UN predicts more

Aids, TB deaths

GENEVA, Friday

Tuberculosis has become the leading cause of death among people infected with HIV, the virus that the causes Aids, and is expected to kill 250,000 this year the United Nations said today.

Dr Peter Piot, executive director' of the UN inter-agency programme on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (UN-AIDS), warned of the growing danger of the dual epidemics.

Dr Paul Nunn, tuberculosis expert at the World Health Organisation (WHO) said the combination was potentially . catastrophic in Asia, particularly in India and Thai land, where large rise in deaths could be expected in the next years.

The officials were speaking to a news conference in Geneva, a day after the· WHO issued a' report on the resurgence of the deadly lung disease which killed nearly three million people in 1995. "

The leading cause of death in people living with HIV is TB," Dr: Piot said.

The tuberculosis and AIDS epidemics reinforce each other through a deadly interaction, " Added Dr Piot, a Belgian epidemiologist credited as co-discoverer of the Ebola virus in Zaire in the 1970s.

Dr Nunn noted that Asia, which accounted for two thirds of tuberculosis cases worldwide, is also experiencing a rapid spread of Aids\_

(Reuter)