General vows to annihilate protesters in Myanmar

YANGON, Dec 12: In an ominous warning to student protesters, one of Myanmar top generals vowed in comments published Thursday to annihilate anyone disrupting his government's work, reports AP. The remarks by Gen. Tin Oo

were published in state-run newspapers following six days of student protests in the cities of Rangoon and Mandalay.

Thousands of students demonstrators, demanding freedom, human rights, an end to police brutality and the right to form a students union, have staged the most serious show of civil dissent since the nationwide democracy uprising of 1988 which also was sparked by student protests.

The protests have diminished over the last two days to brief, hit-and-run style demonstrations because authorities have sealed off universities and other rallying points such as the 1.000-year-old Sule Pagoda

in downtown Yangon A 10-square-kilometer (four-square-mile) area of the capital is surrounded by checkpoints, and many people who live inside the area say they haven't gone to work or shopped in three days because they are afraid they won't be allowed to

return home.

Schools remained closed for the fourth straight day Thursday, and democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyt remained confined to her home by the military.

And authorities postponed an annual marathon planned for Thursday in the Burmese capital. The route would have passed through areas now closed off to the general public. and there had been fears that students would try to disrupt it.

Tin Oo is one of the four most powerful generals in the ruling junta that seized power by violently crushing the 1988 uprising. More than 3,000 civil-

ians were gunned down by the military, thousands were jailed and schools were closed for three years.

The military government will never allow the recurrence of the 1988 disturbances and would annihilate any internal elements who are trying to dis-

rupt the country," Tin Oo said. Tin Oo is a battle-hardened veteran, having fought against communist insurgents and ethnic rebels along Myanmar's untamed frontiers.

He also is viewed as a junta hardliner, having threatened to annihilate Aung San Suu Kvi and her allies in the past. In his most recent speech, he indirectly suggested that she is behind the student protests, a charge she and the students have denied.

Myanmar was a British colony from 1824 until 1947 when Suu Kyi's father. Gen. Aung San, won the country's independence.

Aung San, who was assassinated in 1947, began his career as a student leader, and students have been carrying his portrait

in the recent protests. A deputy of Aung San Suu Kyi, Kyi Maung, said 28 members of her National League party had been detained after a demonstration Friday night. Four were released Wednesday morning and the other 24 were still being held, he said.

One person — a laundry worker - was killed in the demonstration, which was broken up by a water cannon and baton charge, said Kyi Maung, who is vice chairman of the

Maung said he believes international pressure has prevented the government from resorting to harsher tactics against the protesters, but that if the students were sure the government wouldn't fire on them, "there would be thousands coming out into the streets."

New drug to treat type 2 diabetes

Federal health authorities on Wednesday took a first step toward approving a new drug to treat an increasingly prevalent type of diabetes that cannot be controlled with insulin, reports Reuter.

An advisory committee to the Food and Drug Administration recommended unanimously that the FDA approve the Warner Lambert Co. Drug Rezulin to treat type two diabetes, which affects about three million Americans.

Its recommendation is not binding on the FDA but the agency usually accepts the views of its advisory commit-

Endocrinologic and metabolic drugs advisory panel members said they had little doubt Rezulin was effective and that the minor risks it posed were far outweighed by its bene-

Type two diabetes is a metabolic disorder resulting from the body's inability to make enough insulin, or to

properly use it, to convert sugar starches and other foods into the energy required for daily

