



# The Daily Star

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**INFLATION EASES**  
Overall rate fell by 0.17 percentage point to 7.22 percent in October  
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**ASHRAFUL DROPPED**  
Ex-national skipper is not picked for first Test against West Indies  
PAGE 16

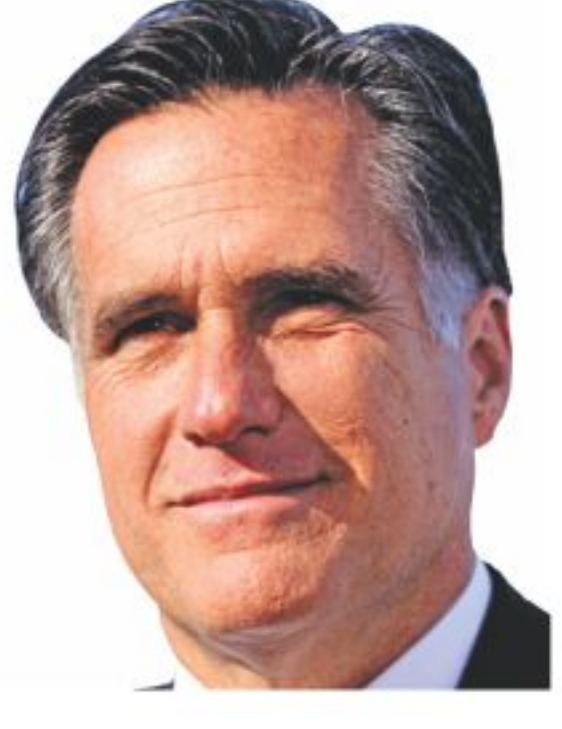
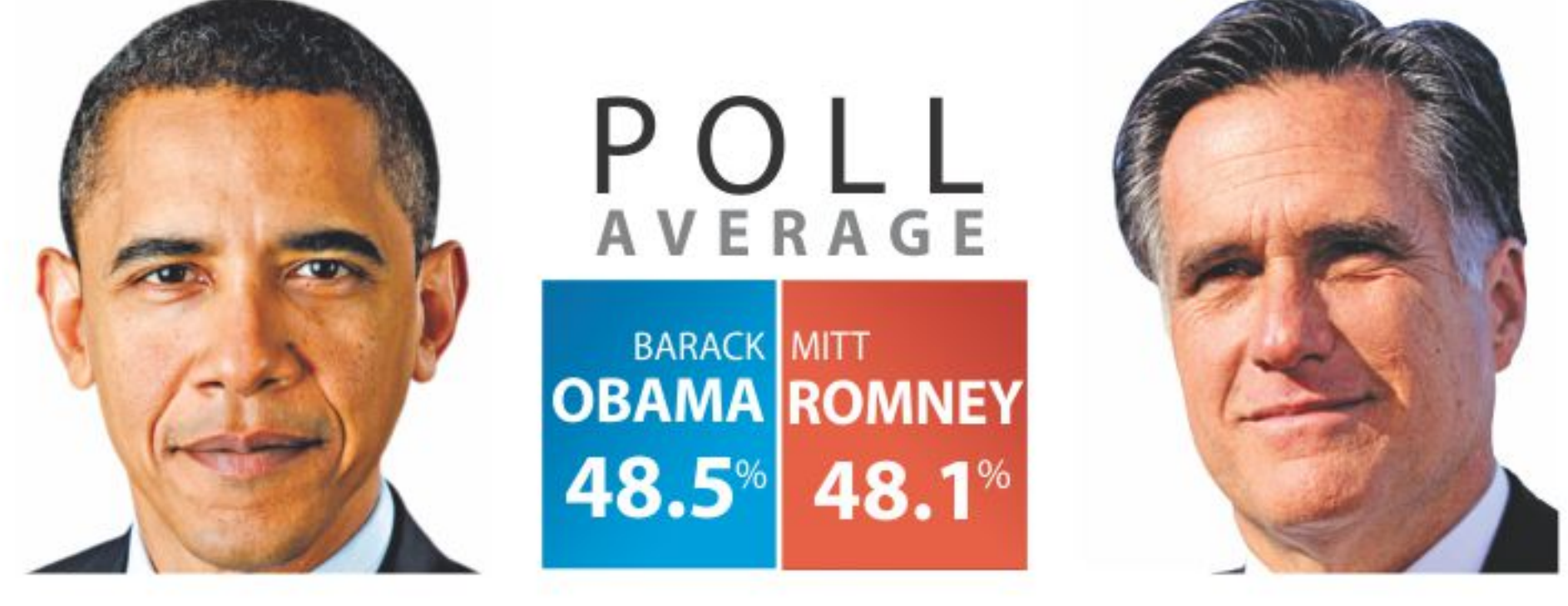
**ARAFAT EXHUMATION**  
A Swiss laboratory team visits the West Bank city of Ramallah  
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## America decides today

