

Worth Reading..... Inspiring

If there is a will, there is a way to help society - Classic live example for the fact that income level is not a matter of restriction to help others.



**This is a real inspirational encounter with a rickshaw driver in Mumbai:**

Last Sunday, my wife, kid, and I had to travel to Andheri from Bandra. When I waved at a passing auto rickshaw, little did I expect that this ride would be any different. As we set off, my eyes fell on a few magazines (kept in an aircraft style pouch) behind the driver's back rest. I looked in front and there was a small TV. The driver had put on the Doordarshan channel.

My wife and I looked at each other with disbelief and amusement. In front of me was a small first-aid box with cotton, dettol and some medicines. This was enough for me to realise that I was in a special vehicle. Then I looked round again, and discovered more - there was a radio, fire extinguisher, wall clock, calendar, and pictures and symbols of all faiths - from Islam and Christianity to Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism. There were also pictures of the heroes of 26/11- Kamte, Salaskar, Karkare and Unnikrishnan. I realised that not only my vehicle, but also my driver was special.

I started chatting with him and the initial sense of ridicule and disbelief gradually diminished. I gathered that he had been driving an auto rickshaw for the past 8-9 years; he had lost his job when his employer's plastic company was shut down. He had two school-going children, and he drove from 8 in the morning till 10 at night. No break unless he was unwell. "Sahab, ghar mein baith ke TV dekh kar kya faida? Do paisa income karega toh future mein kaam aayega."

We realised that we had come across a man who represents Mumbai [WINDOWS-1252?]- the spirit of work, the spirit of travel and the spirit of excelling in life. I asked him whether he does anything else as I figured that he did not have too much spare time. He said that he goes to an old age home for women in Andheri once a week or whenever he has some extra income, where he donates tooth brushes, toothpastes, soap, hair oil, and other items of daily use. He pointed out to a painted message below the meter that read: "25 per cent discount on metered fare for the handicapped. Free rides for blind passengers up to Rs.50."

My wife and I were struck with awe. The man was a HERO! A hero who deserves all our respect. Our journey came to an end; 45 minutes of a lesson in humility, selflessness, and of a hero-worshipping Mumbai, my temporary home. We disembarked, and all I could do was to pay him a tip that would hardly cover a free ride for a blind man.

I hope, one day, you too have a chance to meet Mr Sandeep Bachhe in his auto rickshaw: MH-02-Z-8508.

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