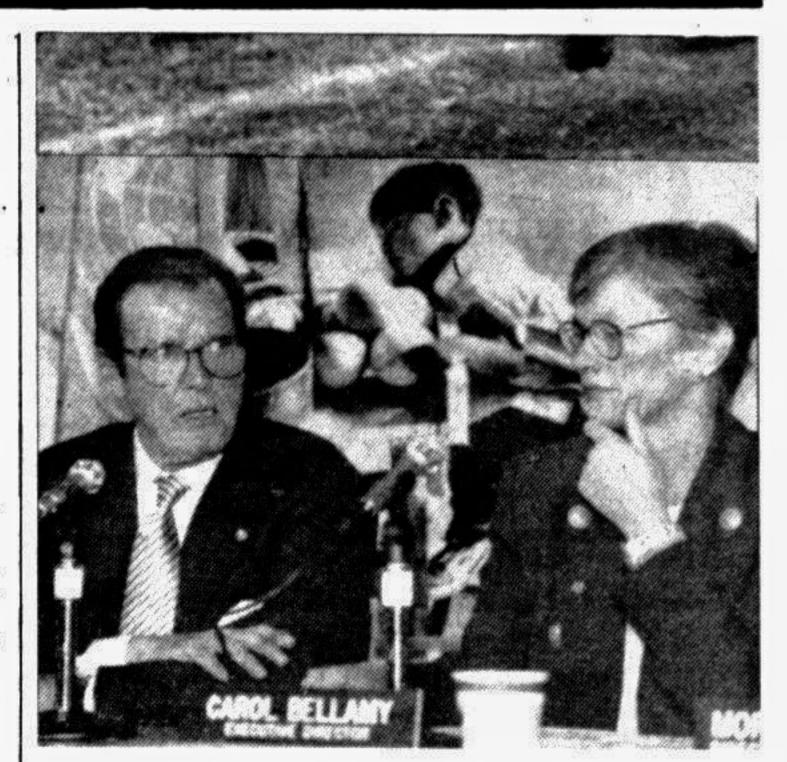
Warner Lambert officials said Rezulin, taken as a tablet once a day, was found effective in trials as a therapy for patients whose diabetes does not

respond to insulin. Medical experts say the cause of diabetes is a mystery, although genetics and factors such as obesity and a lack of ex-

ercise appear to play roles. They add that type two is nearing epidemfc stage, due to an increased number of older Americans and a greater prevalence of obesity and a sedentary lifestyle.

Type one diabetes is an autoimmune disease in which the body produces no insulin and most often occurs in younger

All told about 7.6 million people in the United States have diabetes. It is the fourth leading cause of death and this year some 178,000 Americans will die of it, experts say.



Actor Roger Moore, the UNICEF Special Representative for the Film Arts, speaks at the launch of the 1997 State of the World's Children Report in New York on Wednesday. Moore was joined by Carol Bellamy, the Executive Director of UNICEF. - AFP/UNB photo

UNSC considering draft plan for new Bosnia mission

UNITED NATIONS: Dec 12: With the NATO peacekeeping mission in Bosnia drawing to a close, the UN Security Council is considering a resolution to establish a new international force that would remain in the Balkan country for 18 more months, reports AP.

A draft resolution authorising the multinational stabilisation force, or SFOR, was prepared by the United States and other countries for submission to the council this week.

The council must vote on the resolution before the mandate of the NATO-led force expires on December 20.

According to a draft obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press, the resolution would authorise the force to "take all necessary measures to defend itself from attack or the threat of attack."

It also "demands" that the Bosnian parties - Serbs. Muslims and Croats - respect the security and freedom of movement of the force and other international personnel.

it would also extend the mandate of the United Nations mission, including civilian po-

Calcutta.

from Tokyo.

comment.

gulf, south of Nagoya, Sato said.

AFP reports from Surda.

for the shock treatment

opposition, AP reports from Bucharest

new government by a 2-to-1 margin.

lice which assist in the training and monitoring of Bosnian security forces.

The draft resolution was circulated among the 15 council members after a conference last week in London.

3000 Kurdish evacuated from northern Iraq

WASHINGTON, Dec 12: Nearly 3,000 Kurdish aid workers and their families have been evacuated from northern Iraq in the past week, the State Department said Wednesday. reports AFP.

Of the 2.853 who have crossed into Turkey from northern Iraq, 2,087 have been flown to Guam, a US outpost in the Pacific spokesman Glyn Davies said.

In Guam, they will be granted US asylum as part of an effort to resettle some 4.500 people, mostly Kurds, who were under threat in northern Iraq because of their ties to US aid agencies or organisations funded by the United States.

BREFFIY

Mother Teresa's condition stable:

Mother Teresa woke with mild chest pain early Thursday, but

was quickly made more comfortable with medication and was

in stable condition, a hospital statement said. AP reports from

shock to the heart Wednesday to correct an irregular heartbeat.

