



## ZAHHEER HUSSAIN says that many people have adopted habitual begging and are manipulating it through an organised network

**I**n the past decade, due to unequal distribution of economy and resources, the ratio of poverty, unemployment and crime rate has been on the rise. The growing poverty has forced people to put an end to their life and many cases of suicide due to unemployment and poverty has been reported in the last few years. Perhaps due to fast increasing poverty or something else, the tendency towards beggary has risen

acutely and our streets, bazars, markets and busy places are swarming with male, female and minor beggars. You go anywhere- a shopping point, an eatery, a hotel etc., you will be set by a horde of beggars. They are not one or two but innumerable, and if you put off one, another will be there. If you happen to park your car or bike outside a hotel or shop, small children in tatters will instantly appear and start dusting your car and after two or three swishes, they will extend their hand asking for

alms. Sometimes, I happen to take my family to nearby market for some refreshment and a brief outing. When we are quaffing cold drinks or having *chaat* or *Dahi Bhalley*, a number of male or female cadgers would readily approach and solicit us to buy some petty items or dole out something in the name of Allah. It puts me off so much that sometimes I prefer to remain home and fetch eatables to avoid the constant disturbance created by the pesky moochers.

Through the above-described lines I do not aim to establish myself a hard-core merciless beggar-enemy who shuns those who beg in the name of Allah. Being a Muslim I regard myself an all-time beggar who begs the mercy and bounty of Allah, the Beneficent. I am a follower of the Prophet (PBUH) who maintained in his Hadith, "Hand out alms to a beggar even if he comes to you riding a horse." I am a devotee of Ali (AS) who gave away his meal for three consecutive days,

B  
e  
suffered I  
condemn  
my mode  
certain ar  
the deser  
ing to my  
But, the I  
somethir  
encourag  
beggars,  
scourge  
intently  
sional b  
are you  
looking  
a lot of  
some m  
business  
begging  
beggar  
sufferin  
themse  
collect  
from th  
supers  
years,  
for luc  
numb  
idealists  
stoics  
exact  
trains  
cards  
of the  
Some  
tion t  
ask f

# Beggars beggars everywhere!

— Social Problems  
10.08.200  
The Nation

suffered hunger but did not condemn the mendicant. From my modest income I allow a certain amount of money to the deserving people according to my capacity and status. But, the help of have-nots is something quite different from encouraging professional beggars, and supporting the scourge of beggary. If you intently observe the professional beggars, among them are young girls with good-looking appearance, who earn a lot of money every day and some manipulate sleazy business under the pretext of begging. There are young male beggar without any bodily suffering or defect who garb themselves as *dervish* and collect a fair amount of money from the credulous and superstitious people. For a few years, there has been a craze for lucky bond numbers and number-crazy people have idealised these self-styled stoics for the prediction of exact lucky number. In our trains, young girls distribute cards which bear a short story of their so-called tribulations. Some minutes after distribution they collect the cards and ask for some money. This

procedure adopted by girls to collect alms is certainly ridiculous. In bazars, and other busy places, mutilated, physically defected and abnormal persons are frequently seen, worthy of our attention and help, but it is bitterly interesting to know that these dismembered or naturally abnormal persons are governed by big wigs who daily collect alms from them and use them as tool to manipulate their begging business. Professional beggars have adopted beggary as their ancestral profession and the son or daughter of a beggar must be a beggar. All this shows a very ugly aspect of our society, the prime reason of which is the ignorance of our masses and the inactive role of our administration.)

Another very painful and shameless aspect of this scenario is that our professional almsmen show brazen effrontery in begging alms from foreigners and outlanders. Whenever they catch sight of a foreign tourist or outlandish person, they beset him and ravaging the honour and prestige of the country, carry out every possible derogatory

effort to elicit alms from him. I personally witnessed minor beggars running after a Japanese on The Mall road, while the Japanese throwing hem away with utmost embarrassment. Thank God, Administration have imposed a ban on begging from foreigners and now such an ugly practice is not seen on The Mall at least.

So far as, the concept of beggary in Islam is concerned, Islam does not recommend the curse of beggary in any shape. Islam has commended the noble deed of generosity as it exhorts the spirit of help and support of have-nots, but, on the other hand, a number of Ahadith describe the condemnation of beggary and alms-seeking. According to a famous tradition, when a person approached the Holy Prophet (SAW) for alms, he advised him to cut woods with axe and sell it in the market. When he did accordingly, the Prophet (PBUH) recommended his deed of working with hands rather begging. Another well-known Hadith describes that the upper hand (the granting one) is better than the lower (the begging

one).

It is responsibility of the government to fight the scourge of poverty which has compelled the poor masses to demean themselves to fill their stomach. On one hand government is not serious to check the unjustified distribution of economy which is making the rich more affluent while driving the poor into quagmire of poverty deeper. On the other hand our rapidly growing population is reducing our source and magnifying the severity of the problem. Poverty is the mother of all ills and whenever hunger irritates, a person is forced to sell out the corpse of his honour for some rupees. However, the people who have adopted habitual begging and are manipulating this profession through an organised net-work, maligning the dignity of society must be taken to task and meted out severe punishment.

I pray to Allah, the Beneficent to grant us the ability to earn our living with honour and handwork and let our hands spread before none but the Allah Almighty. ■