



TUC BOSS Frances Grady

## Aslef strikes deal to end train misery

BY BEN GLAZE  
Deputy Political Editor

A DEAL to end the bitter row between Southern Railway and the train drivers' union was struck last night.

The dispute, centring on who operates carriage doors, sparked strikes, which hit 300,000 commuters a day.

Some said they missed hospital appointments, turned down jobs and even saw the value of their homes fall because of the delays.

There are no details of the deal, brokered by the TUC, with Southern's parent company Govia Thameslink.

About 1,000 drivers with Aslef will vote on the plans.

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said: "Both sides worked hard to achieve this breakthrough." Aslef's Mick Whelan added: "I believe this deal can deliver a safer railway." The RMT, representing conductors, says its dispute is still on.



TRAGEDY Michael Sousa

## Boy injured in fall on school stairs is dead

BY LOUIE SMITH

A BOY of 12 who was critically hurt in a fall down a stairwell at school has died.

Michael Sousa was injured last week, just one day after his birthday.

The full circumstances of the accident are not known. He was airlifted to hospital but died after more than a week in intensive care.

His mother Sandra Rodrigues, 36, said: "When I send my children to school I send them trusting they will be safe and come back."

She added: "I hope that schools everywhere improve safety and surveillance."

Rebecca Handley Kirk, principal of Jane Austen College in Norwich, said: "We are devastated and send our love to Michael's family and friends. We will be making time to remember Michael in the days ahead."

The Health and Safety Executive is investigating.



ORDEAL Jon Ashworth

## Top MP tells of his shame at drunk dad

BY JASON BEATTIE  
Head of Politics

A LABOUR frontbencher has spoken of his shame at being brought up by an alcoholic father who was too drunk to buy food or walk him home from school.

Speaking in a debate on alcohol harm, Shadow Health Secretary Jon Ashworth said he was his dad's main carer after his parents divorced when he was eight.

He said: "At the weekends I would live with him and he would spend the whole weekend drunk. It was very typical for him to pick me up from school and fall over."

"It coloured my life. I went through the shame and the embarrassment, particularly as a teenager."

But Mr Ashworth, brought up in Salford, Gtr Manchester, said he always loved his late father, who was never violent, and he believed his dad loved him.



TRIBUTE Judge Wright

## 6 men jailed for sex abuse in Rotherham

BY DAVE HIGGINS

A GANG who raped and abused two young girls in Rotherham have been jailed.

One of the victims, who was 11 when she was first abused and became pregnant at 12, was in court to see her attackers jailed.

Judge Sarah Wright said the victim was plied with drugs and alcohol before having sex with the men.

She said: "Her childhood and adolescence was taken."

The two girls were abused in the South Yorkshire town from 1999 to 2001.

Basharat Dad, 32, was jailed for 20 years. His brothers Nasar, 36, and Tayab, 34, got 14 and a half years and 10 years.

Matloob Hussain, 41, got 13 years, Mohammed Sadiq, 40, got 13 years and Amjad Ali, was jailed for 11 years.

Two of the men shouted "Allahu Akbar" as they were led from the dock.

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TOMORROW: THE SHOCKING ILLEGAL ANIMAL TRADE

# MIRROR INVESTIGATION: SPECIES UNDER THREAT

# Massacre in the jungle



OUR PROBE  
Tom in mask on jungle journey



RARE FIND  
Congolese miner sifts for metals

## Gorillas poached for bushmeat in hunt for mobile phone metal



BUSH TREK  
He is guided to their kingdom



ENDANGERED  
Youngster's future is uncertain

### EXCLUSIVE BY TOM PARRY Special Correspondent in the Congo

**WATCHING these magnificent gorillas from feet away, it is hard to believe they are being slaughtered in vast numbers because of mobile phones and games consoles.**

The animals are being poached for bushmeat by militia groups and miners digging for an ore called coltan.

It contains tantalum, used to make capacitors in modern electronic devices.

Much of the globe's coltan is mined here in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Wildlife observers have witnessed whole families of gorillas being massacred by thugs with machine guns.

Eastern lowland gorillas, which are only found in the Congo, were recently added to the critically endangered species Red List, one step from extinction. They are the largest primates on the planet.

Twenty years ago, before the Congo civil war – which has left 5.4 million people dead and still rumbles on today – there were

18,000. Now there are estimated to be just 3,800 left in the wild.

That is a population decline of 80% in a single generation.