She was expected to remain at the BM Birla Heart Research Cen-

tre a few more days to make sure her heartbeat remained nor-

mal. Mother Teresa was hospitalised Nov 22 after suffering a

mild heart attack. Doctors waited for her to be strong enough

New Romanian govt approved:
Parliament endorsed a new government Wednesday under

Premier Victor Ciorbea, completing a leadership transition

that has relegated former prominent Communists to the

Among Ciorbea's main goals in quicker integration of Ro-

mania into NATO and the European Community. He told par-

liament that the next five years would determine not only our

destiny but the future of many future generations." He promised

faster market reforms and greater democracy for this former

Communist country of 23 militon. The lawmakers approved the

Gunmen kill 20 in Algeria: Gunmen

posing as police stopped a bus of civilians early Wednesday and

The attack took place near Blida, about 50 kms (30 miles)

south of the capital, Algiers. More than 300 people have died in

the region since Oct 1. A survivor of the attack, a merchant who

would not give his name, said the assailants identified them-

selves after the killing as members of the Armed Islamic Group.

100 Chinese arrested in Japan:

Japan has arrested 100 Chinese off the central port city of

Nagoya in the biggest haul of illegal immigrants in recent years.

a maritime safety agency official said yesterday. Reuter reports

is the biggest group arrest in years, agency spokesman Satosh Sato said. "The group was found on a fishing vessels in the ise

Palestinians kill 2 Israelis: Palestinians

from a self-rule ericlave shot and killed a Jewish settler and her

12-year-old son and wounded five other family members

Wednesday in an attack in the West Bank, Israeli officials said.

The Israeli army quickly sealed off the nearby Palestinian-

ruled town of Ramallah, where police said the attackers fled, to

press Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority to arrest and hand

over the men Palestinian police also set up roadblocks and

checked drivers inside Ramallah, a town of 40,000 people.

sources in the town said. Arafat's office had no immediate

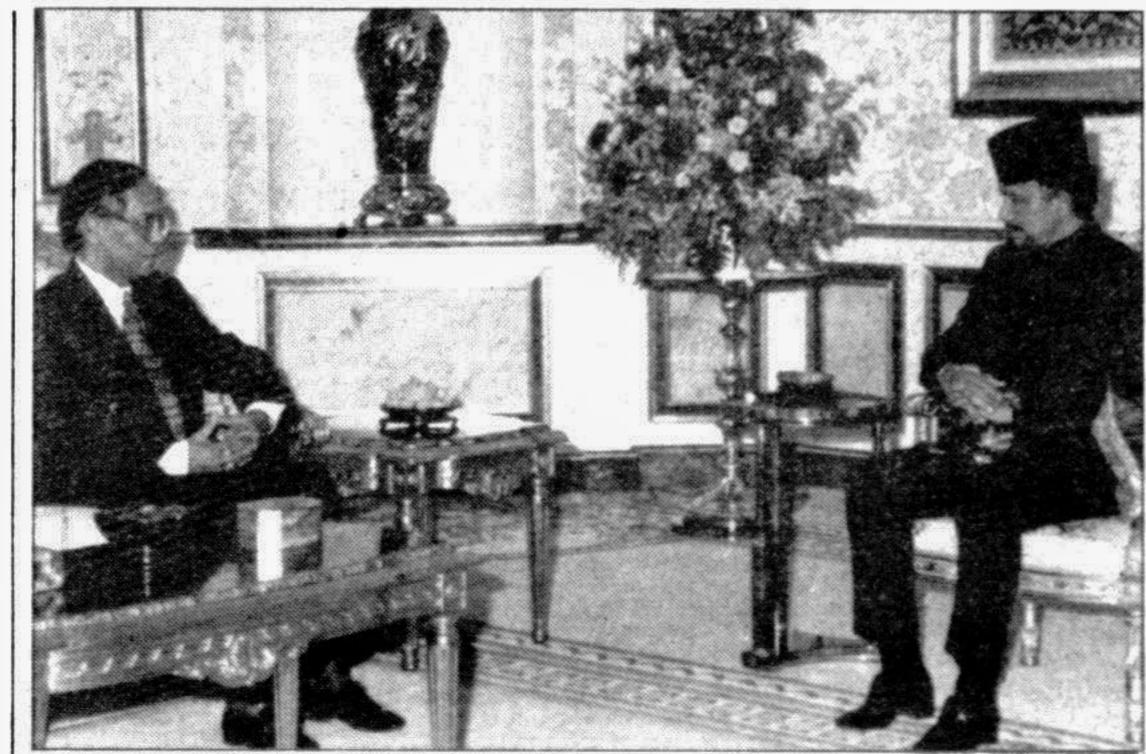
"We arrested 100 Chinese on suspicion of illegal entry - this

a violent armed faction fighting to overthrow the government

killed 20 of them, witnesses and local security official said

Seven others were wounded. AP reports from Algiers.

