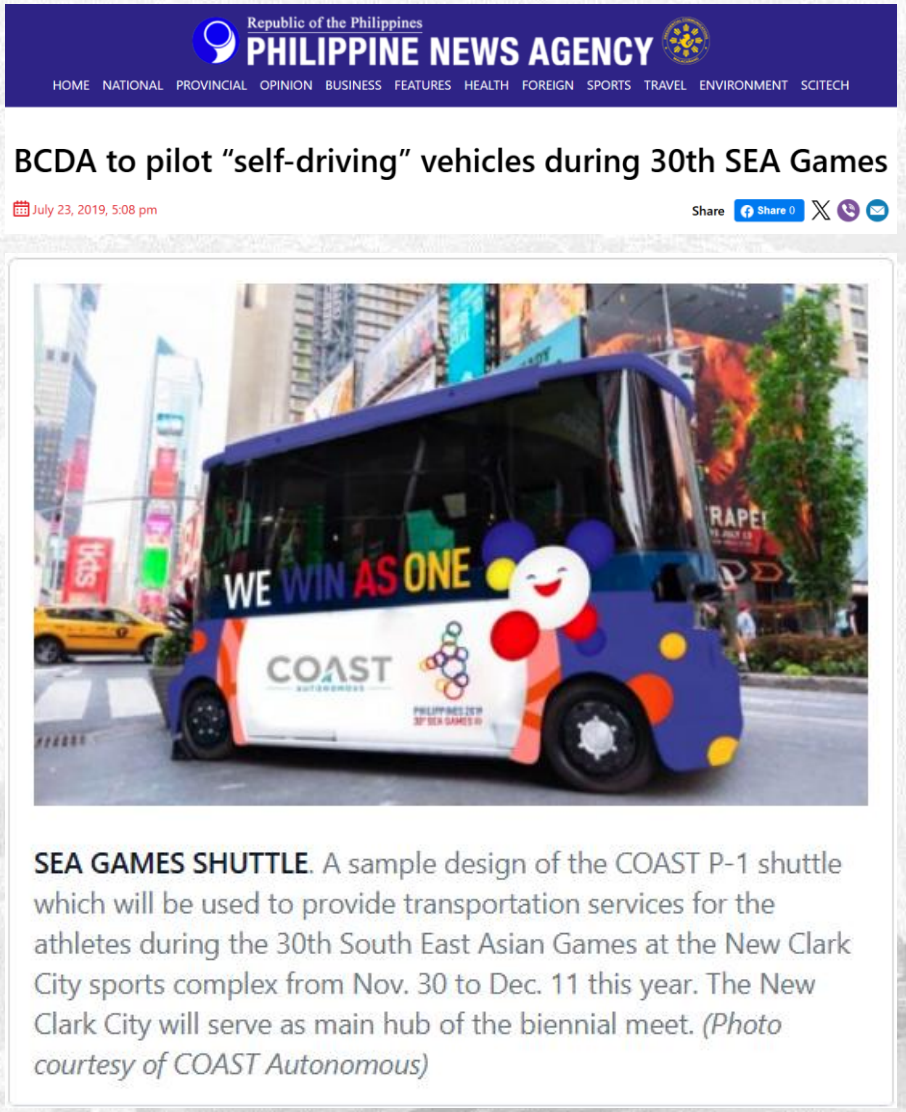
Perspectives from Nascent and Interested Countries: Opportunities, Priorities, and Questions for Autonomous Mobility (PHILIPPINES)

NAVIGATING THE FUTURE: REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

09-10 September 2026

Early Pilot and Technology Demonstration Stage



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BCDA to pilot "self-driving" vehicles during 30th SEA Games

July 23, 2019, 5:08 pm

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SEA GAMES SHUTTLE. A sample design of the COAST P-1 shuttle which will be used to provide transportation services for the athletes during the 30th South East Asian Games at the New Clark City sports complex from Nov. 30 to Dec. 11 this year. The New Clark City will serve as main hub of the biennial meet. *(Photo courtesy of COAST Autonomous)*

Highlights

- The Bases Conversion and Development Authority (BCDA), a government-owned and controlled corporation, partnered with US-based mobility company, COAST Autonomous, for the pilot testing of low-speed autonomous vehicles (AV) within New Clark City at no cost to government.
- The AVs provided transportation services for the athletes during the 30th Southeast Asian Games which was held in New Clark City in 2019.
- Each shuttle can accommodate up to 20 passengers
- Established New Clark City as the Philippines' first demonstration site for autonomous vehicle technology

Early Pilot and Technology Demonstration Stage



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Filipinos can now ride self-driving bus in Clark for free

