

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Screening starts for meningitis

THE Cotswold village of Stonehouse today becomes the centre of Britain's largest ever medical screening in an attempt to discover why the area has been hit by a rare form of meningitis over the past five years, writes Shyana Perera.

Six people in south Gloucestershire have died, and another 50 been treated, for the Meningococcal B15 virus, for which there is no vaccine. Most of the sufferers have been children, 12 of them from Stonehouse.

The screening was agreed by the Department of Health and Social Security a month ago after pressure by parents and a locally organised action group, the Meningitis Trust. Medical staff will take throat swabs and blood tests in schools and at the local health centre. The Government and the Medical Research Council are paying, with another £20,000 supplied by the Meningitis Trust.

Mr Steve Tomlin, the trust's national campaign organiser, said last night: "We are increasingly of the opinion that it may have a very low transmission rate, but we think that it is extremely virulent."

The last death was that of Tessa Duff, an 18-month-old girl from the Forest of Dean, who died 29 hours after showing signs of the disease. Meningitis is passed on by bodily contact and will normally remain in one geographical area for between two and three years.

## MPs to question Hurd on parades

THE Labour MP, Mr Jeremy Corbyn, and members of the Anti-Fascist Action group are today meeting police to discuss ways of preventing a recurrence of last year's violence during the Remembrance Day parades.

Mr Corbyn and a number of Labour MPs are also expected to ask the Home Secretary why the AFA has been granted permission to march to the Cenotaph in the early evening after the annual service and wreath-laying on Sunday, while the National Front and British National Party will be allowed into the area in the early afternoon.

## Dalyell to press Havers on leak

THE Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers, faces questions in the House of Commons today about the Prime Minister's involvement in the Westland affair.

Mr Tam Dalyell, Labour MP for Linlithgow, is to ask Sir Michael about what Mrs Thatcher knew and did on the weekend before the Solicitor-General's letter was leaked.

## Mass arrests in nuclear protests

FIVE hundred people at 30 military bases cut a token strand of wire at the weekend as part of the continuing Snowball campaign to get Britain to support multilateral nuclear disarmament, writes Paul Brown.

Most of them, including the pop singer Billy Bragg, were arrested, charged with criminal damage, and released to appear in court later.

## Brighton murders man released

DETECTIVES investigating the murder of two Brighton school-girls yesterday released a young man on police bail after two days of questioning. He is believed to live in the Brighton area.

The bodies of Nicola Fellows, aged 10, and Karen Hadaway, aged nine, were found in Wild Park, near their homes on the Moulsecroomb estate at Brighton on October 10, a day after they disappeared while out playing.

## Couple find son's friend murdered

A 23-year-old children's nanny was found murdered yesterday by a Merseyside couple Mr and Mrs Denzil Douglas, who found her body in the bedroom of their home in Formby when they returned from holiday.

Alison Brewer, from Ontario, who was reported missing by her employers in Birkdale, near Southport, on Thursday, was a friend of Keith Douglas, aged 22, the son of the couple who found her. Police have appealed for him to come forward.