

# Parking wars

## Trouble on the streets

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# MI5 launches two inquiries into missed terror warnings

- Questions over how terror killer dropped off radar
- Rudd refuses to comment but hits out at Corbyn
- More arrests and house raids in Manchester

Vikram Dodd and Anushka Asthana

MI5 has launched two urgent inquiries into how it missed the danger posed by the Manchester bomber, Salman Abedi, amid claims his interest in being a potential terrorist killer was repeatedly reported to the authorities.

Britain's domestic security service started one review last week, which will aim to quickly identify any glaring errors, while the other will be more in depth, the Guardian has learned.

Greater Manchester police continued to raid properties in the city yesterday as part of their investigation. A house in Moss Side was targeted by police. Residents said they heard an explosion as armed officers entered the house. A man believed to be of Libyan origin was seen being taken away.

The home secretary, Amber Rudd, refused to comment yesterday on whether opportunities had been missed to spot Abedi's murderous intent.

The question was posed as national security became the major issue in the general election campaign.

The reviews come against a background of security officials warning that the threat from Islamist terrorism keeps rising and is at an "unprecedented scale", with other attack plots feared and under investigation.

The fallout from the tragedy has triggered a war of words across the political spectrum, with Rudd claiming that the risk of another atrocity would be greater if Jeremy Corbyn were prime minister.

As she accused the Labour leader of



Armed police officers take a break to pose for a picture at yesterday's Great Manchester Run Photograph: Joel Goodman/LNP

voting against anti-terror measures, with "no evidence he will keep people safe", her Labour counterpart Diane Abbott hit back by claiming that government cuts, including to the police and border force, have "consequences".

"Citizens have a right to expect that the government sets their safety and protection as their number one priority and provides the resources to achieve that," the shadow home secretary told the Guardian. "It is no exaggeration to say that this government has failed in that elementary duty."

Investigators believe Abedi, whose parents come from Libya, may have received terrorist training in the country amid concerns some parts of the country offer a haven for jihadis. Abedi returned to the UK from Libya just days before

exploding a homemade bomb packed with metal bolts and screws, carried in a rucksack, killing 22 people after the Ariane Grande concert at Manchester Arena.

Teachers and religious figures in Manchester who knew Abedi raised concerns about his extremist views on multiple occasions and over several years.

MI5 is believed to have conducted a "quick" review of the intelligence held about Abedi last week, but it was limited as the agency's focus and resources were poured into the manhunt and recovering the materials linked to the bomb. The second review will be more detailed and look at the decision-making round Abedi before his attack. A source said the key question, given what is now evident about the danger Abedi posed, will be: "Would different decisions be made?"

The longer review will look at the processes and systems used to assess suspects and what was known about any of the other main conspirators. The system of assessing and managing risk MI5 uses is coming under immense strain given the unrelenting and rising workload.

Abedi had been examined by security service case officers in the past, but by last Monday was one of 20,000 one-time jihadi suspects. He was not one of the 3,000 under active investigation.

MI5 says it has to prioritise which suspects it devotes limited resources to investigating according to those deemed most dangerous. Rudd, speaking on the BBC's Andrew Marr show yesterday, said she did not

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# BA faces bill of £100m for flights havoc after IT fiasco

Sarah Butler

British Airways could face a bill of at least £100m in compensation, additional customer care and lost business resulting from an IT meltdown that affected more than 1,000 flights over the weekend.

All the airline's flights from Heathrow and Gatwick were grounded on Saturday. Services resumed yesterday but cancellations and delays persisted, with about 200 BA flights in and out of Heathrow cancelled on Sunday. There were no cancellations at Gatwick but some passengers experienced delays.

The glitch is believed to have been caused by a power supply issue and there is no evidence of a cyber-attack, the airline said.

In a video posted on YouTube, Alex Cruz, chief executive of BA, admitted that all the IT systems were not yet restored. "Many of our IT systems are back up today. All my British Airways colleagues on the ground and in the air are pulling out all the stops to get our operation back up to normal as quickly as we possibly can ... we're not there yet."

"I know this has been a horrible time for customers. Some have missed holidays, some have been stranded on aircraft, some separated from bags and some stuck in long queues while they have waited for information. On behalf of everyone at BA I want to apologise for the fact you've had to go through these very trying experiences," said Cruz.

As hundreds of passengers remained stranded, the GMB union blamed job cuts at BA for the IT problems that were thought to relate to a power outage.

