

Police arrest a coconut

9th September, 2013



Police officers in the Maldives have arrested a coconut. It had Arabic writing on it. It was a "sura" (a verse from the Koran) and local people got worried

about it. They said it was full of black magic and that someone was using it to try and change the results of an election. Police took the coconut to a local police station because it was a "suspicious fruit". They thought the small fruit might affect how people voted in Saturday's national election. People on the island of Guraidhoo believe black magic can stop voters from voting, or make them vote for someone else. The police contacted a "ruqyah" (a good magician), who decided the coconut was a fake and contained no black magic.

A police official said: "It seems like it was a joke. Just a prank, so that people will become aware, understand the message, and not do it again." The Huffington Post website claims that black magic can have a big effect on life in the Maldives. In July, a school refused to let a voting box into the building. Teachers were worried it would make students ill. In 2012, Abdulla bin Mohamed Ibrahim, a religious leader in the Maldives, asked the government to make black magic illegal. He said it was a sin to practice black magic. He said it caused a lot of problems for many families and that it was time to do something about it. Mr Ibrahim said black magic has become a major social issue in his country.

Sources: Aljazeera / Haveeru / Huffington Post

Writing

Compare and contrast coconuts and peanuts.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

police officers / arrest / coconut / results / election / fruit / island / magic / voting / prank / message / website / teachers / religious leader / sins / problems / social issue

True / False

- Police arrested a person dressed up like a coconut. T / F
- Someone tried to use a coconut to change the results of an election. T / F
- Someone wrote something on the coconut in English. T / F
- A good magician said the coconut contained no black magic. T / F
- A website said black magic affected life in the Maldives. T / F
- In 2012, a voting box in a school made students ill. T / F
- A religious leader asked the government to make black magic illegal. T / F
- The leader said black magic wasn't such a big problem in his country. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| 1. full | a. allow |
| 2. change | b. problem |
| 3. suspicious | c. imitation |
| 4. verse | d. trick |
| 5. fake | e. dishonest-looking |
| 6. joke | f. filled |
| 7. let | g. unlawful |
| 8. ill | h. affect |
| 9. illegal | i. sick |
| 10. issue | j. poem |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you know about coconuts?
- What would you do if you saw a "suspicious" fruit?
- Why is a coconut called a coconut, when it is not a nut?
- Why do you think people believe in black magic?
- Should black magic be made illegal?
- What's your favourite food or drink that has coconut in it?
- How many different ways can you use a coconut?
- What questions would you like to ask the arresting police officer?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. They said it was full | a. results of an election |
| 2. try and change the | b. effect on life |
| 3. affect how | c. it was a joke |
| 4. make them vote | d. no black magic |
| 5. the coconut was a fake and contained | e. social issue in his country |
| 6. It seems like | f. students ill |
| 7. black magic can have a big | g. of black magic |
| 8. worried it would make | h. practise black magic |
| 9. it was a sin to | i. for someone else |
| 10. black magic has become a major | j. people voted |

Discussion – Student B

- What springs to mind when you hear the word 'coconut'?
- What do you think about what you read?
- Do you like the taste of coconut?
- What do you think when you see a beach lined with coconut trees?
- Were the Maldives police right to take the coconut to the police station?
- Do you believe in black magic?
- Do you believe in any kind of magic?
- What things can change how people vote?

Spelling

- Police isfforce in the Maldives
- try and change the ssrletu
- it was a "ipsscsuuio fruit"
- Saturday's national elntocei
- a good liamgcan
- oncadneit no black magic
- understand the sgsmaee
- a school suerefd to let...
- a glierisou leader
- a sin to iceratps (UK) aerpccit (USA) black magic
- it scuade a lot of problems
- black magic has become a major social iuess

Answers – Synonym Match

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

Role Play

Role A – Coconut

You think coconuts are the best tropical fruit. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their fruit. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): papayas, bananas or pineapples.

Role B – Papaya

You think papayas are the best tropical fruit. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their fruit. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): coconuts, bananas or pineapples.

Role C – Banana

You think bananas are the best tropical fruit. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their fruit. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): papayas, coconuts or pineapples.

Role D – Pineapple

You think pineapples are the best tropical fruit. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their fruit. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): papayas, bananas or coconuts.

Speaking

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

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| • coconuts | • apples |
| • pineapples | • strawberries |
| • papayas | • kiwi fruit |
| • bananas | • grapes |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	T	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.