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## Plots on to oust govt since takeover

That's why they had to join JS, says Khaleda, proposes ban on student politics

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia informed the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday they have foiled "many conspiracies aimed at toppling this government" since it assumed office eight months ago.

"Timely and appropriate actions frustrated all their (opposition's) intrigues. That is why they (opposition) had to join the parliament session (last week). But the conspirators are still active," she said as she came down heavily on the main opposition party, the Awami League (AL).

Winding up a general discussion in the House on the proposed national budget for next fiscal, the prime minister also accused the opposition party of 'continuing its attempts' by holding secret meetings with retired army officials and civil servants.

"I would like to warn that no conspirator will be spared, no matter how powerful one is or whatever position one holds. We have meantime uprooted many of them," she said, warning of stern legal action against such people.

In her 48-minute speech, Khaleda proposed a ban on student politics to free the campuses from violence. "Time has come to decide on politics by students and teachers to save our education system," she said and sought the opposition's cooperation in this regard.

"Let us put our heads together and decide how to free the educational

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Prime Minister Khaleda Zia addressing the budget session at the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

PHOTO: PID

## Budget balanced before getting JS nod

Duty on computer lifted, reconditioned car import on, retail VAT remains same, new tax on banks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman yesterday brought some changes to his tax proposals for the next fiscal while winding up the discussion on the proposed budget in the Jatiya Sangsad.

He claimed, "Taking the global recession into consideration the revenue collection proposals were considered as courageous and epoch-making steps in the comprehensive analysis."

Saifur has withdrawn his proposed customs duty on computer and accessories, lifted ban on reconditioned vehicles for two years and set stringent conditions for the import of those, reduced annual VAT for small shops and also retail VAT to

existing 1.5 per cent from the proposed 2.25 per cent.

He also brought down minimum payable income tax but kept the lowest slab at Tk 75,000. The finance minister also imposed new taxes on a few items.

According to the final revision, the minister has withdrawn 7.5 per cent import duty on computer and accessories but introduced the earlier three per cent advance income tax (AIT) and made pre-shipment inspection (PSI) mandatory for import of those.

Also the minister lifted ban on import of reconditioned vehicles but only for the next two financial years and slapped stringent conditions for import of the item for what he said 'to check irregularities'.

The minister also imposed 10 per cent supplementary duty on reconditioned vehicles between 1350cc and 1649 cc for what he said 'to check massive fall in the revenue due to massive reduced duty structure'. But, the new cars between that range will be exempted from this

duty. Revising the tax measures, Saifur reduced annual VAT for the small shops within city corporation areas to Tk 4,200 from the proposed Tk 5,400 and for the shops outside the city corporation areas to Tk 3,000

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## Rift in gas committee over reserve estimate

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The national committee on gas reserve headed by BUET Vice-chancellor Prof. Nooruddin Ahmed yesterday finalised its report, but two of the committee members refused to sign it.

The report put the country's gas reserves at between 12 trillion cubic feet (TCF) and 15.5 TCF.

But two of the members of the committee -- Prof. Obaed Ullah, chairman of the Geology Department of Dhaka University, and Dr Khalilur Rahman of Jahangirnagar University, differed on the reserves assessment.

They observed that the committee did not use the assessment methodology outlined in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the committee.

They argue that the proven gas reserve was around 7 TCF and the committee should not show prospective gas finds as 'proven gas reserve'.

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## Fancy finale!

REUTERS, Yokohama

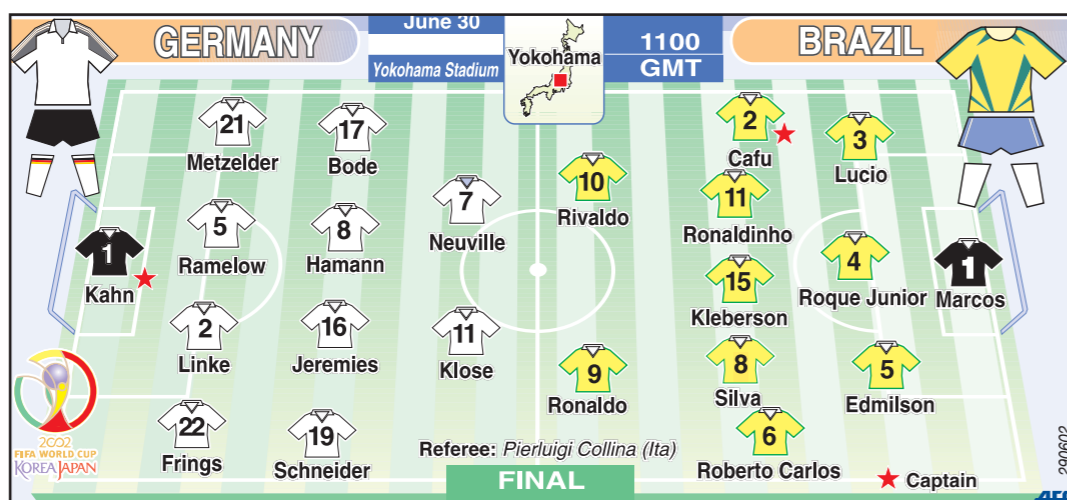
When Germany and Brazil's players shake hands and wish each other luck before today's World Cup final, no-one would be surprised if they all admitted to each other: "Well, fancy seeing you here."

