

MALIBU TAXI SERVICE IN DIANI

MALIBU SERVICES IN DIANI CONTINUE TO EXPAND

PROBABLY the biggest business success story in Diani in these recent years of economic depression caused in large part by the tribal clashes which occurred in Likoni and Ukunda and the consequent disastrous tourist slump, MALIBU taxi and safari services.

Founded by Georg Karolyi with his wife Ebede, the 'yellow cabs' as they have come to be known, are now seen everywhere, every day and night, even days a week. Starting with three cars just over two years ago, the MALIBU fleet now numbers twelve vehicles, including two minibuses.

"I got the idea of the yellow cab service after we visited New York, USA" said Mr. Karolyi, "and I felt that this was what was needed in Diani - cars with air-conditioning and radio call, available at all times. I couldn't have known how popular it would become in such a short time. I had to rapidly expand the fleet and, this year, I had to take even more cars to cope with the demand.

"I think it is because, as well as the 24 hour service whereby you can call up and have a taxi at your door within 15 or 20 minutes, we are totally reliable. We don't let people down.

"I think if you offer a first class, reliable and competitive business, and you work hard (I work seventeen hours



A MALIBU promotion and charity function when MALIBU T shirts were distributed

a day, seven days a week!), you will succeed.

"Even though the last two years have not been good for Kenyan tourism, it is up to everyone to show confidence in this country and its future prosperity."

Mr. Karolyi regrets to say that some (only some) of the South Coast hotels seem jealous of his rapid rise to success and try to discourage their clients from calling the Malibu office for a taxi, preferring them to use the ones stationed at the hotel.

"This is a country which encourages free enterprise" says Mr. Karolyi.

"People must be free to choose what services they use.

"If you are offering a good service, people will come to you.

"If you are not, then people will look elsewhere for what they want.

"People don't have to take the yellow cabs.

"They can take black, red, blue - whatever, but people must have the freedom of choice, and that I will fight for.

"I believe competition is healthy, and there is enough business for everyone.

"We are now seeing an increase in tourism and the signs are positive for a continued upswing in visitors."

Georg Karolyi came to Kenya in the 80s.

In 1990 he bought land in Diani and built a complex of de luxe villas with a swimming pool and called it MALIBU Cottages.

In 1996 he opened Malibu Safaris, offering every kind of travel service.

With a large office in the prestigious Diani Shopping Centre, he expanded it into a Tourist Information Centre, offering as well photocopying, fax and

telephone services for the convenience of his clients, with prices lower than anyone else.

MALIBU Taxis is his latest venture.

He believes his investment is offering a much needed, reliable, economical and quality service, and it shows his belief in Kenya as a tourist destination.

"We believe we are offering the best services possible to visitors and to residents" says Mr. Karolyi.

"Our clients are happy and satisfied.

"The fact that in the 28 or so safari offices in Diani, we are always so busy indicates that we are giving people what they want.

"This has always been my aim, and will continue to be so: offering the best possible service at the best possible price and keeping my clients satisfied."

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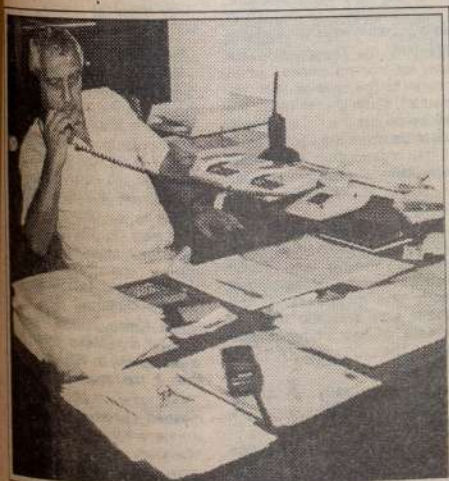
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Georg Karolyi, proprietor, MALIBU, at his desk in his office in the Diani Shopping Centre.