

Stabbed to death, rapper known as Splash Addict*

*That's slang for liking bloody knife attacks

THE latest teenage victim of London's Wild West crime-wave was a 'drill' rapper who boasted of his love of knives.

Latwaan Griffiths, 18, died from stab wounds having fallen off the

By **Chris Greenwood** and **Harry Howard**

back of a moped as a friend tried to rush him to hospital.

Detectives suspect he may have been targeted by members of a rival

gang after footage of him goading them was posted online. He was known as SA Latz, or Splash Addict, and was a member of the Harlem Spartans music collective. His nickname and the group's provocative lyrics refer to 'splashing' or 'getting splashed up', urban slang for stabbing someone and being spattered with their blood.

Police are concerned that drill music – a brand of rap which often features masked young men brandishing guns and knives – is fuelling soaring violence. Footage emerged yesterday of more than a dozen men being lined up against a park fence by armed officers after being caught recording a video.

Latwaan was known to police as a gang member in Kennington, South-East London, and

'A summer of gang reprisals'

had been arrested for offences including possessing a machete and a knife, and robbing a rival. Most took place in and around the Kennington Park Estate which the Harlem Spartans used as a backdrop for their videos.

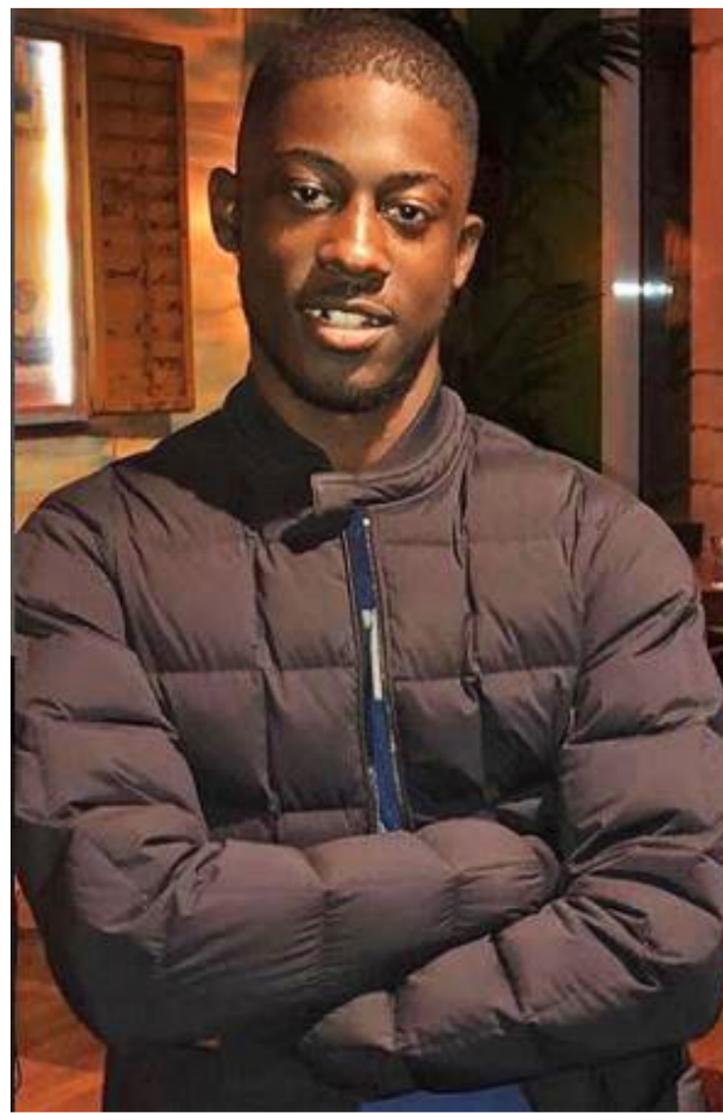
Online comments asked if Latwaan had been targeted by members of rival gangs such as 410, based in Brixton, or Zone 2, based in Peckham.