Mick Rix, GMB national officer for aviation, said: "This could have all been avoided."

"BA in 2016 made hundreds of dedicated and loyal IT staff redundant and outsourced the work to India. BA have made substantial profits in for a number of years, and many viewed the company's actions as just plain greedy."

BA said: "We would never compromise the integrity and security of our IT systems."

Both Gatwick and Heathrow advised passengers to check the status of their flights after terminals became congested as travellers headed away for the long weekend and half-term school holiday.

BA was asking passengers not to turn up until 90 minutes before their flights

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# Disease and desperation in the world's most toxic town



Lead mining in Kabwe has left a deadly legacy for its children, but at last a clean-up is in sight, writes  
**Damian Carrington**

"I'd like to be a doctor," says seven-year-old Martin, sitting quietly in his modest home in Kabwe, Zambia. But the truth is that Martin struggles with his schoolwork, and his dream seems unlikely to become a reality.

Kabwe is the world's most toxic town, according to pollution experts, where lead poisoning has almost certainly damaged the brains and other organs of generations of children - and where they continue to be poisoned every day.

Almost a century of lead mining and smelting has left a truly toxic legacy in the once-thriving town of 220,000 people in central Africa's Copperbelt, 60 miles north of the capital Lusaka. But the real impact on Kabwe's people is yet

to be fully revealed and, while the first steps towards a clean-up have begun, new dangers are emerging as desperately poor people scavenge in the vast slag heap known as Black Mountain.

"Having been to probably 20 toxic hotspots throughout the world, and seeing mercury, chromium and many contaminated lead sites, [I can say] the scale in Kabwe is unprecedented," says Prof Jack Caravanos, an environmental health expert at New York University, on his fourth visit to the town. "There are thousands of people affected here, not hundreds as in other places."

The fumes from the giant state-owned smelter, which closed in 1994, have left the soil in the surrounding

area with extreme levels of lead. The metal, still used around the world in car batteries, is a potent neurotoxin particularly damaging to children. But it is youngsters who swallow the most, especially as infants when they start to play outside and frequently put their hands in their mouths.

Martin's mother, Annie Kabwe, first noticed her children getting stomach pains and fevers and losing weight when they were very young. "I thought it might be HIV, but the tests were negative," she says.

Then blood tests revealed very high levels of lead. "I thought they would

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# Victory for Vettel Ferrari take 1st and 2nd places on the streets of Monte Carlo

Sport ➔





Clockwise from left: Black Mountain, the huge heap of lead waste, and a manganese reprocessing smelter that spews toxic fumes across the area; a man digs out lead from the slag heap; Brian Jovo, 14, one of the many children who work with adults by the smelter; Royce Sakaloo, 6, in her back yard, less than 50 metres from the mine; Annie Kabwe, left, with her children, twins Blessings and Gift, both 10, and Martin, 7. Both the boys have shown high blood lead levels when tested



# Brain damage, paralysis and blindness: the price Kabwe's children pay for pollution

Photographs by Larry C Price

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die," Kabwe says. After learning about the toxicity of the dust in her neighbourhood and reducing her children's lead exposure through frequent washing of hands and clothes, the worst has not happened. "The problem is they are not really learning well in school, so the lead is still affecting them," she says.

Caravanos says lead poisoning stays with you for the rest of your life - it can't be reversed. Having seen the extreme lead levels measured in children in several townships, he says severe and widespread health impacts are highly likely, including brain damage, palsy and, ultimately, fatalities. "I am concerned kids are dying here," he says.

Barry Mulimba, who as a volunteer community facilitator has seen many affected children, says, "I feel very, very sad, especially for the children, because we consider the children our future leaders and if they do not get a good education, they will not be capable."

The slow, insidious nature of lead poisoning means careful epidemiological work is needed to distinguish its effects from other causes and reveal the true extent of the crisis. But that work

has barely begun. Caravanos says: "It is shocking to think that we are here in 2017 and that a problem we have known about for decades is still here."

Lead poisoning remains a highly sensitive issue in Kabwe and people from several organisations refused to speak to the Guardian, while those trying to tackle the problem complain that data gathered by officials is not made public.

One local source reports that there are children with brain damage, paralysis and blindness - all classic symptoms of lead poisoning - who have not been tested for lead, and that some children with disabilities are hidden by families fearing stigma. A second source says that the children in Chowa, the township that once housed the mines and smelter workers, are markedly different from those in less polluted townships: "I do notice a slowness in them and they take much longer to catch on to ideas."

