

## Argentina dismisses Tory win

Buenos Aires, June 12.

The Argentine President, General Reynaldo Bignone, said yesterday that Mrs Margaret Thatcher's re-election as Prime Minister would not affect Argentina's claim to the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands.

Gen Bignone told reporters: "Our position regarding the Malvinas Islands is very clear and will not change because Mrs Thatcher has won elections in her country."

His remarks, the first official Argentine reaction to Mrs Thatcher's victory, came three days before the first anniversary of Argentina's defeat in its war with Britain over the Falklands.

In Port Stanley, Falkland islanders are having to scale down celebrations because their tribute to Britons killed recapturing the islands has not arrived.

The islanders had planned to commemorate the anniversary by unveiling a granite war memorial surmounted by a bronze figure of Britannia and bearing a plaque naming the 255 British servicemen killed in the conflict.

But the ship carrying the granite blocks on the 8,000-mile journey from England, where they were quarried, has had to head for Gibraltar with engine trouble.

The Falklands architect, Mr Gerald Dixon, designer of the £100,000 (about HK\$1.15 million) monument, said he was very disappointed.

Argentine forces, who seized the South Atlantic islands, surrendered to a British task force on June 14 after a two-month conflict in which more than 1,000 people were killed.

The 1,800 islanders and the 4,000 British troops defending the islands will mark the anniversary with a thanksgiving service in the cathedral. There will also be a party at Government House.

—Reuter