

100 held in Sharjah for begging, hawking

Colonel Mohammad Rashid Byat, director of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) at Sharjah Police, told Gulf News that police have intensified the campaign against beggars and illegal residents which was launched last week

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Sharjah: Police have arrested 100 illegal residents, including 79 beggars, during the first five days of Ramadan, a senior official said on Sunday.

Colonel Mohammad Rashid Byat, director of Criminal Investigation Department (CID) at Sharjah Police, told *Gulf News* that police have intensified the campaign against beggars and illegal residents which was launched last week.

"The inspection campaign will continue for the next few weeks and is also targeting street vendors. In the first five days of Ramadan, we arrested 79 beggars in various residential areas that comprised Arab and Asian men and women," said Col Byat.

He said the majority of female beggars would target villas and apartments, and would go door-to-door asking for charity. Col Byat urged residents, particularly housewives, not to open the door to strangers or sympathise with beggars because it will only encourage them to continue begging.

Among those arrested were street vendors who were found selling products without a trade licence along the city's busy roads, squares and subways.

Col Byat also noted that the street vendors were either infiltrators or were violating the residency law.

"Some of the street vendors were selling products used for personal hygiene, but the goods posed a danger," he said.

Contact

Residents are urged to notify the police about beggars in their neighbourhood by calling the number 999 or 06 5623322.

Al Ain: Campaign stepped up

Al Ain police has stepped up its drive against begging, arresting an Asian who was seeking alms from people pretending to be the seller of paintings inscribed with Quranic verses.

The elderly man was arrested in the industrial area of Hili district during a surprise inspection of the locality. The preliminary investigations have revealed that the person had entered the country on a visit visa and had Dh941 and a mobile phone, said the police, adding that legal action will be against him.

Colonel Hamad Ajlan Al Amimi, Director of Al Ain Police, said the police has stepped its efforts to curb the menace of begging in the eastern region of Abu Dhabi from the very first day of Ramadan.

Al Ain police had arrested 14 beggars in the first six months of this year, while 91 were held last year, 128 in 2008, and 140 in 2007.

Lieutenant Colonel Mohammad Suhail Al Rashidi, Deputy Director of Al Ain Police, said special inspection teams have been formed to control begging. Plainclothes members of the inspection teams will be visiting different areas of the city to keep a close eye on the beggars.

— *Aftab Kazmi, Bureau chief*

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