The 86-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate was given a mild



Ashfaqur Rahman, Bangladesh High Commissioner to Brunei Darussalam presented his credentials to Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkian Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah in Bandar Seri Begawan recently. Rahman is High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Singapore with concurrent accreditation to Brunei Darussalam.

Paintings of Shahabuddin — a celebration of freedom with force

CALCUTTA, Dec 12: His paintings are a celebration of freedom with force and power constituting the fibre of his

canvases, reports PTI. Shahabuddin, a Bangladeshi artist nominated as one of the world's "50 masters of contemporary art" by the Olympic Committee, recently made "A Return to India with a fresh repertoire of 26 canvases.

One of the most charismatic Third World painter, now set tled in the West, Shahabuddin made it big in the Parsian art world by slowly installing in his art the power of life which his roots had bestowed on him.

"The true artist has always been a citizen of the world, the velocity of his commitment to life liberating him from the bounds of the certificate of his birth, yet never able to outgrow his roots," he said.

Claiming to be a "Muktijoddha (freedom fighter) in art, freedom has been Shahabuddin's singular obsession since his days as the platoon commandeering the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971

So intense and deep had been his experience of the struggle for freedom that since the time he gave up the gun to wield the brush, it has been the artist's source of inspiration.

"Freedom fighter Shahabuddin's faith in freedom got extended to and converged in the freedom of artistic ex pression and this I believe. earned international recognition for me."

In his canvasses, the clon gated human figures on energetic move against empty space captured in various emotional gestures by Shahabuddin's fluent and swift brushwork in oils creates and atmosphere of high tension transcending gory memories of a past and speaks of man's imperishable future

In The war of Titans, El Furioso, 'Strife,' Promethbus unbound and Catharsis the vigour and resolve portrayed stems from heart felt experiences of the artist which he tries to translate into interconnected themes, speaking of man's eternal striving for vic-

Shahabuddin is primarily occupied with two themes portraits and sprinters. Excelling as a semi-abstrac

tionist portrait artist, his can vases of Gandhi. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Kazi Nazrul Islam. Satvajit Ray and Mother Teresa may identify him with a patriot in exile.

All these portraits are 1 1 admire and respect them and this my way of seeing them. am present in these faces.

The portraits are unusual dipped in anguish and angst with hectic patches of black brown yellow red and white that sometimes evoke a tragic nostalgia

In my portraits it also try to communicate that the cause of freedom demands a personal commitment, to the extent that an individual becomes an epitome for several people and the individual representing the general cannot celebrate the freedom without first going through the anguish and agony. anxiety and will to achieve something," he explained.

secy gen post deadlocked

Contest for UN

UNITED NATIONS, Dec 12: The contest for the post of UN Secretary-General was deadlocked on Wednesday with the head of UN peacekeeping operations, Kofi Annan of Ghana, leading the field of four African candidates but unable to shake off a potential French veto, reports Reuter.

Further balloting was set for

After two unofficial Security Council polls on Tuesday and another three on Wednesday, Undersecretary-General Annan remained the only candidate who consistently obtained more than the nine votes needed to win council endorsement once official balloting takes place.

On Wednesday his support hovered between 11 and 12 votes, but each time the votes against him included one cast by a permanent member of the 15-nation security council generally believed to be France. The other permanent members are the United States, Russia. Britain and China. All five have veto power.

The person formally nominated by the Council once an official vote is held is certain to be endorsed by the 185-nation General Assembly.

Annan's nearest rival was Ivory Coast Foreign Minster Anara Essy, who presided over the General Assembly in 1994-95 and is thought to be France's favourite

His support hovered between six and seven votes in Wednesday's balloting but he was opposed each time by two veto-bearing permanent council members - widely thought to be the United States and Britain.

WB appoints new Chief Economist

WASHINGTON Dec 12 Joseph Stiglitz, head of the US council of economic advisers. has been appointed World Bank Senior Vice President and Chief Economist, it was announced here vesterday, reports AFP.

