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Volvo unveils driverless electric bus in Singapore



Volvo's first full size autonomous electric bus, which uses 80 percent less energy than a diesel bus of a similar size, is seen in Singapore. ROSLAN RAHMAN / AFP

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Volvo and a Singapore university unveiled a driverless electric bus Tuesday that will soon undergo tests in the city-state, the latest move towards rolling out autonomous vehicles for public transport.

High-tech Singapore has become a testbed for self-driving technology and the world's first driverless taxis went into operation in a limited public trial in the country in 2016.

Swedish automaker Volvo Buses and its local partner Nanyang Technological University (NTU) unveiled what they described as a full-size autonomous electric bus and said the vehicle would soon start trial runs in the university's sprawling campus.

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Data from the trials will be used to improve the technology before the driverless buses are put to the test on public roads, Volvo and NTU said in a statement.

Volvo Buses president Hakan Agnevall said the vehicle was "an important step towards our vision for a cleaner, safer and smarter city".

The vehicle is 12 metres (39 feet) long with a full capacity of close to 80 passengers.

It uses 80 percent less energy than a diesel bus of a similar size and is equipped with sensors and navigation controls managed by an artificial intelligence system, the statement said.