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Indian heat wave kills 200

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20 June, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Indian heat wave kills 200

BNE: Over 200 people have died of sunstroke and dehydration in a scorching heat wave that has swept much of India. The mercury rocketed up to 50 degrees Centigrade on June 19 in the state of Orissa. The heat has also meant the capital New Delhi has simmered all month in temperatures of over 40 Celsius. Sweltering conditions have forced many schools to remain closed in an extended summer vacation. To make matters worse, many states are experiencing power cuts, which means people cannot use their fans or air conditioners. There seems to be little respite or sanctuary from the blistering heat.

Meteorologists attribute the searing temperatures to the late arrival of the summer monsoon rains on the subcontinent. This has made life almost unbearable for most Indians. Sanjay Bhal from West Bengal said: "There is no escape. There is no refuge. I have never known such a savage sun." His neighbour Bidde Gupta similarly complained of being helpless. She said the sweltering hot spell seemed to have no end in sight. She also said: "My house is like an oven. We are being roasted, even as we sleep, and these power outages only add to our misery." Weather forecasters predict the relentless heat to continue taking its toll until the end of June.

WARM-UPS

1. HEAT WAVE: Imagine there is a heat wave in your town – everyday is 50 degrees Centigrade. (In very hot countries imagine there is a freezing spell – every day is minus 20 degrees.) Talk to your partner(s) about living in such heat (cold). What do you do to stay cool (warm). How has the heat (cold) affected your daily life? Change partners often.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

Heat waves / the sun / sunstroke / dehydration / India / 50 degrees C / power cuts / fans / air conditioners / monsoons / ovens / weather forecasters

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

3. HEAT: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "heat". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

4. 2-MINUTE HEAT DEBATES: With a partner, engage in these fun 2-minute debates. Students A firmly believe in the opinions on the left, Students B support the opinions on the right. Change partners often.

- a. Hot is best. vs. Cold is best.
- b. Sitting on a beach is life's greatest pleasure. vs. Sitting on a beach is crazy.
- c. Skiing is the greatest fun. vs. Snow and freezing weather is not fun.
- d. Summer fashions are best. vs. Winter fashions are best.
- e. Kenya's climate is better than Iceland's. vs. Iceland's climate is better than Kenya's.
- f. Sunstroke is worse than frostbite. vs. Frostbite is worse than sunstroke.
- g. Air conditioners are heaven. vs. Log fires are the greatest.
- h. Summer is the best season. vs. Winter is the best season.

5. EXTREME WEATHER:

In pairs / groups, talk about which of these places you would like to live in or choose not to live in:

- England – Extremely gray skies and non-stop rain.
- Saudi Arabia – Boiling hot, dry and sandy every day of the year.
- Iceland – Freezing cold temperatures every day with few hours of daylight.
- Philippines – Very humid every day with lots of typhoons.
- Antarctica – Nothing but snow, ice, below-zero temperatures and penguins.
- New York City – Boiling hot in the summer, freezing cold in the winter.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Scorching temperatures have killed hundreds of people in India. | T / F |
| b. The mercury touched 50 degrees Celsius in one Indian state. | T / F |
| c. Schools have opened early so students have more time to study. | T / F |
| d. The heat has melted air conditioners and fans. | T / F |
| e. The heat wave is due to the early arrival of the summer monsoon. | T / F |
| f. A man from West Bengal said there are many heat wave refugees. | T / F |
| g. A woman compared her house to an oven. | T / F |
| h. Meteorologists say respite will come at the month's end. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| a. sunstroke | pause |
| b. scorching | boiled |
| c. rocketed | India |
| d. simmered | burning |
| e. respite | unforgiving |
| f. meteorologists | ferocious |
| g. the subcontinent | shelter |
| h. refuge | weather forecasters |
| i. savage | hyperthermia |
| j. relentless | shot |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. died of sunstroke and | rocketed up to 50 degrees |
| b. heat wave that has swept | almost unbearable |
| c. The mercury | much of India |
| d. to make | in sight |
| e. little respite or sanctuary | misery |
| f. searing | dehydration |
| g. This has made life | matters worse |
| h. no end | its toll |
| i. add to our | from the blistering heat |
| j. continue taking | temperatures |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the correct spaces.

Indian heat wave kills 200

BNE: Over 200 people have died of _____ and dehydration in a scorching heat wave that has _____ much of India. The _____ rocketed up to 50 degrees Centigrade on June 19 in the state of Orissa. The heat has also meant the capital New Delhi has _____ all month in temperatures of over 40 Celsius. Sweltering _____ have forced many schools to remain closed in an extended summer vacation. To make _____ worse, many states are experiencing power cuts, which means people cannot use their fans or air conditioners. There seems to be little _____ or sanctuary from the _____ heat.