Bank President James Wolfensohn said Stiglitz, a key aide to President Bill Clinton, would begin his new assignment on February 1

He will replace Michael Bruno, a former governor of the Bank of Israel and who has been chief economist since

Shi'ite activist shot dead in Multan

MULTAN, Pakistan, Dec 12. Sunmen killed an activist of a Shi ite Muslim militant group near the town of Multan in Pakistan's Punjab province, police said today, reports Reuter

A police spokesman said unidentified gunmen fired on Barkat Ali and his nephew Abid Askari as they rode a motorcycle in Chichawatni town 130 km (81 miles) east of Multan on Wednesday

All a local leader of the Shrite Sipah i Mohammad Pakistan (SMP) group, died on the spot. Askari was taken to hospital in Multan in critical condition with six bullet wounds.

Taliban renew quest for seat at OIC meeting

JAKARTA, Dec 12 Afghanistan's Taliban militia renewed its quest Thursday for a seat at a meeting of Muslim governments, arguing that it has established itself as leader of its war-ravaged nation, reports AP.

The 54-nation Organisation of the Islamic Conference has left the Afghan seat empty at its annual conference this week. refusing to decide between the Taliban and a rival faction in the Afghan civil war.

"We do not subscribe to the decision of the OIC," said Mula Muhammad Ghaws, acting foreign minister for the Taliban. whose forces control two-thirds of Afghanistan as well as the capital, Kabul. We have in these areas a

central government under one administration, and the people of the area, they are with us. It is not just that other people be representative of Afghanistan." With one day left in the conference. Mula said he planned

to meet later Thursday with OIC Secretary-General Hamid Algabid of Niger to make another appeal for the seat.

seat is the ousted government of

The other contender for the

President Burhanuddin Rabbani, which lost Kabul in September but controls onethird of Afghanistan and is fighting back

Mula said his delegation had met with the Pakistani foreign minister at the meeting but no government had agreed to support their campaign to be recognised as Afghanistan's representative.

The Taliban has sent a

three-member delegation to the meeting, including its UN ambassador designate. The United Nations still recognises Rabbani as the leader of Afgha-Taliban fighters have enforced austere Islamic regula-

tions in their territory, banning

women from working and

confiscating musical instruments, but Mula denied they were extremists. "We are not fundamentalists. not extremists. Only we are en-

forcing Islamic law in our country." he told The Associated Mula said Afghans allieded

by neighbouring Iran, would be safe from retribution if they return to their homes.

Off the Record

For organising prostitution

HANOI: Nearly 500 hotels, restaurants and Karaoke bars in Ho Chi Minh City have been shut down for organising prostitu-

tion, a newspaper report said Thursday, reports AFP. A total of 498 hotels, restaurants and Karaoke bars have been closed this year so far after a check conducted by city police and other forces found they were involved in "organising prostitution," The Cong An Thanh Pho Ho Chi Minh reported. . The police also arrested 265 sex brokers. 23 of them was accused of "sending prostitutes abroad," the paper said.

Last February the Vietnamese government launched an anti social evils campaign amid growing concern about prostitu-

Ho Chi Minh City has seen an explosion in the number of Chinese style restaurants and Karaoke bars in the past few years as investors have flooded in from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Prostitution has flourished in the former Saigon with official figures putting the number of women working in the sex industry at around 50,000.

Bid to stop criminalising the homeless

WASHINGTON: In some US cities it is illegal to lie down on a public sidewalk and others have designed park benches so that they cannot be slept on all part of a trend toward criminalising the homeless, a news study said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

While an old Christmas song encourages people to put a penny in the old man's hat" at this time of year, the study found that in many of the largest US cities it is illegal for him to hold The Washington-based National Law Centre on Homeless-

ness and Poverty said that 77 per cent of 48 large American cities it surveyed had laws restricting begging, either banning it outright or prohibiting it in some public places. Over half of these cities have engaged in police sweeps to

clear homeless people from town, with some authorities jailing those repeatedly caught sleeping in public, the study said. It said the 'meanest streets' for the nation's homeless are in Atlanta, San Francisco, Dallas New York and San Diego.

The report said those cities have either passed broad restric tions against homeless people conduct or made themselves in

hospitable to the homeless population. In recent years there has been a growing trend toward the criminalisation of homelessness in cities across the United States, the study said.

Over 700,000 people in the United States are homeless on any given night, the study said. But, "virtually none of the cities analysed in this report have a sufficient number of emergency shelter beds or transitional housing slots to accommodate their homeless residents.

Jupiter's biggest moon has magnetic field!

NEW YORK: Jupiter's biggest moon. Ganymede, is surprisingly like Earth in some ways, with a magnetic field and probably a molten iron core, researchers say, citing data from the orbiting Galileo spacecraft, reports AP.

