

WOMEN ONLY TAXIS: A HIT IN MUMBAI



It is unfortunately a common sight in newspapers and on websites: stories about Indian women being abused by the male dominated society they live in. There are even signs on Indian trains warning men that harassing women is a criminal offence. Basically, the situation is in some places terrible. However, some members of the Indian society have been trying hard to improve things, including a group of women in India's financial capital, Mumbai, who have created a woman only taxi service.

The service is called 'Forsche', and provides a way for women to get about safely. The risk of being attacked in a taxi has now been nullified. Many women proclaim they always felt uncomfortable with male drivers staring at them in the rearview mirror. This unpleasantness has also been eradicated with this scheme. The taxis are coloured in white and silver to avoid any confusion with the traditional Mumbai yellow. They are deemed to be a present to women after the international day of women on the 8th of March. The scheme is not only of benefit to Indian women, as many foreign tourists can make use of this safety net as well.

Even the inside of the taxis is designed purely for the convenience of women. There are magazines available, big mirrors and make-up kits. Although many of the journeys are quite short, there is still the opportunity for women to make the most of them. Men are not allowed to enjoy these taxis at all, unless they happen to be under 12 years of age. The taxis are not cheap as the price is 20% higher than the regular Mumbai rate. However, safety and luxury have never been for free. If the scheme turns out to be a large success, then Forsche vehicles could also appear in Bangalore by the end of the year.

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