



Fujisawa field tests start for Robot Taxi's driverless cabs

- 1) FUJISAWA, KANAGAWA PREF. – Japan's Robot Taxi Inc. has started a field test for driverless taxis in Fujisawa in Kanagawa Prefecture.
- 2) In the test, 10 groups of participants will be transported between their homes and the Fujisawa outlet of major Japanese retailer Aeon Co.
- 3) The unit of mobile video game service operator DeNA Co. also plans to carry out a similar test in Sendai and Aichi Prefecture.
- 4) Robot Taxi aims to realize commercial operations of driverless taxis early, so they are used for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics.
- 5) Hiroshi Nakajima, president and chief executive officer of Robot Taxi, told reporters at the Fujisawa outlet that his company hopes to launch its driverless taxi service in sparsely populated and mountainous areas where residents suffer from a lack of access to public transport.
- 6) Later, the service will be spread across the country, Nakajima also said.
- 7) Utilizing the government's national strategic special zone in Fujisawa, the company will conduct the test during daytime on weekdays until March 11.
- 8) For the test, two vehicles equipped with cameras and sensors will be used.
- 9) During the test, the drivers will shift to automated driving on 2.4 km of public roads after confirming the safety.
- 10) The braking and steering systems will be controlled automatically by computers.【March 1, 2016/JJI, Japan Times】

field test:実地試験 participant:参加者 outlet:支店、小売店 launch:開始する sparsely populated:過疎の mountainous:山岳の resident:住民 utilize:利用する strategic special zone:戦略特区

★Ice breaker for active discussion

1. Do you enjoy driving cars? If you don't have a license, would you like to drive your own car someday?
2. What are the advantages of regular taxis compared to driverless ones?
3. What do you think will be the difficulties of having driverless cars?
4. If you have children, would you allow them to take driverless cars without parent's attendance?
5. Do you think driverless taxis will be widely used in the future? Why do you think so?
6. Make sentences using the following words: participant, outlet, launch, sparsely populated area, utilize and strategy.

1960年から始まった人工知能 (artificial intelligence, AI) の研究は2000年代に入り飛躍的に前進した。無人運転車の研究・開発は、すでに実用化への熾烈な競争段階に入っている。Googleやトヨタはソフト、ハードの両面で毎年最新モデルを発表している。ジェネラル・モーターズは今年1月、オンライン配車サービス会社リフトと提携し、ライドシェアリングによる自動運転車ネットワークをスタートさせる計画を発表した。安全な無人運転タクシーに乗る日が遠くない将来に来るかもしれない。