

# GLOBAL NEWS



## Taxi...hic!

Taxi drivers in the Romanian town of Pecica have complained to Mayor Petru Antal that their town has become a laughing stock following the council's decision to place a series of warning signs around the town regarding the number of drunks crossing the road. One of the few English speaking cabbies in the town told Global News: "Maybe some think the signs are amusing, but not only does it give the impression that we are all drunks, but we as taxi drivers are becoming fed up with having to explain to passengers what the signs are for and to assure them they do not apply to us."



The triangular sign features a man crawling on the floor holding a bottle and has been introduced, according to the Mayor's office, as the result of a series of accidents. A spokesman for the Mayor confirmed to us that April Fool's jokes are not common in Romania and that this was a serious attempt to warn motorists, adding that they hoped the signs would act as a warning to motorists who may not know the area - where locals apparently enjoy the town's many bars!

He also said that the problem came about because Pecica is a border town, which many people drive through quickly on their way to somewhere else! The notice translated means 'Attention – Drunks' but one local student told us that the signs are expected to be hanging on the bedroom walls of fellow students by the time anyone sobers up enough to notice!

## WORLD CUP: "NO GOOD FOR TAXI DRIVERS!"

Taxi drivers in South Africa are complaining that the FIFA World Cup is not going to provide them with the work they were assured would come. Already working in one of the most crime-ridden countries in the world, it was hoped that the competition that begins on June 11 and which England last won in 1966 under Bobby Moore, would help to calm things down while at the same time give them more work through tourists coming to the games. But it doesn't look as though their hopes will materialise.

One South African driver told Global News: "We ferry the majority of the population around every day, but we are now unhappy that a bus system is being introduced ahead of the tournament. This is going to take most of our work away from us. It isn't fair because when the Government put in their bid for the World Cup, they told us how we would all benefit. Now they are taking it all away from us." It also seems that there will be far more South Africans at the matches than tourists and supporters because of the distances and cost involved in getting to South Africa. With long-haul flights charging full price and hotels in South Africa hiking prices during the World Cup period, tickets that cost between £180 for the cheapest opening game seat to £220 for the final, the whole event has become too expensive for many fans that may still be suffering from the global economic crisis.

Back to the cab driver: "With the cost of getting to South Africa added to that of the tickets, the chance of saving money by using a bus will appeal to many. Where does that leave us?" Some cabbies have now threatened to sabotage the

rapid transit bus system during the World Cup because they believe it is going to destroy their industry. There have been at least two attacks on these buses so far. World Cup organisers say they are confident the event will run smoothly and that taxi drivers will get plenty of work...

## WE'RE ALL TAXI DRIVERS IN MONGOLIA!

In a country where the average life-cycle is 64 years and only 80 people out of every 1000 own a TV set, you'd hardly expect taxis to make much news – and you'd be right! Whilst taxis run around those parts with good enough roads to support them and many have indeed some sort of taxi identification written on them, Ulaanbaatar must be one of the only places in the world where you can stop almost any car and ask for a lift!

Potentially, every car in the capital is a taxi! If you hail a car and the driver is prepared to pick you up, he'll do so and charge the same rates as taxis. This is supposedly seen to be a safe way of travelling, although it may not be quite so appropriate if you are a single woman travelling late at night – or work for London's TfL! The other problem is that some taxis have meters while others don't and officials rarely check them, so no one really knows the correct fare. Sadly, Taxi Globe's access to Mongolian quotes is admittedly lacking, although Editor Sandie Goodwin has been promised a free holiday with miles of beautiful sands. Unfortunately, Sandie tells us that the Gobi Desert isn't on her "must-visit" list!

## ALBUQUERQUE TAXIS... NOT SUCH A FUNNY BUNNY!

Albuquerque is in the south west of America and perceived as being a peaceful place, but for one family, an incident occurred that they will not forget too easily. The family say they were about to save a rabbit's life, but instead watched as it was deliberately run over three times by an Albuquerque cab driver! The family had just finished breakfast at a restaurant when they say they spotted an injured rabbit trying to cross the road. "We had just finished breakfast and saw a bunny in the middle of the road," said Tiffany Poth. "We noticed a cab slowly driving up and thought that this nice person was going to help the poor bunny up."

However, the family claim that the Albuquerque Cab Company driver intentionally ran over the injured rabbit, turned around and then ran over it twice more. The owner of Albuquerque Cab Company, Fichel Hindi, says he was shocked by the allegations. "I've never had a complaint on this driver in 5 years with the company. It doesn't strike me as something he'd do," he said. The family filed a report with the City of Albuquerque Animal Control and hope that the driver will face criminal charges. "Our three young girls were just devastated," says Mr Poth.

Animal control wouldn't speak specifically about the incident; however, they say possible charges against the cab driver could range from a misdemeanour to animal cruelty or a more serious felony charge under a state statute. According to someone who knows the driver, he saw how badly injured the rabbit was and he wanted to put it out of its misery.

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