

Specials p e c i a l s

The aftermath of the grenade attack

THE 21st of August, this year brought with it a brutal massacre of many innocent lives in the grenade attack on the Awami League procession in the Bangabandhu Avenue. Many people lost their lives, while hundreds of others were left injured.

After the grenade blasts, the whole country, shocked at such a heinous crime, went into standstill. The attack terrorized most people. The hospitals were filled with the injured people, suffering from various injuries due to the blasts. Awami League and other political parties went to protest and declared Hartals and other activities. Many people risked their lives and led out processions and rally and voiced their abhorrence towards such an atrocious aggression. The local people also burnt down a few cars and buses to reveal their anger and fury.

During this period of turmoil in the country, most of the educational institutions were declared closed for an uncertain period of time. This was mainly to assure the safety of the lives of the students, because it was neither safe nor possible to come out onto the streets where there was no guarantee of their lives. Some of the political parties and student associations also declared educational strikes in order to show their disapproval of such a deed.

Just as the unstable situation calmed down slightly, a new fear grasped the people, especially the schools. Many schools received bomb threats over the phone, saying that the schools would be blown up if regular classes were held. In one school a bomb shape object was found. Once again the schools were shut down, for an indefinite period.

Due to these sudden closures, the



curriculum of most of the schools were severely disrupted. Most teachers have had to change their lesson planning for which reason the examinations in some schools have been delayed. This has automatically affected the usual holiday schedule. Some schools have even shortened their annual holidays, in order to cover up for the loss. Many schools will remain open even during the month of Ramadan. Some of the schools are holding regular classes on weekends in order to make up for the loss.

Those students, who are going to sit for their exams in a few months, have been

seriously affected. Many of them are very worried and doubtful about whether they will be able to finish their syllabus or not. The students of the public colleges and universities have also been affected in similar ways due to the sudden closure of their institutions.

Though the situation of the country is much more stable now and classes have resumed in the educational institutions, there is still no guarantee that something like this will not happen in the near future. People are living in the constant fear of being bombed. Students have no guarantee about their education.

By Nusrat

Chittagong Chronicles

Bichitra: bright or boring?

WITH so many time consuming things these days, hardly anyone settles down at the end of the day with a good novel, with soft music in the background, and losing oneself in the story. Apparently, today's teens have much better things to do during their free time i.e. cruising around town in their cars, talking to their 'significant other' on the phone for hours, listening to music at full volume, shopping, watching endless TV, etc. the list goes on and on. At Chittagong, reading for pleasure has become a thing of the past. Hardly any major bookstores exist, fully equipped with books that people can read for pleasure.

One of the bookstores that still carries

English novels is 'Bichitra'. Bichitra is currently situated in Katalgong just beside 'Little Jewels School'. Once just a bookstore with a lot of novels and having stock of a few textbooks, Bichitra now caters to almost 95% of the English medium schools of Chittagong with stock of almost any textbook you can think of. Apart from textbooks, they also sell stationery and a multitude of general knowledge books and encyclopedias, with only one shelf committed to books for pleasure reading. They mostly have books in stock by John Grisham and Sidney Sheldon, many older classics, many Archies', books from the Goosebumps series and other books that middle school students will find interesting. When questioned about

why the selection of these books is so limited, the proprietor answered that during this time of the year, school textbooks are in high demand as all the schools open simultaneously.

PROS: Well, if you want any particular textbooks, Bichitra's undoubtedly the place to look. Also an ideal retreat for John Grisham and Sidney Sheldon fans.

CONS: Not the perfect place for people who have a wide taste in novels, and prefer exploring new light hearted and fun writers i.e. Marian Keyes, Cathy Kelly, etc. this is definitely not someplace you'd like to be!

By Jennifer Ashraf

Step Up

To learn foreign languages

GLOBALISATION has made it necessary to learn a foreign language or two besides one's mother tongue for the sake of prospering in business or for the sake of studying abroad. To serve this purpose, a Germany-based international language institute "Sprachforum Heinrich Heine Dhaka", a branch of the Sprachforum Heinrich Heine Düsseldorf, has started their activity in Dhaka since January 2004. Presently, this institute specialises in German language courses, and also offers courses in French, Spanish, Chinese and English.

The German course offers two packages: Basic Level and Intermediate Level. These courses are offered in the mornings, evenings, and on weekends. Each level consists of 200 class hours over a duration of three months, and the course fees are only Tk 4000. The French course also comes in two levels, and consists of 50 class hours at the rate of Tk 2200 per level. The Spanish course offers the same deal as the French course, while the Chinese

course costs Tk 3000 for a 50-hour package. The English classes cover 100 class hours and cost Tk 3000.

