

GLOBAL NEWS



USA TAXI “REFUSALS”

A Chicago federal judge has dismissed a 50-year-old taxi driver’s lawsuit against the city, but the driver has told The Globe’s US correspondent that he plans to continue to fight the ordinance requiring cabbies to pick up all customers in the neighbourhoods they service.

The judge dismissed cabby Steve Weinberg’s lawsuit, saying it failed to show constitutional grounds. Mr Weinberg, representing himself in court, filed the lawsuit last May against the City and Consumer Services dept claiming the ordinance had violated his constitutional rights. He has been driving a cab at night for 17 years, mainly on Chicago’s notorious South Side and was carjacked by an armed man last March. He claimed that prompted him to take a stand for the safety of taxi drivers and not pick up anyone he considered looked “risky.”

A spokeswoman for the city’s Department of Consumer Services said the ordinance was designed to prevent taxi drivers and taxi companies from discriminating against people and certain communities.

“More than 500 complaints for refusal of service were filed against Chicago cab drivers last year,” a city spokeswoman told Taxi Globe, “that isn’t a cab service. Perhaps Mr Weinberg should consider working elsewhere. Chicago is a big city.”

FLAUTED IN OZ

Although there are undoubtedly many good taxi drivers out in Oz, Sydney Symphony flautist Alison Mitchell didn’t strike one, though she must have been sorely tempted! Returning home from a part holiday / part concert trip to Sri Lanka, she shared a taxi with a colleague from the airport. He got out first and paid his share of the fare.

Arriving at her house, the taxi driver demanded the full fare again. When she refused, he launched into a one-sided shouting match. When Alison’s husband came outside to investigate, the driver took off – together with her £9,000 handmade flute, a hand-held computer, her camera and music! She has still not recovered any of the items...!

INDIAN ‘OLD BANGERS’ ROLLED OUT AS ‘HERITAGE TAXIS’

The adage that old is gold holds true even today. An Indian Government’s decision to make use of vintage cars as heritage taxis may pay dividends in attracting foreign as well as domestic tourists!

It will be a unique experience to go for sightseeing in Rajasthan in the heritage taxis. The Transport Department of Rajasthan Government has given permission to Mr Abdul Hameed, owner of five vintage cars, to ply three vehicles as heritage taxis.

Mr Hameed told Taxi Globe: “I am thrilled after getting the approval of the transport department to run my three cars as heritage taxis. It is a dream come

true as I have been fighting for it this past decade. I will drive myself as I keep my vintage cars like family members.” Tourism Secretary, Lalit Panwar was optimistic about the success of the new idea. “I feel that vintage cars have become showpieces in the garages of the owners and the Government’s decision would prove a blessing in disguise for them. I am confident that these heritage taxis will automatically boost tourism.”

Mr Hameed said he was using three cars. The Ford (1930), Dodge(1938) and Erskine(1926). He added: “When I drive these cars, some of the foreign tourists show their desire to touch them. Some call them old bangers, but I know different.”

JAPANESE TAXI PASSENGER SUICIDE

Taxi Globe has heard of a disturbing story where the passenger in a Japanese taxi stabbed and killed the driver and then did the same thing to himself – although unlike the driver, he did not die. The taxi driver, who lived in Oita, died in hospital about an hour after the brutal attack but managed to tell police that there was no reason for the stabbing and that he did not know the passenger. That passenger, a 19-year-old university student who also lived locally, suffered multiple stab wounds. Police said he was found collapsed some 200 meters away from the taxi with the kitchen knife he had used on the driver stuck into his own neck. His injuries are not life threatening and police plan to arrest him on murder charges when he recovers.

RING YOURSELF TO CATCH A THIEF...

A man who robbed a German taxi driver, stealing his mobile phone and then running off without paying the fare, was arrested after the quick-thinking driver called his own phone. Police attending the injured driver, whose arm had been broken in a struggle with the thief, could not see any sign of the man, but when the driver suggested calling his own phone, the officers spread out in the area and one heard the phone ring and discovered the robber hiding in bushes!

A Berlin court heard that the robber had told the taxi driver his friend would pay for the journey across town, but that the driver did not believe him. The judge sentenced the man to two years and nine months in prison. And he wasn’t allowed to take a phone with him!



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