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Indian policewomen slap dating couples

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Contents

The Article	2
Warm-ups	3
Before Reading / Listening	4
While Reading / Listening	5
Listening Gap Fill	6
After Reading	7
Discussion	8
Speaking	9
Homework	10
Answers	11

22 December, 2005

THE ARTICLE

Indian policewomen slap dating couples

Shock and outrage are sweeping India at the moment due to television and newspaper coverage of two policewomen attacking a young woman on a date in the northern town of Meerat. Her crime? Cuddling up to her boyfriend in the local park. The scandal has swiftly led to the suspension of the officers, who were conducting “Operation Romeo” – a police campaign to keep decency on the streets (and in the parks) and crack down on kissing and embracing in public. The televised incident has sparked a major controversy and has already figured on the agenda in India’s government. National women’s groups lodged strong protests and scores of students protested in the streets in Delhi, calling for an immediate end to the harassment of young, and completely above-board, lovers.

The young couple at the center of the beating has not been seen since their identities were revealed on television. Their disappearance has turned the sweethearts into national heroes. Indians are engrossed by both sides of the story – both shocked at the humiliating beating and concerned about the wellbeing of the couple. There are concerns the two lovers may become social outcasts because they feel they risk scorn and reprisals from their local community. Protesting students in Delhi burnt effigies of the assailant policewomen and chanted, “down with police dictatorship”. An angry Meerat resident chided the law enforcement authorities. She ranted: “Is falling in love wrong? Who gave the police the right to beat and hit people and misbehave in such a manner?”

WARM-UPS

1. MY DATING HISTORY: Are you a big romantic? In pairs / groups, talk about your history of dating. Have all of your dates been super-romantic? Does romance last? Do you kiss and cuddle in the park?

2. KISSING: How does your society view kissing in public? With your partner(s), discuss whether it is OK for lovers to kiss in the following places. Are there limits to the kind of kissing that might take place at these places / occasions?

- In a park
- On a busy rush hour train
- In the back row at the movies
- In MacDonald's
- At a church, temple, mosque...
- During an English lesson
- In an elevator
- At a family party
- In a library
- In the toy section of a department store

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

Shock / outrage / India / going on dates / cuddling / scandals / Romeo / decency / lovers / identities / social outcasts / protesting students / police / falling in love

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

4. ROMANTIC QUESTIONS: Point to one of the words below and ask your partner to ask you a question using it. Takes turns in choosing and pointing.

- Romance
- Kissing
- Darling
- Lover
- Decency
- Immoral
- Hugging
- Heavy petting
- Dating
- Public displays of affection
- Falling in love
- Holding hands

5. KISS OPINIONS: Discuss these comments with your partner(s). Who do you think might hold these opinions?

- a. People should not kiss in public. Not everyone wants to see such behavior.
- b. Kissing in public is a basic human need.
- c. People should never kiss in front of their parents.
- d. Kissing is over-rated.
- e. Kissing should only take place after marriage.
- f. People can kiss when and where they want and for how long they want.
- g. The French are the best kissers.
- h. The phrase "kiss and make up" is an important one to remember for couples.

6. DATING: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with dating. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- a. Two Indian policewomen attacked a young woman on a date. T / F
- b. The policewomen were jealous of the woman having a boyfriend. T / F
- c. There is a police campaign to make kissing illegal in India. T / F
- d. Students protested in the streets of Delhi over the incident. T / F
- e. The young couple appeared on television to vent their anger at police. T / F
- f. The Indian public is shocked by the obscenity of kissing in public. T / F
- g. Students burnt effigies of the policewomen at the center of this storm. T / F
- h. A local resident said police should beat young couples who fall in love. T / F

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

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| a. sweeping | proper |
| b. coverage | rebuked |
| c. decency | retaliation |
| d. lodged | respectability |
| e. above-board | dummies |
| f. engrossed | spreading across |
| g. reprisals | filed |
| h. effigies | yelled |
| i. chided | reports |
| j. ranted | captivated |

