

HC asks  
Metro Makers  
to stop  
earth-filling  
**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

The High Court (HC) yesterday asked a real estate developer to stop earth-filling under the Modhumoti Model Town project at Amin Bazar in Savar for the next six months.

Justices Abdul Wahab Miah and Zinat Ara issued an injunction against Metro Makers Limited after Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (Bela) filed a writ petition.

The HC division bench also asked the company to stop running advertisements on plot sales under the project.

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## Violence erupts in Najaf again

GI, Dutch soldier, Ukrainian officer and 8 Iraqis killed in attacks

**AFP, Najaf**

Gunfire boomed across the Iraqi city of Najaf yesterday, a day after the interim government said its offensive against Shi'ite Muslim militiamen would continue in the wake of failed peace talks.

An AFP correspondent heard tank fire and saw smoke rising from the

direction of the cemetery, north of the holy shrine of Imam Ali, which has been a militia stronghold since a spring uprising against foreign troops.

A ceasefire Friday suspended days of fierce fighting between rebel leader Moqtada Sadr's Mehdi Army and a US and Iraqi government forces to allow for negotiations, which broke down the next

day.

Mortar and tank fire, punctuated with machine-gun fire continued into the early afternoon in the Old City.

The area has been sealed off by US forces, who were only allowing people to leave. US soldiers fired warning shots into the air to hurry

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Planning minister's project approval power doubled

**REJAUL KARIM BYRON**

The power of the planning minister in approving development projects has been enhanced and from now on he can okay projects worth Tk 20 crore or less and those involving beyond Tk 20 crore will go to the Executive Committee on National Economic Council (Ecne) for approval.

The process of project paper preparation and approval has to be done in a maximum of 67 days.

The decisions were taken at a planning ministry meeting on simplification of development project formulation, processing and approval at the National Economic Council. Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman presided over the meeting that approved a draft proposal on project formulation and approval. The draft proposal awaits prime ministerial nod before a circular is issued.

Earlier, the planning minister could approve projects worth Tk 10 crore and the time limit for preparing proposals and approving projects was 105 days. However, in some cases, it took the officials even four to five years to finalise project proposals.

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PHOTO: STAR

A security guard checks the bag of an employee before letting him in after a hoax bomb threat sent panic among the staff of the offices in Senakalyan Bhaban in Motijheel yesterday.

HOAX BOMB THREAT  
Senakalyan Bhaban targeted this time

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Senakalyan Bhaban, a Motijheel skyscraper, came under an anonymous bomb threat yesterday, in the recent serial hoax bomb threats, causing panic and a hectic search.

The unknown caller claimed himself as an al-Qaeda member.

The caller phoned at 8:02am informing, "a powerful bomb is going to blow up the building in 25 minutes," said Sergeant Kabirul Haq, guard supervisor of the building.

"As I asked which building and

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**Humayun Azad's body may arrive on Thursday**

**DU CORRESPONDENT**

The body of Professor Humayun Azad is likely to arrive in Dhaka on Thursday.

Azad's wife Latifa Kohinoor has sent a letter to the president of PEN International German chapter requesting a swift transportation of the body of her husband who had died of heart attack in his Munich apartment last Thursday.

Kohinoor solicited the same from German Charge d' Affairs Hermann Nicholai when he paid a condolence visit to the bereaved family at its Fuller Road residence in Dhaka University (DU) campus yesterday afternoon.

Nicholai conveyed his sympathies to the late professor's kin and said the German government would do everything possible for a speediest return of the body.

Azad's family members told the German envoy they did not believe the autopsy report, which cited the

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PHOTO: STAR

German Charge d' Affairs Hermann Nicholai, extreme right, condoles the family of eminent writer and teacher Humayun Azad at their Fuller Road house on Dhaka University campus yesterday.

**Qaeda deadline for Europe expires**  
Group asks fighters to attack all targets in Italy

**REUTERS, Dubai**

A group claiming links to al-Qaeda called on its fighters Sunday to attack "all

targets" in Italy after the group's Aug. 15 deadline for Italian troops to quit Iraq was ignored.

The Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades, in an Internet statement, said Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi was one of its main targets, adding its forthcoming attacks would not stop until "Iraq is secure."

"Today we have declared the start of a bloody war and, by the will of God, the ground will shake beneath the feet of each and every Italian," said the statement.

Its authenticity could not be immediately verified.

"We call on all our cells to hit all targets in Italy and to strike repeatedly and with strength until this government withdraws (its troops) from Iraq. We will not stop until

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**US to donate wheat worth \$5.5m**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

US Ambassador to Bangladesh Harry K Thomas yesterday said US will donate wheat worth \$5.5 million for post-flood rehabilitation and expressed hope that the international community will respond to the United Nations flash appeal launched Thursday.

Emerging from a meeting with Foreign Minister M Morshed Khan yesterday, Thomas told reporters that in addition to the pledge of \$1.3 million assistance to the flood-hit people, the US will provide the wheat through the World Food

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**Prayer Timing**

**August 16**

	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	4-25	5-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-45	5-00
Maghrib	6-38	6-41
Esha	8-00	8-30

Source: Islamic Foundation

**Flood-hit villagers crowd markets for jobs**

**RAFIQ HASAN, back from Daudkandi**

As floodwaters are receding gradually, flood-hit villagers in Daudkandi upazila of Comilla, particularly poor ones, now fear a longer spell of miseries due to lack of jobs.

They are desperately looking for jobs to start life anew as government help and relief from various organisations and individuals would stop after the recession of floods.

Hundreds of people now crowd the village markets and roads every day in search of work to make a living.

Complete recession of water from the low-lying area will take a couple of months more and farming will start after that, creating jobs for them, the

sufferers said.

Fishing is also a major profession of the locals but it will be in full swing only when water recedes further.

The floods left a trail of devastation in almost all villages in the upazila, damaging houses, crops, cattle and poultry and washing away roads and culverts.

"We lost everything in the flood and have survived so far on our small savings and food assistance from the government and various organisations and individuals. Now it will be more difficult for us to survive if we do not get work," said Abdul Mannan of Lalpur, a village located between the rivers Meghna and Gumti.

Many other villagers echoed him.

Laipur, around 10 km from Daudkandi upazila headquarters, is mostly under water till now and country boats are the only mode of transport. This correspondent reached the village by an engine boat on Friday.

Harunur Rashid, former chairman of Mazidpur union parishad, said there was hardly any house in the village that was not submerged by floodwater. All the 18 villages in the union have been affected by the flood.

The villagers also suffered huge losses because fish from big ponds and fish farms escaped as they went under water. He estimated the loss

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