Obama, Romney in last-minute campaign for presidency

AGENCIES

After four nationally televised debates, two political conventions, hundreds of speeches, one devastating hurricane, and the expenditure of an estimated \$2 billion -- most of it on nasty, negative, and mendacious television ads -- the 2012 US presidential campaign finally comes to a close today.



President Barack Obama and Republican

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MORE ON PAGE 7  
ELECTORAL MAP ON PAGE 19

A brief tale of elections past

SYED BADRUL AHSAN

America's presidential election today promises to be unpredictable, despite the fact that Barack Obama is ever so slightly ahead. You can be sure that neither the incumbent nor the challenger, Mitt Romney, will be able to sleep before voting begins or until it ends. One of them will lose.

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## Pundits predict

BBC ONLINE

Two pundits prepared to stick their neck out and predict results in the swing states both foresee a win for Barack Obama. Larry Sabato's Crystal Ball, a website run by the University of Virginia's Centre for Politics, gives Obama 290 electoral college votes -- 20 more than the 270 required to win -- while Nate Silver at the New York Times' FiveThirtyEight blog envisages Obama taking 307 votes.

There are conservative pundits who predict quite the opposite. One, Dick Morris, a former Democrat, foresees Mitt Romney picking up 325 electoral college votes. George Will of the Washington Post, puts Romney on 321. Meanwhile, from the liberal camp, Josh Marshall's

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## Factbox

One of the world's largest electoral exercises in the world gets underway today when 169 million American voters go to the polls to choose a president, a new House of Representatives, 33 senators and thousands of local officials at a whopping cost of \$6 billion.

**Key facts:**  
• There are 169 million registered voters, 86 million Democrat and 55 million Republican and 28

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## SONALI SCAM ACC quizzes Gautam

SAJJADUR RAHMAN

Facing grilling by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Gautam Kumar Mitra yesterday denied his involvement in the embezzlement of Tk 71 crore from the Agargaon branch of Sonali Bank. He pocketed the amount in the same way Tanvir Mahmud of Hall-Mark Group embezzled Tk 2,686 crore from the state owned bank by opening inland letters of credit (ILC) and later selling those to other banks.

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## GRENADE ATTACK 2004 Then PM didn't let DGFI launch probe

Ex-DGFI boss Rumi says Khaleda asked him not to proceed, Hannan told intelligence men about involvement of Tarique, Babar

CHAITANYA CHANDRA HALDER



Khaleda Zia as prime minister did not allow the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence chief to investigate the August 21 grenade assaults in 2004. Maj Gen (ret) Sadik Hasan Rumi, the then DGFI director general, said this

before a Dhaka court yesterday during his deposition as the 65th prosecution witness of the cases filed in connection with the attacks. Judge Shaheed Nuruddin of Speedy Trial Tribunal-1 recorded Rumi's nearly one-and-a-half

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## Bangladesh joins Asem

PM attends 52-nation meeting in Laos

BSS, Vientiane

Bangladesh has formally joined the 52-nation Asia-Europe Meeting (Asem) devoted to building up cooperation between Asia and Europe on political, economic and social issues.

The induction of Bangladesh happened

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PHOTO ON PAGE 5

## Jamaat activists clash with cops

54 policemen among 260 hurt across the country; more than 120 held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

At least 260 people, 54 of them policemen, were injured as Jamaat-Shibir men fought pitched battles with law enforcers in Dhaka and 10 other districts in the country yesterday.

The clashes began as police intercepted the processions that the Jamaat-e-Islami and Islami Chhatra Shibir activists brought out in the capital and elsewhere demanding the immediate release

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PHOTOS ON PAGE 20

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