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

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. Shock and outrage are | from their local community |
| b. Cuddling | strong protests |
| c. a police campaign to keep | the center of the beating |
| d. The televised incident has | effigies of the assailant policewomen |
| e. National women's groups lodged | both sides of the story |
| f. The young couple at | decency on the streets |
| g. Indians are engrossed by | sweeping India at the moment |
| h. they risk scorn and reprisals | the law enforcement authorities |
| i. students in Delhi burnt | up to her boyfriend |
| j. An angry Meerat resident chided | sparked a major controversy |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Indian policewomen slap dating couples

Shock and outrage are _____ India at the moment due to television and newspaper coverage of two policewomen attacking a young woman on a date in the northern town of Meerat. Her _____? Cuddling up to her boyfriend in the local park. The scandal has swiftly led to the suspension of the officers, who were _____ "Operation Romeo" – a police campaign to keep decency on the streets (and in the parks) and crack down on kissing and _____ in public. The televised incident has _____ a major controversy and has already figured on the agenda in India's government. National women's groups _____ strong protests and _____ of students protested in the streets in Delhi, calling for an immediate end to the harassment of young, and completely above-_____, lovers.

The young couple at the center of the _____ has not been seen since their _____ were revealed on television. Their disappearance has turned the _____ into national heroes. Indians are engrossed by both sides of the story – both shocked at the humiliating beating and concerned about the _____ of the couple. There are concerns the two lovers may become social _____ because they feel they risk scorn and reprisals from their local community. Protesting students in Delhi burnt effigies of the _____ policewomen and chanted, "down with police dictatorship". An angry Meerat resident chided the law enforcement authorities. She _____: "Is falling in love wrong? Who gave the police the right to beat and hit people and misbehave in such a _____?"

board
crime
embracing
lodged
sweeping
conducting
sparked
scores
ranted
identities
outcasts
sweethearts
manner
beating
assailant
wellbeing

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Indian policewomen slap dating couples

Shock and outrage are _____ India at the moment due to television and newspaper coverage of two policewomen attacking a young woman on a date in the northern town of Meerat. Her crime? _____ up to her boyfriend in the local park. The scandal has swiftly led to the _____ of the officers, who were conducting "Operation Romeo" – a police campaign to keep _____ on the streets (and in the parks) and crack down on kissing and _____ in public. The televised incident has _____ a major controversy and has already figured on the agenda in India's government. National women's groups _____ strong protests and scores of students protested in the streets in Delhi, calling for an immediate end to the harassment of young, and completely _____ - _____, lovers.

The young couple at the center of the _____ has not been seen since their identities were revealed on television. Their disappearance has turned the _____ into national heroes. Indians are engrossed by both sides of the story – both shocked at the humiliating beating and concerned about the _____ of the couple. There are concerns the two lovers may become social _____ because they feel they risk scorn and _____ from their local community. Protesting students in Delhi burnt effigies of the _____ policewomen and chanted, "down with police dictatorship". An angry Meerat resident _____ the law enforcement authorities. She ranted: "Is falling in love wrong? Who gave the police the right to beat and hit people and misbehave in such a _____?"

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 activity. 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 "DATING" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about the things we should and shouldn't do in public when dating.

- 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:

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| • sweeping | • identities |
| • cuddling | • engrossed |
| • conducting | • wellbeing |
| • sparked | • reprisals |
| • scores | • chanted |
| • above-board | • ranted |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What adjectives describe your feelings about this story?
- c. Do you think it's right that the policewomen were suspended?
- d. What do you think of "Operation Romeo"?
- e. Do you think police officers higher up the chain of command should lose their jobs over this incident?
- f. Don't you think it's good that authorities are trying to protect India's culture, in which kissing and cuddling cause offence?
- g. Are you surprised by the public reaction in India?
- h. Where would you draw the line with public displays of affection?
- i. Do you think a crackdown on kissing in public might be a good thing?
- j. What do you think of other cultures in which kissing in public is common / unacceptable?

