

Seoul to crack down on taxi overcharging of tourists

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Dhaka: On August 6, the Seoul municipal government announced a 100-day special campaign to tackle unfair taxi practices targeting foreign visitors.

The crackdown aims to stop illegal activities such as overcharging, tipping demands, refusal to accept short trips, and other common problems tourists face when using taxis.

Efforts will concentrate on key areas like airports and popular spots, including the bustling Myeong-dong shopping district.

In the city centre, Seoul Metropolitan Government civil servants will penalise taxi drivers who refuse to take foreign passengers on short trips, wait to demand prices above standard rates from tourists or overcharge at night.

The 100-day crackdown is designed to “rectify illegal taxi activities

ahead of the peak tourism season in South Korea”, said Mr Yeo Jang-kwon, head of the transportation office at the Seoul Metropolitan Government.

The initiative follows ongoing efforts by the city to address the issues, including 139 cases of overcharging reported at airports near Seoul and 109 cases of taxi drivers refusing to accept foreign passengers for short rides, as at end-June. Regular crackdowns have been in place since 2015.

Visitors can report taxi-related issues via card-sized survey slips available at Incheon and Gimpo airports. These cards link to a survey through a QR code and are available in English, Chinese and Japanese.

In Seoul, the base fare for a single standard taxi ride up to 1.6km is 4,800 won (\$4.50). An additional 100 won is charged for every 131m of travel. At night, the base fare ranges from 5,800 won to 6,700 won, depending on the time of travel.

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