Several pointed out that a video of the victim recording a rap mocking 410 has been viewed more than 20,000 times.

They warned that London faces a 'bloody summer' of violent gang reprisals, with one saying: 'Someone is getting deaded.'

One teenage associate said Latwaan was '100 per cent' immersed in South London gang culture, but his fame as an online rapper meant he 'could have gone mainstream'.

According to the Harlem Spartans' own lyrics, more than ten of its members have been jailed in recent months. Their



Provocative lyrics: London rapper Latwaan Griffiths



Performing: Latwaan in a video for a Harlem Spartans song

best-known track, Call Me A Spartan, has registered more than six million views. Another, Kennington Bop, opens with the line: 'Come round Kennington, come around ready for war.'

Last night Latwaan's mother Marsha McNamee, 39, said she was too upset to speak. Police are still hunting the rider of the moped which dumped Latwaan near King's College Hospital, Camberwell, on Thursday. The

rider shouted 'Help him, he's been stabbed' before speeding off. Latwaan was helped by bystanders before being taken into hospital where he died. It is not known where the attack took place.

Latwaan was the 52nd person fatally stabbed in London this year as police try to get to grips with a knife crime epidemic. A 17-year-old boy has been arrested on suspicion of murder.

Middle-class cocaine use fuels violence, says Khan

THE middle classes are fuelling drug-related gang violence on the streets with their appetite for cocaine, Sadiq Khan said yesterday.

The London Mayor said recreational drug use is not a 'victimless crime' and there is a clear link with rising violence.

He called for more action against those who buy the drug at 'middle-class parties', as well as knife-wielding gang members. 'There is a definite link, which has been shown to me by the police, of drugs and criminal gangs and knife crime and crime going up,' he said.

'We have got to make sure we take action among those young

By **Chris Greenwood**
Chief Crime Correspondent

people who are involved in criminal gangs as well as those who are buying [drugs] at middle-class parties.

'There are some Londoners who think it is a victimless crime. We need to make sure Londoners realise there is no such thing as a victimless crime.'

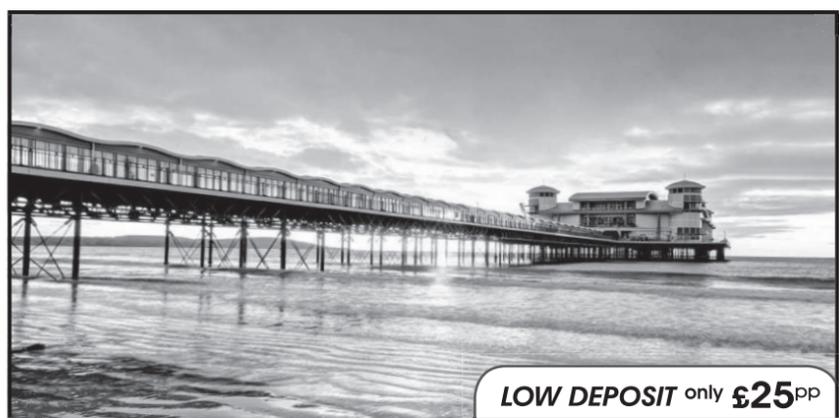
Mr Khan is under pressure over his record on crime in the capital as youth violence, robberies and burglaries soar. There is also deep concern over the murder rate – more than 80 people have died this year.

Speaking on LBC radio, Mr Khan said teenagers are 'losing

their lives' because of the lucrative drugs trade. He said: 'Some of the young people being knifed on our streets is because they are involved in criminal gangs who are lower down the food chain in relation to drugs.'

The Labour politician is the latest high-profile figure to denounce the middle-class cocaine trade. In May, Justice Secretary David Gauke said those who take cocaine 'should feel a degree of guilt and responsibility' when teenagers are murdered in East London.

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Cressida Dick has said those who 'splash the cash' on cocaine should think about the misery it causes.



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Eastbourne	Burlington	£95	£105	£179	£284
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