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

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think it's OK to kiss and cuddle in a park?
- d. What do you think the boyfriend did while his girlfriend was being slapped by the policewoman?
- e. What would you do if two police officers started slapping your partner because you were cuddling in the park?
- f. Public kissing was rare before movies came along. Do you think screen kisses started a slide in morals and decency?
- g. Have you ever been offended by public displays of affection?
- h. How and when do you think French kissing first started?
- i. Do you think people from any particular nation are the world's biggest romantics?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

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

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

KISSING RULES: You are the newly appointed Secretary of Cuddling Kissing (SOCK) for your government. Team up with your fellow SOCKs and decide the rules for kissing in your country. In the table below, write two reasons why kissing cannot be tolerated at all in the places in the table or give two circumstances where it is OK.

PLACE	WHY NOT AT ALL	OK IF...
A Library	1. 2.	1. 2.
MacDonald's	1. 2.	1. 2.
A place of worship	1. 2.	1. 2.
On a train	1. 2.	1. 2.
In an English lesson	1. 2.	1. 2.
In the street	1. 2.	1. 2.

Change partners and compare your rules and decisions.

Role play a discussion between a SOCK and a SACK (Secretary Against Cuddling and Kissing). SOCKs think kissing is OK anywhere. SACKs think it should be totally banned.

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. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on this story. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. EYEWITNESS: Imagine you were in the Indian park and witnessed the police attack on the young lover. Write your eyewitness account of what happened. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

4. LETTER: Write a letter to the head of the Indian police. Tell him/her what you think of the attack on the lovers in the park. Show what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did everyone write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| a. sweeping | spreading across |
| b. coverage | reports |
| c. decency | respectability |
| d. lodged | filed |
| e. above-board | proper |
| f. engrossed | captivated |
| g. reprisals | retaliation |
| h. effigies | dummies |
| i. chided | rebuked |
| j. ranted | yelled |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. Shock and outrage are | sweeping India at the moment |
| b. Cuddling | up to her boyfriend |
| c. a police campaign to keep | decency on the streets |
| d. The televised incident has | sparked a major controversy |
| e. National women's groups lodged | strong protests |
| f. The young couple at | the center of the beating |
| g. Indians are engrossed by | both sides of the story |
| h. they risk scorn and reprisals | from their local community |
| i. students in Delhi burnt | effigies of the assailant policewomen |
| j. An angry Meerat resident chided | the law enforcement authorities |

GAP FILL:

Indian policewomen slap dating couples

Shock and outrage are **sweeping** India at the moment due to television and newspaper coverage of two policewomen attacking a young woman on a date in the northern town of Meerat. Her **crime**? Cuddling up to her boyfriend in the local park. The scandal has swiftly led to the suspension of the officers, who were **conducting** "Operation Romeo" – a police campaign to keep decency on the streets (and in the parks) and crack down on kissing and **embracing** in public. The televised incident has **sparked** a major controversy and has already figured on the agenda in India's government. National women's groups **lodged** strong protests and **scores** of students protested in the streets in Delhi, calling for an immediate end to the harassment of young, and completely above-**board**, lovers.

The young couple at the center of the **beating** has not been seen since their **identities** were revealed on television. Their disappearance has turned the **sweethearts** into national heroes. Indians are engrossed by both sides of the story – both shocked at the humiliating beating and concerned about the **wellbeing** of the couple. There are concerns the two lovers may become social **outcasts** because they feel they risk scorn and reprisals from their local community. Protesting students in Delhi burnt effigies of the **assailant** policewomen and chanted, "down with police dictatorship". An angry Meerat resident chided the law enforcement authorities. She **ranted**: "Is falling in love wrong? Who gave the police the right to beat and hit people and misbehave in such a **manner**?"