

# 39 I can understand news journalism

## A Common words in news reports

Amid further **allegations** of a **cover-up**, **sources** at the Home Office refused to comment on claims of a serious **lapse** in security at a nuclear power station.

**D**iscussions about **controversial** new **measures** to control anti-social behaviour are continuing **behind the scenes**.

**A**ccording to figures from a recent **opinion poll**, the government's popularity is falling.

It **emerged** yesterday that the contents of a **scathing** report on Barkfield Hospital have already been **leaked** to the press. The report **quotes** a senior doctor **as saying that ...**

### Glossary

<b>amid (or amidst) sth</b>	while sth else is happening.	<b>behind the scenes</b>	without people's awareness or knowledge ( <b>behind closed doors</b> = in private, not in public).
<b>allegation</b>	a statement, without proof, that sb has done sth wrong.	<b>according to</b>	used for saying where ideas or information have come from.
<b>cover-up</b>	<b>allege v.</b> an attempt to stop people discovering the truth about sth. <b>cover sth up v.</b>	<b>(opinion) poll</b>	a process of asking people for their opinion about sth.
<b>source</b>	<b>OFTEN PL</b> a person who provides information, especially for journalists.	<b>emerge</b>	(of facts, information, etc.) become known. <b>emergence N.</b>
<b>lapse</b>	a small mistake caused by forgetting sth or carelessness.	<b>scathing</b>	strongly critical ( <b>scathing attack/remark</b> ).
<b>controversial</b>	causing angry discussion and disagreement. <b>controversy N.</b>	<b>leak sth to sb</b>	give secret information to journalists or the public. <b>leak N.</b>
<b>measure</b>	an official action taken in order to achieve sth.	<b>quote sb</b>	repeat the exact words that sb said ( <b>quote sb as saying that ...</b> ).

### 1 Complete the dialogues.

- How do you know about this? ~ It was in a recent \_\_\_\_\_ poll.
- How did the man get into the palace? ~ It was a \_\_\_\_\_ in security apparently.
- When did they discover this news? ~ It \_\_\_\_\_ last night.
- Are these talks in public? ~ No, it's all behind closed \_\_\_\_\_.
- Do many people disagree with it? ~ Yes, it's a very \_\_\_\_\_ idea.
- Was she strongly criticized? ~ Yes, it was a \_\_\_\_\_ attack.
- Is there proof the man stole it? ~ No, it's just an \_\_\_\_\_ someone made.
- Is this information accurate? ~ \_\_\_\_\_ to *The Times*, it is.

### 2 Complete the text with suitable words.

(1) \_\_\_\_\_ continuing pressure on the government, information has been (2) \_\_\_\_\_ to the press of a plan to (3) \_\_\_\_\_ up the fact that Britain cannot meet the European Union's renewable energy targets. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ to reliable (5) \_\_\_\_\_ inside Whitehall, officials have informed the government of this fact, and one expert was (6) \_\_\_\_\_ as saying that Britain might only reach 9 per cent by 2020. Meanwhile, discussions are continuing behind the (7) \_\_\_\_\_ to see what (8) \_\_\_\_\_ can be taken to reach the target.



## B Figurative language in news reports

Words connected with *water*, *fire*, *war*, and *sport* are often used figuratively in news reports. For example, if two people are **locked in battle**, it doesn't mean they are literally fighting, but that they are involved in a competition or struggle, e.g. a **legal battle**. These expressions are also called **metaphors**.

Example		Meaning
WATER	<i>There is certain to be <b>a storm of protest</b> over the new legislation.</i>	a situation in which a large number of people express strong feelings against sth.
	<i>Refugees are <b>flooding</b> into the country.</i>	appearing in large numbers at the same time.
	<i>Some people believe the <b>tide is now turning</b> in the government's favour.</i>	the situation and public opinion are changing.
	<i>The opposition has dismissed the money as <b>a drop in the ocean</b>.</i>	a very small amount compared with what is needed.
FIRE	<i>Police fear the arrest of the two youths could <b>spark</b> further trouble.</i>	cause sth to start or develop.
	<i>The ministers have had <b>a blazing row</b>.</i>	a very angry argument.
WAR	<i>The headteacher has <b>come under attack</b>.</i>	been strongly criticized. SYN <b>come under fire</b> .
	<i>The Board of Directors could be next <b>in the firing line</b>.</i>	in a position in which people can criticize and blame you.
SPORT	<i>The minister has got himself into <b>a tight corner</b>.</i>	a difficult situation.
	<i>MPs are now accusing the government of <b>moving the goalposts</b>.</i>	INF unfairly changing the agreed rules or conditions during a course of action.
	<i>There have been accusations of <b>foul play</b>.</i>	behaviour that is unfair or dishonest.
	<i>Trade Union leaders claim they just want <b>a level playing field</b>.</i>	a situation in which everyone has the same opportunities.

### 3 Cross out the incorrect word in each sentence and write the correct word at the end.

- The Prime Minister could be in the shooting line. \_\_\_\_\_
- We sent some money but it's still only a drip in the ocean. \_\_\_\_\_
- There was a thunderstorm of protest. \_\_\_\_\_
- It was an uphill struggle but I think the wave has turned. \_\_\_\_\_
- Tourists are now raining into the town to see the festival. \_\_\_\_\_
- They are demanding a flat playing field. \_\_\_\_\_
- They're upset that the officials keep moving the goalkeeper. \_\_\_\_\_
- The problem is that she has got herself in a very tight bend. \_\_\_\_\_
- The producer resigned after a burning row with the director. \_\_\_\_\_

### 4 Complete the sentences.

- The Prime Minister has come \_\_\_\_\_ for his handling of the affair.
- A vicious attack on two young boys nearly \_\_\_\_\_ a riot earlier this month.
- The takeover was rather suspicious; I think most people suspect \_\_\_\_\_.
- They expected a \_\_\_\_\_ protest when they banned smoking in public places.
- He's made too many mistakes, so now he's got himself in a very \_\_\_\_\_.
- They desperately need aid, but this gift of cash is still only a \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_.

