

Avon and Somerset Police reported a 20 per cent increase in domestic abuse incidents in the past two weeks, from 718 to 868.

In some areas of China that are quarantined due to the coronavirus, domestic abuse cases trebled in February compared with the previous year.

Priti Patel promises to protect the vulnerable who are trapped with domestic abusers during the coronavirus lockdown in exclusive article for the Mail on Sunday

There can be no doubt that we are living through an extraordinary and emotional time.

It is a hard time for everyone, as we are all asked to stay at home in order to keep our families, friends and communities safe. But for some people it is even harder, because home is not the safe haven it should be.

I am acutely aware that the necessary guidelines about social distancing and self-isolation may leave the victims of hidden crime, such as domestic abuse and child sexual abuse, feeling especially isolated, vulnerable and exposed.

And now schools are closed, millions of children are spending more time online than they otherwise would have and may be even more vulnerable to online predators.

But my message to every potential victim is simple: we have not forgotten you and we will not let you down.

And my message to every perpetrator is equally as simple: you will not get away with your crimes.

As we tackle coronavirus our priority is to save lives and to protect the vulnerable. We need to safeguard and support the most vulnerable now more than ever.

Victims of crime remain my top priority and I will continue to do everything in my power to protect every single one.

We are putting them first with our ground-breaking new Domestic Abuse Bill, an additional £15 million to tackle this vile crime was announced in the budget, and £16 million is going directly to refuge services.

But as coronavirus takes hold I refuse to stop there.

We have already given £1.6bn to local councils to help those who need it most during this crisis.

We are continuing to work urgently with charities, to ensure that the support services they provide can remain open during this challenging time.

The Government backed National Domestic Abuse Helpline is also to operate.

We are working with law enforcement to see what more we can do awareness and tackle the perpetrators of these heinous crimes.

We are working across government to redouble our operational res making sure we are doing everything we can.

And we are working with charities, schools and law enforcement to parents and children know how to stay safe online.

► **realtor from Ohio with extensive criminal past that includes arrests for drugs and 'intent to riot': Once threate...**



► **What to expect AFTER expecting: New mums reveal what really matters during those first months - and the ONE thing they wish someone had told them**
AD FEATURE

► **Sophie Turner and Taylor Swift take New York again! Actress enjoys night out with estranged husband Joe Jonas' ex-girlfriend - amid couple's bitter custody row**



► **Naga Munchetty is left in hysterics as she watches hilarious CCTV video of a man hit in the face by a pigeon**



► **Desperate Labour tries to row back from Keir Starmer's 'monstrous' plan to 'reverse Brexit' after leader is caught on camera saying the UK won't 'diverge' from ...**



► **I'm a professional dog walker who owns three XL Bullies - and I get more grief from Labradors and Dalmatians**



► **Is 'quiet thriving' the key to career contentment? Five ways to mindfully flip the switch and take back control of your wellbeing at work**
ADVERTISING

► **'I was destined for nothing': Severely dyslexic, blighted by acne, an academic failure - Ben Fogle felt lost after school. Here he reveals how his TV challenges...**



ADVERTISEMENT