The results are considered important because they provide more information about what a planet needs to generate a magnetic field. Ganymede is bigger than Marcury or Pluto and is often con-

sidered to be essentially a planet even though it orbits Jupiter. Ganymede's large-scale magnetic field puts it in a select club. Of the solid bodies in the solar system, only earth and Mercury are known to have one, although Jupiter's moon lo probably does and Mars might, said researcher Gerald Schubert of the University of California at Los Angeles

The Associated Press reported in July that the Galileo spacecraft found evidence of a magnetic field on Ganymede. The spacecraft's observations and the argument for a partially or totally molten core are presented in Thursday's issue of the journal Nature

Such a core is the only reasonable explanation for the presence of the field, Schubert and colleagues wrote. Currents moving through the liquid would produce the field, as they do in molten metal - mostly iron - in Earth's core. Ganymede formed about 4.5 billion years ago, but the core

might have been heated as recently as 1 billion years ago, he

said. That could have happened if Ganymede temporarily followed an orbit that brought it alternately close to Jupiter and The changes in gravitational pull from Jupiter would make

then far away Ganymede change its shape, creating tremendous friction within that would produce the heat, he said.



Bagh Camp in the outskirts of Pakistan's northwestern city of Peshawar Tuesday. Refugees, mainly Tajiks, arrive in Peshawar from Kabul as most of them fear the Pashtun Taliban rule. The refugees are waiting for basic assistance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees as the temperature falls to minus 2 degree centrigrade during — AFP/UNB photo the night

250 m children world over working in unhealthy condition' UNITED NATIONS, Dec 12: UNICEF said countries should Poverty drives children ternatives for children. Other export industries that could be India this type of transaction is

Children are bitten by snakes on rubber plantations in Malaysia, inhale pesticides picking coffee in Tanzania and are hurt on construction sites in Portugal, the U N Children's Fund said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

In the United States, they can be found working on large farms and in sweatshops or the garment industry. UNICEF said in report on child labour around the world.

Hazardous child labour must be left behind, consigned to history as completely as those in their forms of slavery that it so closely resembles," said UNICEF Director Carol

Calling for global action.

provide schooling for all children, enforce international treaties they signed and immediately ends 'intolerable forms of child labour such as prostitution or bonded labour

UNICEF's report, which follows up one on the same subject several months ago by the International Labour Organisation, contended that more than 250 million children between 5-14 years were working in conditions detrimental to the their health.

The report also sought to debunk myths that child labour was found only in poor nations. that it was inevitable in families of extreme poverty and most children were employed in

reformed through sanctions and boycotts. Mexican American children

work on farms in New York state, including fields wet with pesticides, while children are employed by leather industries in the Napales region of Italy. And in Britain, 15 to 26 per cent of the 11-year-olds and 36 to 66 per cent of the 15-year-old are working, the report said.

Nevertheless, most child labourers live in the Developing World, half of them in Asia. where bonded labour is com-

Children as young as eight are pledged by their parents to factory owners or agents in exchange for very small loans. In

widespread in industries such as those making carpets and matches, UNICEF said. In Africa one child in three

works and in Latin America one in five works. A survey of domestic servants in Uruguay found that 34 per cent had begun working before they were Another myth, UNICEF said is that child labour will never

be eliminated until poverty disappears, thereby saying "we must tolerate the intolerable until world poverty is ended." But the report contended that children were employed

because an employer or parent

benefitted from cheap labour.

depriving adults of jobs.

into hazardous labour. Yet if employers were not prepared to exploit children, there would be no child labour. In other words children are employed because they are easier to exploit," UNICEF said. And contrary to a common

belief, less than five per cent of children are employed in expert industries. Instead they are found selling on the streets, working in agriculture and prostitution, or hidden away in homes far from the reach of official labour inspectors, the report said. While international boy-

cotts and sanctions against firms employing children are valuable, UNICEF warned that such actions need to include alwise they are driven into other exploitative work. The report also criticised the World Bank and the Interna-

tional Monetary Fund for its programmes that forced governments to reduce social and educational spending. It renewed an appeal to governments to allocate 20 per

cent of budgets to education and basic social services and for wealthy countries to earmark such sums in aid programmes.

"It would cost an estimated 6 million a year, on top of what is already spent, to put every child in school by the year 2000," the report said. "Yet it is less than one per cent of what the world spends every year on weapons."