

'Guantanamo Chain-Gang'

PROTESTORS will say Tony Blair "has the key" to men's release. On 16 December a "Guantanamo chain-gang" will arrive at Downing Street as part of a fresh call for the UK government to help eight UK residents held without charge or trial at Guantánamo Bay.

The chain-gang, comprising eight shackled men in Guantánamo-style orange

boiler suits, blindfold goggles and face-masks, will proceed from the Houses of Parliament to the gates of No 10 where they will be met by relatives of the men imprisoned at Guantánamo.

There are currently at least eight UK residents held at the US-run military camp - and the UK government has refused to intercede on the men's behalf.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, Amnesty International and relatives will say that Tony Blair "has the key" to the men's release.

Each of the chain-gang will be identified by name and home town - for example, "Omar Deghayes, Brighton" to represent Mr Deghayes, a law student from Brighton held at Guantánamo for over four years.

Colder Weather On Way

FLOOD warnings are in place as Britain gets ready for another drenching.

But after six weeks of wet, windy and warm weather, we can all look forward to a seasonal nip in the air next week, forecasters say.

There won't be much snow around but there will be plenty of sunshine, frosts and fog, according to the experts.

However, much of the country will have to endure heavy rain before then.

Rivers in the Lake District, North Wales, Cumbria and Gloucestershire are under close watch by the Environment Agency as they rise to critical levels.

...hello to this There are eight flood warnings in place for England and Wales. Torrential rain in Scotland this week has resulted in the closure of schools, roads and public transport, and dozens have been forced to leave their homes.

The country can expect colder and sunnier weather during the week-end and into next week.

The weather website Metcheck.com said: "After some exceptionally mild days recently it will feel noticeably colder. "After weeks without frost, frost will become more widespread during the week.

'Divided We Fall'

"We shall stand together", says Stephen Timms MP at UK premiere of 'Divided we fall'



Vandalism at Valarie Kaur's home gurdwara in Fresno, Calif

A NEW documentary charting the divisive impact of 9/11 on American society received its official UK premiere at the Race Convention 2006, a major European conference held to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Commission for Racial Equality at Westminster's Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre on Monday 27 November.

Stephen Timms, East Ham MP and Chief Secretary to the Treasury, introduced 'Divided we fall; Americans in the aftermath'. The film is executive-produced by London-based company Klein Ventures UK Ltd and provides valuable lessons for Britain's increasingly tense and fragmented society.

Stephen said: "It is apparent to everyone that the reverberations from 9/11 are still being felt with undiminished intensity. For us in the UK,

serious questions have been renewed by the July 7 bombings, the Lansdowne Road police raid in my own constituency and the alleged airline plot uncovered in the summer.

"Questions like: are we all equal participants in the same society? Is there a distinction between insiders and outsiders? And is there a tension between being 100% loyally British and 100% faithfully Muslim?"

"We've already seen films celebrating the heroism of 9/11 and commemorating the personal tragedies of the event itself. I welcome this film, which raises searching questions about the wider impact and highlights the need for a lot of work still to make sure that 'Divided we fall' is not the final verdict. I hope it will make a lasting contribution to ensuring that, in the long run, we shall stand together and not

fall divided."

'Divided we fall; Americans in the aftermath' is executive-produced by Klein Ventures UK Ltd, run by former University of East London (UEL) Innovations Manager Sonia Klein and her husband Michael Klein.

The documentary weaves expert analysis into the cross-country road trip of Valerie Kaur, a Sikh American college student who, after hearing of the unprovoked murder of a family friend on September 15, 2001, set out to reveal and confront the forces that divided America in its time of crisis. According to FBI figures, anti-Muslim hate crimes in the US more than quadrupled from 354 in 2000 to 1,501 in 2001, with nearly 80 percent of the 2001 crimes occurring in September.

Sonia Klein said: "This wave of racist attacks went largely unreported by an American media focused on the unity of a grieving nation. Valerie felt compelled to reconcile the supposed unity with the obvious fear dividing her country. She spent months on the road, travelling to 14 American cities in an attempt to answer the one question that really lay at the heart of the matter: 'who counts as an American?'"

"Her video-journal revealed fascinating, horrifying and moving stories and was later developed in collaboration with award-winning director, Sharat Raju. In the wake of last year's London bombings, the recent terror raids and the growing division in British society, 'Divided we fall' provides extremely relevant and timely lessons for all of us in the UK."

Hardeep Singh also saw the advanced screening and said:

"This film Highlights the Plight of the Sikh community in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on the twin towers in New York. It also helps raise awareness and education about Sikhs who have nothing to do with the ideological battle Islamic militants have with the west. Sikhism is the fifth biggest religion in the world with 23 million adherents worldwide."

Sonia and Michael Klein produced the documentary from their base at the University of East London's HotHatch Business Generator for entrepreneurs starting up their own businesses. For further details on 'Divided we Fall; Americans in the Aftermath', visit www.dwf-film.com.

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Hardeep Singh

TDA urges the need for more BME teachers

ETHNIC minority graduates and students are being urged to consider careers in teaching after it emerged only one in ten new teachers have a BME background.

Latest figures published by the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) show that 12 per cent of trainee teachers originate from Black and Minority Ethnic

communities. This represents some 3,900 people - a 126 per cent increase in the number of BME trainees since 2001.

Although these figures demonstrate that the number of BME trainees is increasing, the TDA aims to improve the diversity of the teaching workforce so that it reflects that of the pupil population.

In particular, there is a specific need for teachers in maths and science, where BME candidates are already playing a significant part in meeting recruitment challenges, making up 14 per cent of trainee science teachers and 20 per cent of maths trainees. A spokeswoman for the TDA said: "There are many reasons why students and graduates should consider teaching. Teachers shape the next generation, and schools need to be able to draw upon as broad a range of talent and experience as possible.

"They make a genuine difference to the lives of children and, as a result, to the wider community. It is a creative and challenging career in which no two lessons - let alone days - are the same."

Currently, newly qualified teach-

ers start on a salary of in excess of £20,000 or £24,000 in inner London.

The pay scale for good, experienced teachers rises to £34,000 outside London and £41,000 in inner London. And the pay can rise to more than £90,000 for head teachers, depending on the size of school.

In addition there is also financial support on offer, whereby eligible trainees on postgraduate courses are entitled to a tax-free training bursary worth £6-9,000, whilst newly-qualified teachers with a PGCE in certain priority subjects may be eligible for a 'golden hello' payment worth £2,500 - £5,000.

For a place on a September 2007 undergraduate or postgraduate teaching course, the TDA recommends applying now.