For despite winning the World Cup seven times between them, and despite this being the seventh final for both countries, neither was really expected to make it this far.

World champions France and pre-tournament favourites

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## Grameen Match Report



## Hasina calls it a regressive budget

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Leader of the Opposition in the Jatiya Sangsad and AL President Sheikh Hasina yesterday offered some specific pro-poor budgetary measures, reiterating that opposition lawmakers were not allowed enough time in the parliament to discuss the proposed national budget for 2002-03.

Her suggestions however came only a few hours before the Jatiya Sangsad was scheduled to pass the budget last night.

The AL MPs on Wednesday walked out of the parliament protesting insufficient time allocation for them to discuss the budget in the House.

Speaking at a press conference at a city hotel yesterday, Hasina came down heavily on the first fiscal budgetary proposal of the new government that, she noted, has endorsed a 'regressive' taxation policy favouring the rich and neglecting the poor.

She alleged that the government designed an 'anti-people' budget to destroy the country's economy for creating an excuse to export gas.

Hasina demanded the lowest ceiling of taxable annual income to be increased to Tk 1,25,000 from the proposed Tk 75,000.

She also proposed a minimum income tax of Tk 1000 as well as a 10 per cent tax on incomes of up to Tk 1,50,000, a 20 per cent tax on incomes between Tk 1,50,000 and Tk 2,50,000 and a 25 per cent tax on incomes over Tk 2,50,000.



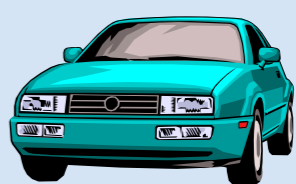
Sheikh Hasina

Hasina said the tax slabs that the finance minister proposed would give tax relief to the rich at the expense of the poor.


Criticising the finance minister's proposal for unconditional accep

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### BUDGET AMENDMENTS




**RECONDITIONED CARS**  
 & Ban withdrawn for 2 years  
 & 4-year old cars allowed  
 & 10% supplementary duty for 1350-1649CC vehicles




**SHOPS**  
 Minimum annual VAT of Tk 5400 for shops in city corporations reduced to Tk 4,200. Minimum Tk 3,600 for non-city corporation reduced to Tk 3,000



**INCOME TAX**  
 Lowest slab of Tk75,000 remains, but lowest tax reduced to Tk 1,200 from the proposed Tk 2,400. Highest slab lowered to Tk 6.25 lakh from proposed Tk 9.75 lakh



**COMPUTER**  
 Import duty withdrawn, but 3% AIT imposed, plus PSI made mandatory



**CIGARETTES**  
 Supplementary duty on imported cigarettes set at 350% from 250%. Supplementary duty on locally produced cigarettes increased by 5%

## INSIDE TODAY

**Article 4**  
 Bush's ME peace plan unduly favours Israel  
 Column: Spotlight on Middle East  
 Muslehuddin Ahmad

**Law and our Rights 6**  
 Let human rights dictate the terms of arrest, detention and police remand; and The Daily Star dialogue on arrest and police remand

## Pacy Turkey third

AFP, TAEGU, South Korea

Turkey took advantage of slack defending and scored the fastest goal in World Cup history here yesterday on the way to beating co-hosts South Korea 3-2 to claim third place in the competition.

The South Koreans, who had eliminated Portugal, Italy and Spain on the way to becoming the first Asian side ever to reach the semi-finals, flopped on their final showing in the competition they have co-hosted with Japan.

And it meant that Dutch coach Guus Hiddink bowed out with a second straight loss in the playoff match having been in charge of Holland four years ago when they were defeated by Croatia.

He is now expected to return to club management, reportedly with PSV Eindhoven.

"I don't know what the future brings but I like to be working on the pitch every day with players. That's why I am considering my future. Nothing is definite or settled yet," said Hiddink, who has transformed the Koreans in 18 months.

"I'm very happy to have worked here. I would have liked to get third place. But we made some big mistakes in the first half in defence," he added.

Turkish coach Senol Gunes, who pointed out his side had to play Brazil twice and both co-hosts to come so far, was delighted with his men's achievements.

"My team gave the Turkish people hope and happiness. It will be the meeting of two lovers tomorrow," when the team return to Istanbul, he smiled.

"We came here with pride and we

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## DHL Spec Report