That is definitely maintaining double standards. But the following news item will reassure your belief that Bangladesh has come a long way when it comes to standards. This appeared in The Times of India on 27 July. Daniel P George wrote from Chennai under (would you believe?) "Indians head to Gulf in 'begging' season"

"It's more than a fortnight since the month of Ramzan began and a regular stream of Indians has been heading to the Gulf countries, literally with begging bowls in hand. Reason: This is the time when alms (zakat) are given generously.

"The huge money that can be made is a powerful magnet. Each beggar makes nearly Rs 6 lakhs in the 30-day period, while the 'take' on Fridays can be as much as Rs 5,000, say officials.

"Mohammad Amjad, 41, of Bihar, now in the UAE, said he made Rs 13,000 in the first two days of the holy month. The money is sent home through 'hawala' operators as people on visit visas cannot hold bank accounts.

"A fortnight before Ramzan begins, says an emigration official, word is spread that agents are looking for people to travel to the Gulf. The amount charged varies from Rs 75, 000 in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to a little more than Rs 1 lakh in Tamil Nadu."

"In Tamil Nadu, especially in places such as Rameswaram, Kilakarai, Kumbakonam, Chidambaram and Vellore, agents arrange 'packages', including air tickets, visas and accommodation, for around Rs 1.25 lakh."

"The fact that begging is illegal all over the Gulf and those caught face hefty fines and jail terms has not acted as a deterrent. About 57 Indian beggars have been arrested in Saudi Arabia and 29, including many women, picked up in Dubai since July 10 when Ramzan began. All of them entered the UAE on visit visas.

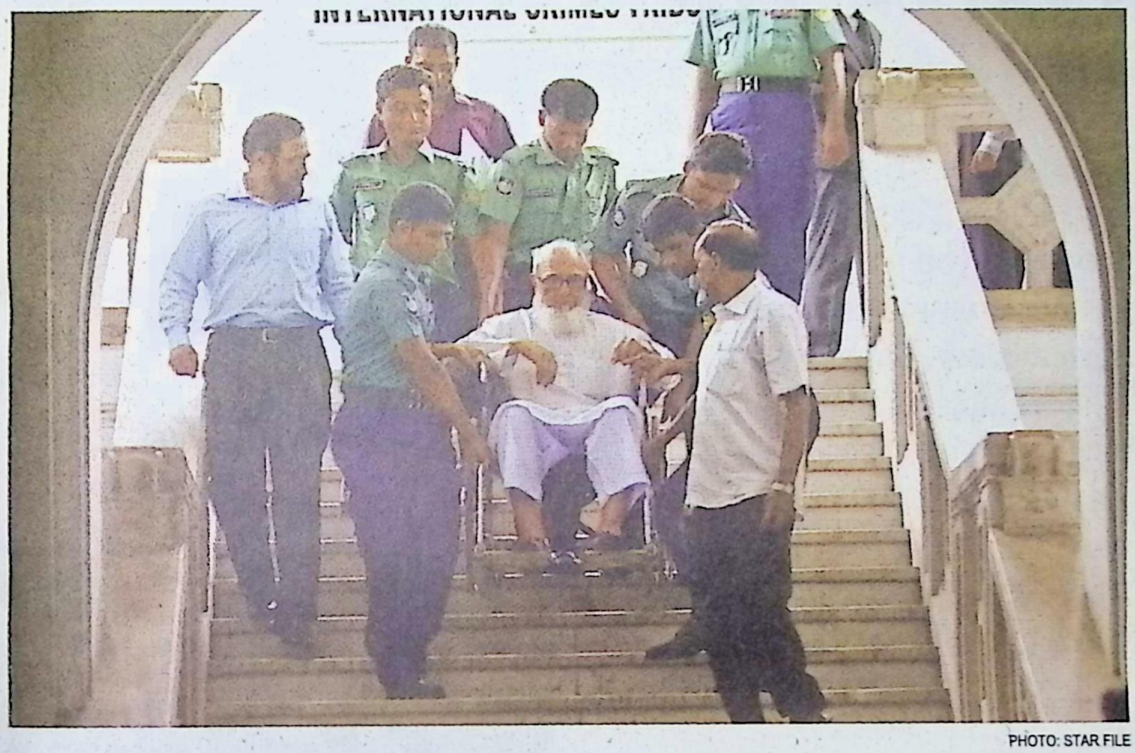


PHOTO: STAR FILE

"As many as 20 police patrols have been deployed in Dubai as part of the annual anti-begging campaign. Similar arrangements have been rolled out in Abu Dhabi and Sharjah. In 2012, nearly 650 beggars were arrested in Dubai, one-third of them during Ramzan. Bahrain, Muscat and Qatar are preferred 'destinations' during Ramzan."

"Every year, hundreds of Indians, Pakistanis, Sudanese and Africans travel to the Gulf on such visits, with those from India and Pakistan forming the majority. Immigration officials at Chennai airport say they see familiar faces leaving the city at the beginning of each Ramzan and returning home after Eid." (End of news item)

The fact is this seasonal begging business is not any Bangladeshi's cup of tea. We got the middle-east to seek our fortunes by the sweat of our brow. Our workers have been mistreated, our workers have been deceived, and our workers have been short-changed in the Arab world. But we do not export beggars.