What is clear in Kabwe is the extreme levels of contamination. A World Bank project that ended in 2011 revealed the problem, though it achieved little to remediate it. In affected townships, the lead in soils is about 10 times the US safety limit and far higher in hotspots. One such hotspot turns out to be the

'It is shocking that a problem we have known about for decades is still here'

Prof Jack Caravanos

dusty yard of the only medical clinic in the district of Chowa, which serves 14,000 people. Caravanos uses a handheld detector to reveal extreme lead levels in the sun-baked mud, frequently over 10,000 parts per million (ppm), far above the 400ppm limit in the US. The clinic's head declined to be interviewed by the Guardian.

The blood levels of lead in children in Kabwe are also very high - a recent study revealed that every one of 246 children tested was above the safety limit of 5 micrograms per decilitre of blood. The majority were over 45 microgram/decilitre, which causes brain, liver and hearing damage, and eight were over 150 microgram/decilitre, at which point death is the likely outcome.

However, in 2015, 113 years after the smelter first opened, NGOs began a clean-up, funded by the Germany branch of the children's rights organisation Terre des Hommes and delivered by Environment Africa and Pure Earth, using workers from the community. More than 120 homes have had the soil in their yards replaced with clean soil from elsewhere.

"It is a drop in the ocean, but we are happy that we have targeted the

**400**  
Limit for lead levels, measured in parts per million, for soil in children's play areas in the US

**10,000**  
Lead levels in parts per million of the mud in the yard at the only medical clinic in Chowa district

most polluted homes first," says Namu Chuma. Environment Africa's director in Zambia, Chuma says: "The government does not acknowledge there is a problem."

Paul Mukuka, director of public health at Kabwe municipal council, says: "The government, like any other government, is concerned for the health of its people." He says there is now a fund of 16m kwacha (about £1.3m) that will be spent on cleaning up Kabwe's toxic pollution, providing the drug therapies that have been absent so far and repairing the clogged canal that is supposed to channel away the run-off from the mine site.

Wilford Chipeta, whose grandson has been poisoned, remains unconvinced: "We were promised that drugs were coming [before], but no mining came. They always talk but we get nothing."

Mukuka was confronted by the lead crisis personally when he arrived in Kabwe a year ago looking for a clean neighbourhood for his family: "I have three beautiful girls at home - where are they going to be playing?" He says the new plan also promises new livelihoods, to draw people away from scavenging among the mine's dumps.

'I have three beautiful girls. Where are they going to play?'

Paul Mukuka, below

On Black Mountain, barefoot and ragged-clothed men dig out lead from the huge slag heap, often in long, unsupported tunnels, dug with hand tools and lit only by candles. "When you don't make them properly, you find they just bury someone," says Provost Musonda, a young father of three, and people have died in the scarred hellscape of Black Mountain. He earns about 80 kwacha a day, unless his chest pains prevent him working. "If I could get another job, I would go there. But there is no way of sustaining our lives otherwise."

Caravanos uses a portable detector to measure the lead levels on Black Mountain: they are sky-high, at 30,000ppm-60,000ppm. "Kids playing here is really unbelievable," he says, noting the youngsters nearby.

In another part of the waste dump, beyond a long breeze-block wall emblazoned with signs reading "Danger keep away!", people sit in the dust breaking stones to sell as building materials.

At one spot, a young woman, Debola Kunda, toils away, with two of her young children lending a hand. The dust sparkles with the metallic glint of galena - pure lead sulphide - and the soil right next to her four-year-old son, Acili,

measures an astronomical 37,900ppm, 100 times above the danger level. She is concerned about the health of her children. "But what can we do when there are no others at home to take care of the children? How will we eat if we stay at home?" she says.

A new £50m project for Kabwe and three other Copperbelt mining areas was approved by the World Bank in December but the Zambian government has yet to give it the go-ahead. "More than 3,000 children and citizens of Kabwe would be subjected to constant medical surveillance and treatment programmes and anyone who showed a high blood lead level would be subjected to treatment," says Sanjay Srivastava at the World Bank, who is optimistic the crisis will be tackled. "The government finally recognises there is an issue and they have to address it."

Caravanos, who is science adviser to Pure Earth, says the solution is clear: "We have the knowledge - we just have to get the kids away from the exposure. Will Kabwe ever be a lead-free town? No, but it can be a lead-safe town."

Photographer Larry C Price is supported by the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting