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Internet chaos in Asia

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30 December, 2006

THE ARTICLE

Internet chaos in Asia

The Internet in Asia is still experiencing problems following the earthquake off southern Taiwan last week. Although the quake caused little damage to buildings and roads, it broke six of seven undersea Internet cables. As a result, millions of people in the Asia-Pacific region could not use the Internet. The damaged cables linked countries in North and Southeast Asia to each other, and to North America and Australia. The powerful magnitude 6.7 quake showed how easily Mother Nature can bring chaos to international communication. Banking services across the region were badly hit and millions of people could not even use an ATM to withdraw cash. Financial markets escaped serious damage as many traders were on holidays ahead of the New Year.

Several ships are now on their way to repair the cables. One damaged cable is the North Asian Loop – a 38,000-kilometre link that stretches from South Korea around India to Holland. Repairing it could be a very difficult job because the ends of the cables may be buried or washed away. Earthquakes can create a lot of damage on the seabed. They can cause things to move long distances under the sea. Taiwanese officials have warned it could take several days or even a week to fix the problems. This means Internet access across most of Asia will not return to normal for a week or so. The cost of repairs for Asian telecommunication companies could be half a billion dollars. They are using more expensive satellite technology to make sure as many people as possible are connected.

WARM-UPS

1. THE INTERNET: What do you know about the Internet? Find out as much as you can from your partner. Change partners often to build up your information.

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

The Internet / problems / earthquakes / cables / Mother Nature / communication / ships / repairing things / the seabed / long distances / satellites / technology

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

3. UNCONNECTED: Imagine there is no Internet. Look at the points in the table. How would NO Internet change these things?

- Writing to friends
- Music
- Reading the news
- Studying
- Shopping
- Finding information
- Hobbies
- Other _____

4. QUICK DEBATE: Students A believe we need the Internet in our lives. Students B believe we don't need the Internet. Debate this with your partners. Change partners often.

5. BEING WITHOUT: In pairs / groups, finish these sentence starters. Change partner(s) and talk about what you wrote.

- a. Being without the Internet _____
- b. Being without George W. Bush as US President _____
- c. Being without McDonalds and Coca Cola _____
- d. Being without wars _____
- e. Being without music _____
- f. Being without (your choice) _____

6. EARTHQUAKE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with earthquakes. 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. A volcano damaged Internet connections for people in Asia. T / F
- b. Six out of seven underwater Internet cables broke. T / F
- c. Mother Nature helped people around the world to communicate. T / F
- d. International financial markets suffered a lot of serious damage. T / F
- e. One of the damaged Internet cables links South Korea with Europe. T / F
- f. It is not an easy job to fix underwater Internet cables. T / F
- g. Many people in Asia will be without the Internet for up to a week. T / F
- h. Using satellite technology is cheaper for telecom companies. T / F

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

- | | |
|-----------------|---------|
| a. experiencing | mess |
| b. following | go back |
| c. linked | area |
| d. chaos | facing |
| e. region | costly |
| f. repair | extends |
| g. stretches | joined |
| h. cause | fix |
| i. return | after |
| j. expensive | make |

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

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| a. still experiencing | Nature |
| b. it broke six of | to normal |
| c. Mother | their way to repair the cables |
| d. people could not even use an ATM | seven undersea Internet cables |
| e. markets escaped serious damage as | or washed away |
| f. Several ships are now on | problems |
| g. the ends of the cables may be buried | to withdraw cash |
| h. move long | as possible are connected |
| i. return | many traders were on holidays |
| j. make sure as many people | distances under the sea |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

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

Internet chaos in Asia

The Internet in Asia is _____ experiencing problems following the earthquake off southern Taiwan last week. Although the quake caused _____ damage to buildings and roads, it broke six of seven undersea Internet cables. As a _____, millions of people in the Asia-Pacific region could not use the Internet. The damaged cables _____ countries in North and Southeast Asia to _____ other, and to North America and Australia. The powerful magnitude 6.7 quake showed how _____ Mother Nature can bring chaos to international communication. Banking services _____ the region were badly hit and millions of people could not even use an ATM to withdraw cash. Financial markets escaped serious damage as many traders were on holidays _____ of the New Year.

easily
result
each
ahead
still
linked
across
little

Several ships are now on their _____ to repair the cables. One damaged cable is the North Asian Loop – a 38,000-kilometre link that stretches from South Korea _____ India to Holland. Repairing it could be a very difficult job because the ends of the cables may be buried or washed _____. Earthquakes can create a lot of damage on the seabed. They can cause things to move _____ distances under the sea. Taiwanese officials have warned it could take _____ days or even a week to fix the problems. This means Internet access across most of Asia will not _____ to normal for a week or so. The cost of repairs for Asian telecommunication companies _____ be half a billion dollars. They are using more expensive satellite technology to make sure as _____ people as possible are connected.

could
long
around
return
way
many
away
several

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Internet chaos in Asia

The Internet in Asia _____ experiencing problems following the earthquake off southern Taiwan last week. Although the quake caused _____ to buildings and roads, it broke _____ undersea Internet cables. As a result, millions of people in the Asia-Pacific region could not use the Internet. The damaged cables linked countries in North and Southeast Asia _____, and to North America and Australia. The powerful magnitude 6.7 quake showed how easily Mother Nature can _____ international communication. Banking services across the region _____ and millions of people could not even use an ATM to withdraw cash. Financial markets escaped serious damage as many traders were on holidays _____ New Year.

Several ships are now _____ to repair the cables. One damaged cable is the North Asian Loop – a 38,000-kilometre link that stretches from South Korea around India to Holland. Repairing it could be a very difficult job because _____ cables may be buried or washed away. Earthquakes _____ lot of damage on the seabed. They can cause things to move long distances under the sea. Taiwanese officials have warned it could take _____ even a week to fix the problems. This means Internet access across most of Asia will not _____ for a week or so. The cost of repairs for Asian telecommunication companies could be half a billion dollars. They are using more expensive satellite technology to make _____ people as possible are connected.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

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

- 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 "INTERNET" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about the Internet.

- 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:

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| • still | • way |
| • roads | • buried |
| • result | • distances |
| • powerful | • normal |
| • hit | • half |
| • ahead | • connected |

DISCUSSION

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

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. Did anything in the article surprise you?
- c. What do you think of the Internet?
- d. Do you think the Internet is a good thing?
- e. How would the world be different without the Internet?
- f. How do you think the Internet will develop?
- g. Do the older members of your family use the Internet?
- h. What would you like the Internet to do in the future?
- i. How important is the Internet in your life?
- j. What would you do if you could not use the Internet for a month?

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. Are you surprised an earthquake could cause so much Internet chaos?
- d. What could happen if terrorists took control of the Internet?
- e. Which is better, writing e-mails or real letters?
- f. Do you think the Internet should be free?
- g. Have you experienced any chaos in your life?
- h. What do you think Mother Nature?
- i. What would you like Mother Nature to stop doing?
- 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

COMPUTER FREE: You are on the committee to make a better, computer free world. Make notes below on why the world would be better with/without PCs. Present your ideas to your group/class. Write a magazine article on your thoughts.

	This would be better / worse with computers
Family life	
Studying	
Eyesight	
Letter writing	
Health	
Record keeping	
Games	
Your idea _____	

LANGUAGE

CORRECT WORD: Choose the correct words from a – d below and write them in the article.

The Internet in Asia is (1) _____ experiencing problems following the earthquake off southern Taiwan last week. Although the quake caused (2) _____ damage to buildings and roads, it broke six of seven undersea Internet cables. As a (3) _____, millions of people in the Asia-Pacific region could not use the Internet. The damaged cables linked countries in North and Southeast Asia to each other, and to North America and Australia. The powerful (4) _____ 6.7 quake showed how easily Mother Nature can bring (5) _____ to international communication. Banking services across the region were badly hit and millions of people could not (6) _____ use an ATM to withdraw cash. Financial markets escaped serious damage as many traders were on holidays ahead of the New Year.

Several ships are now on their (7) _____ to repair the cables. One damaged cable is the North Asian Loop – a 38,000 kilometre link that (8) _____ from South Korea around India to Holland. Repairing it could be a very difficult job because the ends of the cables may be buried or washed (9) _____. Earthquakes can create a lot of damage on the seabed. They can cause things to move long distances under the sea. Taiwanese officials have warned it could take several days or even a week to fix the problems. This means Internet access across most of Asia will not (10) _____ to normal for a week or (11) _____. The cost of repairs for Asian telecommunication companies could be half a billion dollars. They are using more expensive satellite technology to (12) _____ sure as many people as possible are connected.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 1. | (a) yet | (b) still | (c) ago | (d) gone |
| 2. | (a) tiny | (b) few | (c) little | (d) small |
| 3. | (a) rest | (b) resulting | (c) results | (d) result |
| 4. | (a) magnitude | (b) magnify | (c) magic | (d) magnificent |
| 5. | (a) chaos | (b) chase | (c) chaotic | (d) cha-cha-cha |
| 6. | (a) odd | (b) even | (c) flat | (d) just |
| 7. | (a) wax | (b) was | (c) war | (d) way |
| 8. | (a) stretcher | (b) stretches | (c) stretch | (d) stretching |
| 9. | (a) a-to-z | (b) about | (c) away | (d) around |
| 10. | (a) returns | (b) return | (c) returned | (d) returning |
| 11. | (a) so | (b) as | (c) because | (d) then |
| 12. | (a) make | (b) create | (c) cause | (d) effect |

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 about the Internet. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. EARTHQUAKES: Research two different earthquakes that happened around the world. Find five differences and five similarities between them. Make a poster using your findings

4. INTERNET LIFE: Write a story about how you could use the Internet to do everything you need to do in your life. Read your story to your classmates in the next lesson. Which story did you like best and why?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

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

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------|
| a. experiencing | facing |
| b. following | after |
| c. linked | joined |
| d. chaos | mess |
| e. region | area |
| f. repair | fix |
| g. stretches | extends |
| h. cause | make |
| i. return | go back |
| j. expensive | costly |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| a. still experiencing | problems |
| b. it broke six of | seven undersea Internet cables |
| c. Mother | Nature |
| d. people could not even use an ATM | to withdraw cash |
| e. markets escaped serious damage as | many traders were on holidays |
| f. Several ships are now on | their way to repair the cables |
| g. the ends of the cables may be buried | or washed away |
| h. move long | distances under the sea |
| i. return | to normal |
| j. make sure as many people | as possible are connected |

GAP FILL:

Internet chaos in Asia

The Internet in Asia is **still** experiencing problems following the earthquake off southern Taiwan last week. Although the quake caused **little** damage to buildings and roads, it broke six of seven undersea Internet cables. As a **result** millions of people in the Asia-Pacific region could not use the Internet. The damaged cables **linked** countries in North and Southeast Asia to **each** other, and to North America and Australia. The powerful magnitude 6.7 quake showed how **easily** Mother Nature can bring chaos to international communication. Banking services **across** the region were badly hit and millions of people could not even use an ATM to withdraw cash. Financial markets escaped serious damage as many traders were on holidays **ahead** of the New Year.

Several ships are now on their **way** to repair the cables. One damaged cable is the North Asian Loop – a 38,000-kilometre link that stretches from South Korea **around** India to Holland. Repairing it could be a very difficult job because the ends of the cables may be buried or washed **away**. Earthquakes can create a lot of damage on the seabed. They can cause things to move **long** distances under the sea. Taiwanese officials have warned it could take **several** days or even a week to fix the problems. This means Internet access across most of Asia will not **return** to normal for a week or so. The cost of repairs for Asian telecommunication companies **could** be half a billion dollars. They are using more expensive satellite technology to make sure as **many** people as possible are connected.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - b 2 - c 3 - d 4 - a 5 - a 6 - b 7 - d 8 - b 9 - c 10 - b 11 - a 12 - a