of his

book bag and shot another student. In New York city, a 15-year-old shot and killed two teenagers in a school packed with police awaiting a speech by the mayor.

Students in Cokeville, Wyoming now have "drop-and-cover" drills.

Since 1985, the risk of being killed by firearms has increased 77 per cent for teenagers aged 15 to 19, the CDC said in Washington. 83 of 87 teenagers killed last year were homicide victims — three times the national average.

Harvard psychologist Alvin Poussaint said what happens at home and on the streets will inevitably determine what occurs in the classroom and Washington's statistical profile partly explains the violence.

Fifty-five per cent of the children here have only one parent and 17 per cent of those are teenage mothers and half of the children live in poverty.

A child here has a higher probability of dying before age 15 than in any of the 50 states.

Those conditions breed frustration and rage, creating a kind of hyper-vigilance. Even small acts, often unintentional, that are interpreted as disrespectful can create violent reactions, Poussaint said.

"There are certain kids you don't even look at because that becomes a provocation," Poussaint said.

Tanika seaborn, 17, of the school without walls said of the 33 children she attended sixth grade within Washington schools, only three are still

alive.

"Everyone of them died from a bullet."

Many of those were killed four years ago at a party, she said, when a boy who was rejected by a girl returned with a gun and picked off partygoers.

Shanti Jones, 15, of Benjamin Banneker high school, said most youths her age believe they will not live past 25 and that they key to safety is knowing which students to avoid and what boundaries not to cross.

"But if you're beefing with somebody you might carry a gun or a knife for protection, to make sure you don't get hurt," she said.

Some schools in Oakland, California, New York city and Detroit have banned expensive

clothing and jewellery, believing that fights are caused by disparities in income among students or symbols of gang affiliation.

Roaming gangs around Los Angeles, freeways have assailed teenagers wearing opposing gang colours, such as blue for the Crips and red for the Bloods.

To stop students from carrying weapons, many school systems across the country, especially in urban areas, have installed metal detectors and instituted random student searches.

We have to insure these children, said George Carter, a researcher with kids coming in Washington, that they are safer in school than they are in their streets.