Meteorologists _____ the searing temperatures to the late arrival of the summer monsoon rains on the _____. This has made _____ almost unbearable for most Indians. Sanjay Bhal from West Bengal said: "There is no escape. There is no _____. I have never known such a savage sun." His neighbour Bidde Gupta similarly complained of being helpless. She said the _____ hot spell seemed to have no end in sight. She also said: "My house is like an oven. We are being _____, even as we sleep, and these power outages only add to our misery." Weather forecasters predict the _____ heat to continue taking its _____ until the end of June.

matters

simmered

swept

blistering

conditions

sunstroke

respite

mercury

refuge

subcontinent

roasted

attribute

toll

sweltering

relentless

life

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'heat' and 'wave'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT HEAT SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about heat and surviving in hot weather.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- dehydration
- mercury
- simmered
- extended
- power cuts
- sanctuary
- meteorologists
- unbearable
- savage
- helpless
- oven
- toll

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. What was your initial reaction when you read this headline?
- b. Did the headline make you want to read on?
- c. Can you imagine 50-degree temperatures?
- d. Do you like the climate of your country?
- e. Would you like to move somewhere that has warmer or cooler climates?
- f. What do you do to escape the heat or cold?
- g. Would you rather have boiling hot or freezing cold temperatures?
- h. Are you a summer person or a winter person?
- i. Have you ever been ill because of the sun?
- j. Do you like sunbathing?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What are the hottest and coldest temperatures you've experienced?
- c. What can you do to survive in such sweltering heat?
- d. Are you a sun lover?
- e. Can you survive one year without an air conditioner or heater?
- f. The English language uses cooking words (roast, boil, bake, sear, simmer, etc.) to describe hot weather. How about your language?
- g. Have you ever felt like you were roasting?
- h. What's the best thing to drink in sweltering hot weather?
- i. What should national or local governments do to help people in such searing conditions?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
- b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- c. Was there a question you didn't like?
- d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- e. What did you like talking about?
- f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
- g. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

EXTREME CLIMATE LIVING: Imagine you are real estate agents. It is your job to sell top quality, luxury homes at a ridiculously cheap price. The locations of the homes may be a problem – the Sahara Desert and Siberia. In pairs / groups, decide on your sales pitch that will persuade potential home buyers to relocate to the Sahara or Siberia. Use the table to help you.

Students A – Sahara Desert / Students B - Siberia

SALES POINTS	ADVANTAGES
Health	
Sports	
Scenery	
Wildlife	
Hobbies	
Other	

Change partners. Take turns in being salesperson and client in trying to sell Siberia or the Sahara. "Clients" to the sales office must find a fault in every part of the sales pitch.

Return to your original partner(s) and compare what kind of resistance you encountered from your clients. Use this to improve your sales pitch.

Present it again to a different partner. Visitors must again find fault.

Return to your original partner a second time and discuss whether your improved sales pitch worked any better the second time round.

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Indian heat wave kills 200

BNE: Over 200 people have died of _____ in a scorching heat wave that has swept much of India. The _____ to 50 degrees Centigrade on June 19 in the state of Orissa. The heat has also meant the capital New Delhi _____ month in temperatures of over 40 Celsius. _____ have forced many schools to remain closed in an extended summer vacation. To make matters worse, many states are experiencing power cuts, which means people cannot use their fans or air conditioners. There seems to be little _____ from the _____.

Meteorologists attribute the _____ to the late arrival of the summer monsoon rains _____. This has made life almost unbearable for most Indians. Sanjay Bhal from West Bengal said: "There is no escape. There is no refuge. I have never known _____." His neighbour Bidde Gupta similarly complained of being helpless. She said the _____ seemed to have no end in sight. She also said: "My house is like an oven. We are being roasted, even as we sleep, and these power outages _____." Weather forecasters predict the relentless heat to continue _____ until the end of June.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INDIAN HEAT WAVE: Search the Internet and find more information on the Indian heat wave. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. HOW TO SURVIVE: Write a fact sheet about how to survive extremely hot or extremely cold temperatures. Show your fact sheets to your classmates in your next lesson. Did everyone include similar points?

4. DIARY / SCHEDULE: Imagine you are in India. Every day you have to endure temperatures of up to 50 degrees C. Write the entry in your diary / journal for one day in the heat. Read your entry to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| a. sunstroke | hyperthermia |
| b. scorching | burning |
| c. rocketed | shot |
| d. simmered | boiled |
| e. respite | pause |
| f. meteorologists | weather forecasters |
| g. the subcontinent | India |
| h. refuge | shelter |
| i. savage | ferocious |
| j. relentless | unforgiving |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. died of sunstroke and | dehydration |
| b. heat wave that has swept | much of India |
| c. The mercury | rocketed up to 50 degrees |
| d. to make | matters worse |
| e. little respite or sanctuary | from the blistering heat |
| f. searing | temperatures |
| g. This has made life | almost unbearable |
| h. no end | in sight |
| i. add to our | misery |
| j. continue taking | its toll |

GAP FILL:

Indian heat wave kills 200

BNE: Over 200 people have died of **sunstroke** and dehydration in a scorching heat wave that has **swept** much of India. The **mercury** rocketed up to 50 degrees Centigrade on June 19 in the state of Orissa. The heat has also meant the capital New Delhi has **simmered** all month in temperatures of over 40 Celsius. Sweltering **conditions** have forced many schools to remain closed in an extended summer vacation. To make **matters** worse, many states are experiencing power cuts, which means people cannot use their fans or air conditioners. There seems to be little **respite** or sanctuary from the **blistering** heat.

Meteorologists **attribute** the searing temperatures to the late arrival of the summer monsoon rains on the **subcontinent**. This has made **life** almost unbearable for most Indians. Sanjay Bhal from West Bengal said: "There is no escape. There is no **refuge**. I have never known such a savage sun." His neighbour Bidde Gupta similarly complained of being helpless. She said the **sweltering** hot spell seemed to have no end in sight. She also said: "My house is like an oven. We are being **roasted**, even as we sleep, and these power outages only add to our misery." Weather forecasters predict the **relentless** heat to continue taking its **toll** until the end of June.