

Letters will only be considered if they carry the writer's full name, address and telephone number (if any). The identity of the writers will be protected. Letters must be limited to 300 words. All letters will be subject to editing.

**Worldwide poverty**  
I very much enjoyed the article by Abdul Bayes, Professor of Economics at Jahangirnagar University, on poverty traps. We in the United States are watching the middle class consumers dropping into the poverty ranks. Americans are losing their homes and their jobs and the situation is becoming most unpleasant.

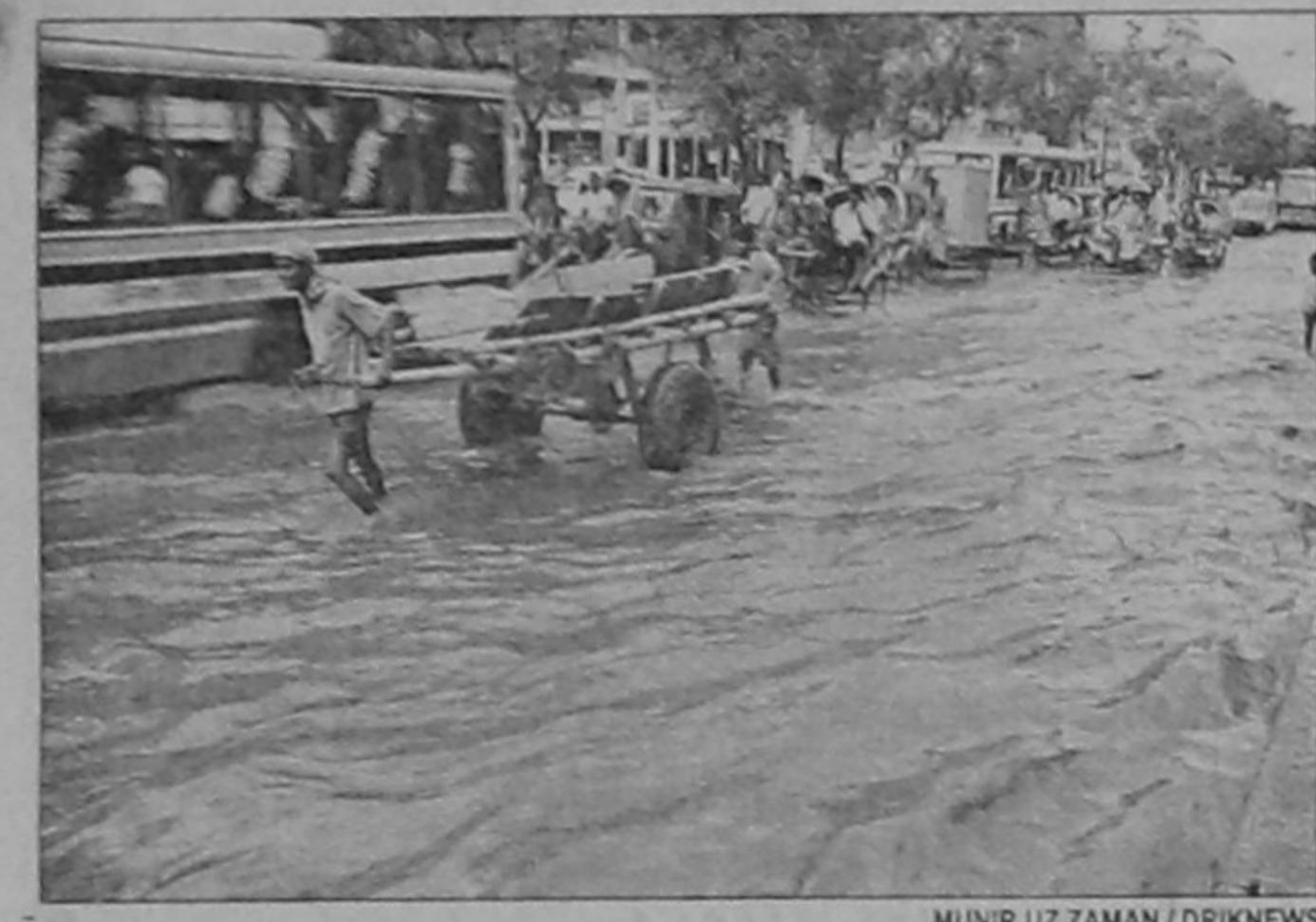
Around the world people look to Americans as rich, but the ordinary Americans are becoming poorer by the minute. They will soon be referred to as the "poor Americans". Many Americans are leaving the United States and seeking employment in other countries.

We need to assume the basic responsibilities to the poor. We as people of the world need to be humane and show compassion. Anyone can become poor. But we must all stand up and stop this trend.

I am going through all the newspapers in the world to learn how each country is working to reduce poverty. Denmark is the leading country doing the best job in this area. We can look to them for examples and learn from their guidance.

Tamra d'ippolito  
Bloomington  
Indiana  
USA

## Water logging



It is a sheer disappointment to see the water logging of Dhaka city after rain. It makes me wonder whether our engineers are aware of the fact that one of the most important design considerations of road construction is drainage. This is needed to remove water efficiently from the surface of the roads to provide a safe passage for all vehicles and pedestrians. Drainage of rainwater minimizes road maintenance cost and hence maximizes the operational lifetime of the roads. It is a simple math.

I live in a city where annual rainfall is only 3 to 4 inches and it gets hardly any downpour. Still, all the roads and highways were built with drainage underneath the road.

I am sure many of our engineers already have training from developed countries on road construction and they know that the drainages are built along with the roads and highways. This is totally absent in construction of roads and highways in Bangladesh. The top bosses simply surrender to the nature as if this is the fate of the people of the country and nothing can be done about it.

Mamun Ahmed  
Las Vegas, NV, USA

### Missing children

I have been living in Pallabi for the last 7 years. It is my finding that missing child is a serious problem in Mirpur & Pallabi areas. It is for your information that on an average I have heard mike announcements for missing child every week in the last seven years.

I have no idea if the incidents are reported to the police. I think there is a very strong and organised group active in Mirpur/Pallabi area to kidnap or steal those children. As we all know, mostly low income people live in those areas.

I would like to appeal to the authorities concerned to look into this matter. If a proper investigation is done, you can easily find out the facts about missing children.

We all know that a huge number of minors are being sold or smuggled to other countries by the organised crime syndicates.

The matter should not be ignored any more. Please show due sensitivity to children.

Mohammad Nazakat Ali  
Pallabi, Mirpur Share Egara  
Dhaka

### Upazila elections

The government is holding the upazila elections before parliamentary elections. It is one of the good initiatives by the military backed caretaker government. But the political parties have opposed the plan. Their attitude is undemocratic. The local government is constitutionally non-partisan.

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