The lessons are taught by highly qualified and experienced teachers, who, apart from the mandatory university education, usually have a special university qualification. In the words of Kazi Mamun-ur Rashid, Director of the institute: "Our teachers for the German language have been educated and trained in Germany, and have a teaching experience in German ranging from seven to fifteen years. We believe in an intercultural and communicative approach to teaching, which conforms to the European Framework of Reference for foreign languages. Our approach to teaching is based on the aims and needs of our students."

The finance director Md. Towhid explained that the classes are aimed towards those who are interested in learning a foreign language, but have limited incomes. To ensure the standard of teaching the class size is limited to

fifteen students per group.

Besides the language courses, the students of the institute are also provided with consultancy and apprised of the study in German-speaking countries free of charge.

Starting in October, a branch of this institute will be opened in the port city of Chittagong. For learners from the rest of Bangladesh, one-month full-level crash courses will be available, complete with accommodation and lodging at minimum cost very soon.

In the very near future, Russian, Italian, Japanese, Arabic, Farsi, Hindi, Bengali for foreigners, and many other languages will be introduced for those interested in revving up their résumés.

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By Sajid Akhand

Do it Yourself

Candle making

MANY people have a very unusual hobby of collecting candles of different sizes and shapes. Other just admire them and use them to decorate their rooms. Now, instead of buying candles, you can easily make them at home. You can be creative and choose your own designs and shapes.

Before you make your candles, gather the supplies and tools necessary to make them. You can find these materials in your supermarket, retail stores, and craft stores. Here is a list of supplies:

Wax. You can find this at any store. The best wax for beginners is paraffin wax, which can be found near then canning supplies in your grocery store.

Stearine. You can find this in any craft store with a candle section.

Dye. You can also find this in any craft store.

Scents.

Wicks. You can find these at any craft store near the candle supplies. Buy wax coated wicks for easy burning.

Thermometer

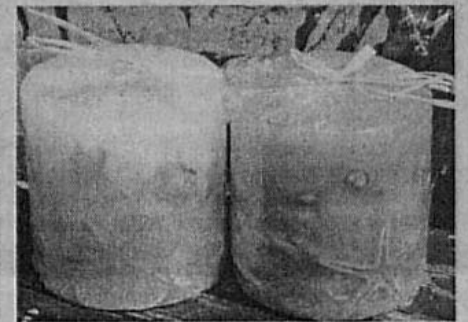
Boiler

Wooden Spoon

Vegetable Oil

Pot Holders

Moulds. You can also find these in any craft store. You can also use household items.



Now that you have gather your supplies, you are now ready to prepare your candles.

Put water in the bottom portion of your double boiler. Then proceed to boil the water.

Break wax into chunks and place in the double boiler. Then proceed to melt.

Place stearine into the wax. This will make the wax darker and harder when it cools. The rule of thumb is three tablespoons per pound.

Coat your mould with vegetable oil. This will make it easier to remove from the mould once hardened. Also tie your wick to a stick or silverware and place wick in the mould.

When the wax reaches a temperature of around 140 degrees Fahrenheit place the dye and/or scent. A cheap alternative to dye is crayons. This step can be skipped if desired.

Pour wax into mould. Allow wax to cool. When the wax cools it will separate from the sides of the container and harden. To speed up this process place in the refrigerator.

Enjoy. Your candle is now ready to use.

[Note: When deciding the shape of your mould do not limit yourself to what you find in your craft department. Use your imagination. You can use many of the items in your household as a mould. Choose any contain that has a wide opening and can handle hot temperature. For example, use a milk container with the top cut off, bowls, or cups.]

Jokes

Real-life home made signs...

On the wall of a Baltimore estate: "Trespassers will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law." — Sisters of Mercy

In a Florida maternity ward: "No children allowed."

In a funeral parlor: "Ask about our layaway plan."

Outside a country shop: "We buy junk and sell antiques."

In the vestry of a New England church: "Will the last person to leave please see that the perpetual light is extinguished?"

In a nonsmoking area, "If we see you smoking, we will assume you are on fire and take appropriate action."

In a dry cleaner's emporium, "Drop your pants here."

In a beauty shop: "Dye now!"

Thomas, Barnes and Roberts divorce specialty law firm: She gets his assets, while his assets at home.

In a podiatrist's window: "Time wounds all heels."

Compiled by Mistress of Legends