

# COOL CABS FOR A POOL PARTY

In a first for the taxis, the blue and silver fleet begins share-a-cab services to long distances



**MONEY SAVER:** The Bandra-Worli Sea Link commute has a number of takers, as the toll also gets split by the number of passengers. FILE PIC

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IT happens only in Mumbai. Even as the recession shows vague signs of ebbing, Mumbaikars are getting smarter with money and inadvertently, more eco-friendly.

Commuters, who use cool cabs between work and home, can now sign up for a cab

pool service with City Cool Cab, the first AC cabs in Mumbai. The blue and silver cab service has its own website where you can log in and state your requirements: time of pick-up and drop and destination of pick-up and drop. The company will then find others with a time and destination match.

Vijay Agunde, proprietor, City Cool Cab, said, "We have been collecting the database for over six months and have around 300 registrations. However, there's a problem with coordinating the time as people don't like to wait for a pick up. We will be dedicat-

ing five cabs for the pool on a trial basis."

## Money matters

Added Agunde, "You would pay Rs 300 by the meter for travelling alone from Bandra to Nariman Point, but on pooling, this amount is split between the passengers."

The Bandra-Worli Sea Link commute has a number of takers as the toll amount also gets split by the number of passengers.

## Commuters speak

Anup Sanap (27) said, "I travel almost daily between

Bandra and Colaba and take AC cabs. When I heard of the cab pool, I signed up because I not only save money, but also get to meet people."

Yatin Umrotkar (25), another commuter who travels between Mulund and south Mumbai, said, "It's a good idea to cab pool. It's like a share taxi, but over a longer distance."

## 11 lakh

Number of Mumbaikars who use taxis

**HAPPY JOURNEY:** Commuters can now sign up for a cab pool service with City Cool Cab, the first AC cab service in Mumbai. It has its own website where you can log in and state your requirements



## NUMBER CRUNCH

- > There are 15 lakh vehicles in Mumbai, of which 3.5 lakh are cars and 55,000 are taxis.
- > About 600 new vehicles hit the roads every week.
- > There are more than 6.47 lakh two wheelers and more than 14,000 bicycles, according to the Mumbai Traffic Police website



> Why is pooling necessary in Mumbai? Read it on [www.mid-day.com](http://www.mid-day.com)

> Log on to the City Cool Cab website — [www.citycoolcab.in](http://www.citycoolcab.in) — and register your needs.

## M O R P A R I A



# Desperate SMS to get commuters to use Sea Link

Worried about the poor response, company that operates toll booth sends SMSes about benefits of the route and urges people to start using it

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THE majestic Bandra Worli Sea Link (BWSL) was touted as one of the best things to have happened to motorists. Despite a Rs 50 toll, it promised a hassle-free journey to commuters in just seven minutes. Yet, there are few takers.

"We had expected 45,000 commuters to use the engineering marvel everyday, but only 25,000 people are using the BWSL. Since slashing the toll price is not feasible, we are sending SMSes and urging people to use the BWSL," said a Mumbai Entry Point Limited (MEPL) official. The MEPL

operates the toll booths at the Sea Link.

The MEPL sent out text messages two days back that read, 'Save up to one litre petrol everyday, use the Bandra Worli Sea Link road'.

The official added, "Using the BWSL not only saves time, but also fuel and money. We want to give the best facilities to commuters, but we need more traffic on the BWSL."

Commuters, however, say

## 256

The number of monthly passes costing Rs 2,400 issued this month



**TOLL MESSAGE:** The SMS urging people to use the Bandra-Worli Sea Link. PIC/PRADEEP DHIVAR



Read 'First cracks on the Sea Link' on [www.mid-day.com](http://www.mid-day.com)

the authorities must iron out all problems before expecting people to use the BWSL.

"I crossed the BWSL in 10 minutes, but the roads leading out at the Bandra end were so crowded that I had to waste 20 minutes and lots of fuel. I would have taken the same time had I taken the alternate route," said chartered accountant Nilesh Chhadva (31). Businessman Atique Memon (26), said, "I believe it's the price that's keeping most people away. The authorities could have started with low rates and then raised the price. But Rs 50 is a lot for many commuters."

Memon, who pays a two-

way toll of Rs 75 everyday to travel to office in Khar, added, "But it's only a matter of time before more people start using the BWSL. People will do anything to save time."

## SHORT OF NUMBERS

**Cost of constructing the BWSL:** Rs 1,634 crore  
**Motorists who use the BWSL daily:** 25,000  
**Projected number of motorists every day:** 45,000  
**Toll income (annual estimate at the current rate):** Rs 60 crore  
**Expected annual toll target:** Rs 90 crore

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