'Eco-warriors' blamed for UK airport shutdown

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A drone shut down England's second largest airport for 30 hours earlier this week. Police are hunting for the people who operated the drone. The police believe these people are "eco-warriors". These are activists who take part in protests or take action to raise awareness of environmental problems. The drone prevented flights from leaving the UK's Gatwick Airport on Wednesday and Thursday. The airport was forced to close its runway. Over 120,000 travellers have been affected. Many of them were trying to fly home for Christmas. Instead, they had to sleep on the airport floor or try to find flights from other airports. Some passengers spent nine hours sitting on a plane near the boarding gate.

The British government is now talking about the actions it can take if other people use drones to cause chaos. They are worried people could use drones to attack airports, nuclear power stations and other important buildings. Police said they were in "a game of cat and mouse" with the drone. They said: "Each time we believe we got close to the operator, the drone disappears; when we look to reopen the airfield, the drone reappears again." This happened many times. Hundreds of police officers and the British Army helped to find the drone's operator, but couldn't. The police are worried a drone could cause a plane to crash. The operator of the drone could face up to five years in jail.

Sources: bbc.com / technologyreview.com / npr.com

Writing

Drones are a danger to society and should be banned. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

drone / shutdown / eco-warriors / protest / awareness / environment / runway / plane / chaos / nuclear power / cat and mouse / police officers / passengers / crash / jail

True / False

a) A drone shut down a major UK airport for three hours. T / F

b) Police say eco-warriors attacked the UK's Heathrow Airport with a drone. T / F

c) More than 120,000 passengers were affected by the drone attack. T / F

d) No one spent more than eight hours sitting on a plane at the airport. T / F

e) Britain is worried a drone could attack a nuclear power station. T / F

f) The police used a cat and a mouse to find the drone. T / F

g) The drone reappeared every time police tried to reopen the airfield. T / F

h) The operator of the drone could go to prison for five years. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

1.	shut down	a.	occurred
2.	hunting	b.	protestors
3.	activists	c.	travellers
4.	prevented	d.	havoc
5.	passengers	e.	searching
6.	actions	f.	near
7.	chaos	g.	closed
8.	close to	h.	prison
9.	happened	i.	stopped
10.	jail	j.	steps

Discussion – Student A

a) What do you know about drones?

b) What do you think of a drone shutting down a major airport?

c) How dangerous are drones?

d) Why couldn't the police deal with the drone?

e) What would you do if you had to sleep on an airport floor?

f) What do you know about eco-warriors?

g) Would you become an eco-warrior?

h) What environmental problems do you care about most?

Phrase Match

1. A drone shut down England's second
2. Police are hunting for the people who
3. raise awareness of
4. The airport was forced to
5. find flights
6. talking about the actions
7. people could use drones
8. a game of cat
9. a drone could cause
10. face up to

a. environmental problems
b. and mouse
c. from other airports
d. to attack airports
e. operated the drone
f. a plane to crash
g. close its runway
h. five years in jail
i. largest airport
j. it can take

Discussion – Student B

a) What do you think about what you read?
b) What would you use a drone for?
c) How will drones help us in the future?
d) What buildings could drones attack?
e) Why couldn't the British police get the drone operator?
f) How can airports stop drones from hitting airplanes?
g) Is five years in jail enough for shutting down an airport?
h) What questions would you like to ask the UK police?

Spelling

1. for 30 hours <u>rleaier</u> this week
2. the people who <u>eerodtpa</u> the drone
3. <u>staiivsct</u> who take part in protests
4. raise <u>asawenser</u>
5. The airport was <u>drcoef</u> to close its runway
6. near the <u>noibdgar</u> gate
7. use drones to cause <u>oahcs</u>
8. <u>eulcnra</u> power stations
9. other important <u>nibdligsu</u>
10. the drone <u>aspreprea</u> again
11. Hundreds of police <u>iforscef</u>
12. cause a plane to <u>rsach</u>

Role Play

Role A – The Buildings
You think the buildings are the best things about airports. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): shops, other travellers or the boarding gate.

Role B – The Shops
You think the shops are the best things about airports. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): buildings, other travellers or the boarding gate.

Role C – Other Travellers
You think other travellers are the best things about airports. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): shops, buildings or the boarding gate.

Role D – The Boarding Gate
You think the boarding gate is the best thing about airports. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): shops, other travellers or buildings.

Speaking – Airports

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about airports at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- The buildings
- The staff
- The shops
- The restaurants
- The boarding gate
- The excitement
- Baggage claim
- Other travellers

Answers – Synonym Match

1.	g	2.	e	3.	b	4.	i	5.	c
6.	j	7.	d	8.	f	9.	a	10.	h

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	T

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.