Today the struggling rangers in the east of the Congo are begging for international assistance, or these magnificent animals could be gone for ever.

John Kahakwa, who recently received the Prince William Award for Conservation in Africa, said: "Twenty years ago, many tourists used to come gorilla trekking here."

"But the country has gone backwards so now the road is worn away and there are few facilities. We receive very few visitors."

"We very much want people to come back here, because the money from tourism will boost the local economy. That will enable us to build up the buffer zone so

people don't cut down more of the gorillas' habitat for farming and mining.

"I spend a lot of time going to communities to explain how important it is that we protect gorillas. It benefits all of us."

"But it is hard for people here to understand. They tell me that empty stomachs have no ears."

John, who lives in the city of Bukavu, has created a foundation to encourage locals to live in peace alongside gorillas.

The global demand for coltan is such that the boom in uncontrolled mining in the Congo extends right across the gorillas' stronghold. Coltan from the Congo is exported to China as electronic-grade tantalum powder for capacitors.

For years rebel militia have controlled the coltan trade and much of the eastern

lowland gorillas' natural habitat. Large mammals like the gorillas are shot down indiscriminately for meat to feed to miners and hungry troops.

One recent study identified 69 different armed groups operating in the main areas where the apes live.

Another threat has been the capture of young gorillas by poachers.

The spread of logging and farming into the mountain forest further reduces the gorillas' ability to roam freely.

These apes are the most threatened of the four gorilla sub-species.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature, which put the species on the Red List, says the population continues to decline by 5% every year.

Our journey to see a surviving family of

25 gorillas involved a bone-shaking journey by jeep down a rutted track and then a steep hike through dense tropical vegetation.

At 7,000ft up a remote rainforest mountain, the sound of a male silverback beating his chest shatters the silence.

Later, we watch in awe as the huge gorilla grooms an orphaned male. The gigantic ape then suddenly stands up, towering over us, and bounds towards me.

One of our guides yanks my hand out of the way as the silverback, said to weigh 30st, powers by within a yard of me.

Luckily, the immense creature – the head of the family – is only hunting for leaves to eat. Despite their fearsome reputation, much of it based on misconceptions formed by people seeing frustrated gorillas in zoos, these apes only ever attack if they feel

threatened. Along comes a younger one; a three-year-old orphan, the guide whispers.

This cute ball of jet-black fur is curious and eager to check out her close relatives, the strangely-clothed human beings.

World-renowned biologist Ian Redmond, who has escorted us here, imitates gorilla sounds to put the apes at ease.

He has been coming to the Congo and neighbouring Rwanda for 40 years.

We all wear face masks to prevent the animals picking up human viruses that could kill them.

This group of apes is among a handful that the rangers can monitor.

Elsewhere in the country the presence of armed bandits known as Mai-Mai makes it impossible to keep watch.

Each mobile phone contains about 40

milligrams of tantalum. At the coltan mine above Rubaya, scores of young miners wearing shorts and vests died with death to scoop out the precious ore.

I watched as a group excavated a deep pit in the side of the mountain, leaving their friends above perched precariously over a sheer drop.

Such dangers are part of their daily routine, a risk they take for meagre returns. For 2lb of coltan – which can take a week to extract – they might make about £10.

In the Congo, this represents a decent income. Foreign mining giants which sell coltan make the big profits in multi-million pound deals with phone manufacturers.

Meanwhile accidents continue to happen in remote mines across the Congo, in places days away from the nearest hospital. Up to

## The precious ore behind slaughter

MORE than two thirds of the world's coltan is mined in Africa – most of it in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In 2013, 260 tons of tantalum was extracted from coltan dug up in the two nations, almost half the 590 tons produced worldwide. African output has more than

doubled in a decade. In 2004 more than 800 tonnes of tantalum came from Australia but the company collapsed.

Mining is tightly controlled in Rwanda but in the neighbouring DRC much of it is under the control of armed gangs and battles for control have often led to conflict.

## Guns, cops and calls for our cash

TEN times Britain's size, the Democratic Republic of Congo is also deeply corrupt.

Mirror photographer Rowan Griffiths and I encountered its endemic racketeering when we tried to view its largest coltan mine at the other end of pretty Lake Kivu.

Before even getting my notebook out, we

were surrounded by police and dozens of officials wanting to inspect our passports.

At every checkpoint on the way back, armed men were there to intimidate us. Eventually money was demanded for our passports to be handed back – summing up why few tourists venture to the DRC.