

TAXI
GLOBE



WARNERS
GROUP PUBLICATIONS P.C.
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Tel 01707 272305

PRINTERS

Cumbrian Newsprint, Cumbria

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On 12th August at Southwark Crown Court an uninsured minicab driver, together with two of his colleagues who tried to cover up their company's role in a fatal car crash in the City, were jailed. The judge described the crash as a "horrific and tragic collision, with profound consequences". Relatives of the woman who died in the accident say they hope no other family "experience the same type of unnecessary loss". Delwar Hussain, the driver aged 31 from West Kilburn, was not licensed by

A CLASSIC ICON

When the Beijing Olympic flame was extinguished, a major initiative began by Think London, the foreign direct investment agency for London. Aimed to encourage Chinese businesses to invest in London before the next Olympics starts, the initiative began with a launch event at the Red Sandalwood Museum in Beijing, which saw a branded London taxi setting off for a three month tour of 12 Chinese cities, taking the message to companies that London is open for business and the ideal location for Chinese companies wishing to globalise. Michael Charlton, Chief Executive of Think London, said: "By the time the Olympic flame is re-ignited in London in 2012 we want to have brought 30 new Chinese companies to the capital. There is a tremendous history of co-operation between the UK and China, and London represents a wealth of opportunity for Chinese companies. Growth in London is forecast at \$80bn over the next four years with the Olympics contributing \$8bn. The London Taxi which has been donated by LTI, SLTI and Geely, represents the way London and China can work together, and we are



delighted that this symbol of business partnership, and of London, will be visiting so many Chinese cities."

Deloitte will be sponsoring the Road to London and Think London's primary partner is the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade. Mayor Boris Johnson said: "This taxi, a classic London icon, carries a personal message from me that we want Chinese businesses looking to expand overseas to call us in London first to see what magnificent opportunities our capital offers, both as a great place to operate and access western markets, as well as a great place for overseas staff to live."

ILLEGAL MINICAB TRIO JAILED

the PCO and was uninsured when he picked up a Danish family in the Paddington area last November. It was in the early hours of the morning and three generations of the Rask family were on their way to catch an early flight home to Denmark after a holiday in England.

Despite not having the appropriate insurance and insufficient seats, Hussain took the family of three adults and two young children in his "minicab". The three year old sat on her mother's lap as there was no child seat. Hussain's minicab pulled in front of a truck on Bishopsgate and the vehicles crashed into each other. The impact left one of the passengers, Toyoko Rask, a 66-year-old grandmother, with fatal injuries. Her 3-year-old grand-daughter suffered severe facial injuries and her 6-month-old baby brother a fractured skull. Hussain pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing to Careless Driving, Fraud by False Representation, and No Insurance. Imprisoning Hussain for 12 months, Judge Geoffrey Rivlin QC, said the sentence should be a deterrent to "spell out to unlicensed drivers that it will be imprisonment." City of London Police carried out a search at the offices of the company

the family had booked the cab with, Minicab 2000. Initially, staff there denied any knowledge of Hussain. The controller, Mohammed Rathore claimed he had given the job to another driver, Abdul Hasenkheil. When officers first spoke to Hasenkheil, 36, he claimed he'd gone to collect the family but had received no reply. Both later admitted to police that it was the unlicensed Hussain who was sent to the pick up.

Rathore, from Kensal Town, and Hasenkheil from Wembley, had pleaded guilty to perverting the course of justice at an earlier hearing. Jailing him for 18 months, the Judge described Rathore's actions as the most serious of all, "showing a callous disregard for the victims." Hasenkheil was given an 8 month suspended sentence and 150 hours unpaid community service.

The family of Toyoko Rask issued a statement after the sentence: "We are pleased and thankful for the way in which the City of London Police, and our family liaison officer Andy Massey in particular, has handled this case. Their investigation, compassion and integrity has been exemplary. We sincerely hope that this tragic accident will help shed light on the issue of illegal and

unlicensed taxi drivers. It is a serious problem that demands immediate attention in order to prevent other families from experiencing the same type of unnecessary loss.

"Finally, we are, as our dear mother would have been, deeply saddened by all of those involved and affected by this tragic accident. This has impacted not just our family and we wish them all the well."

City of London Police Inspector Dave Aspinall said: "This has been a difficult and trying case to investigate. The result begins an end to a complex 9 month investigation and the sentencing reflects the severity of the offences and the parts taken by the three individuals concerned. Everyone involved in the investigation joins the judge in expressing their condolences to the Rask family."

Mary Dowdye, Head of Standards and Regulations at the Public Carriage Office, said: "No licensed operator should ever use an unlicensed driver. If they do, we will prosecute or revoke. We have systems in place to ensure licensed drivers and the vehicles they use are fit to carry passengers safely, and we will prosecute any operator who ignores the regulations."