By Kris Crismundo
September 11, 2024, 6:59 pm

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SELF-DRIVING BUS. The Primary Rapid Transit, the country's first self-driving mass transport, is plying New Clark City during its launching on Sept. 10, 2024. The autonomous bus is powered by Zemnov, Inc. and MC Metro Transport Operation, Inc. and being funded by New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization. *(Courtesy of BCDA)*

Highlights

- Successfully operated an autonomous shuttle along a predefined route in New Clark City
- Demonstrated autonomous driving capability under controlled operating conditions
- Collected operational data and validated the concept of autonomous mobility
- Established New Clark City as the Philippines' first demonstration site for autonomous vehicle technology

Next Steps

- Expand testing to more diverse road environments
- Evaluate autonomous vehicle performance under more complex traffic conditions
- Continue supporting future smart mobility and autonomous vehicle initiatives in the Philippines.



Opportunities and Advantages

- Potential to make the road safer by elimination or reduction of human error that leads to road crashes
- Optimize driver opportunities to improve fuel consumption or fuel economy through optimal acceleration and braking
- Increase mobility for individuals who are unable to drive, such as the elderly and persons with limited mobility
- Self-driving vehicles are being viewed as part of the future of smart mobility ecosystems

Challenges, Risks, and Gaps

- Preparedness has yet to be established by the government on an economic and infrastructural scale
- Absence of a comprehensive AV regulatory framework
- Large-scale implementation costs, poor road systems, and unreliable online connectivity may impede overall progress of the developing countries as countries in developed areas rapidly advance
- Cybersecurity threats in AV systems can allow attackers to gain unauthorized access and potentially take control of critical functions
- Inefficient enforcement of traffic rules, low levels of transport digitization, and overall lack of public understanding of new technologies
- Public hesitations around self-driving vehicles in relation to affordability, reliability of systems, and ethical issues surrounding decision-making in critical situation

Source: *Javines et al., 2026. Utility intention and acceptance evaluation of self-driving cars and its technology in the Philippines*

Addressing AV Acceptance and Viability in the Philippine Context

"The context of self-driving vehicle adoption must be confined, not only as a technological opportunity, but also as a socio-economic and infrastructural opportunity."

CULTURAL

strong appreciation for interpersonal communication and human-driven services in Filipino society that may affect comfort and trust

ECONOMICAL

high costs associated with self-driving technologies may only be made available to higher-income individuals

INFRASTRUCTURAL

the significance of congested road networks, fluctuating traffic management programs, and variable road quality present a real barrier

Source: *Javines et al., 2026. Utility intention and acceptance evaluation of self-driving cars and its technology in the Philippines*

Addressing AV Acceptance and Viability in the Philippine Context

Factors affecting Filipino consumers' willingness to accept autonomous vehicles and their intentions toward them

Significant Factors	
Perceived Benefits	Filipino users are more likely to adopt AVs when they expect substantial benefits. Perceived benefits included better safety during road crashes or malfunctions, reliable decision-making regarding data and routes, reduced personal responsibility for vehicle maintenance, and lower stress related to travel.
Relevance	For Filipinos, relevance may mean more efficient commutes, better handling of unpredictable traffic, or less need for manual driving, especially in crowded areas. Users who find AVs suitable for their needs or lifestyle are more likely to see them as useful.
Perceived Usefulness	In the Philippine context, where exposure to autonomous technology is still limited, perceived usefulness remains a core driver of intention, symbolizing practicality and innovation potential. The idea that AVs can make travel easier, save time, and improve commuting encourages more people to accept them, even with ongoing transportation challenges.
Perceived Ubiquity (Commonness)	In developing countries such as the Philippines where public infrastructure and technological integration remain uneven, perceived ubiquity becomes an important psychological driver of intention, representing optimism about future accessibility rather than current conditions.
Voluntariness	In the Philippines, voluntariness still has a small significant effect indicating that consumers value feelings of freedom and autonomy when making decisions. As most the adoption of technology in the Philippines is done voluntarily by consumers and not in the form of government policy or mandate, there is a higher likelihood of positive programs when there is perceived choice rather than obligation to participate.

Source: *Javines et al., 2026. Utility intention and acceptance evaluation of self-driving cars and its technology in the Philippines*

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Less-Significant Factors	
Perceived Ease of Use	In the Philippine context, ease of use is not primary and important yet, considering that most consumers do not interact with autonomous vehicles frequently or at all. As such, Filipino consumers may be directing their attention more toward cost, safety, or, at the very least, practicality with less emphasis on the easy complex.
Perceived Cost	In the Philippine context, where autonomous vehicles are still in the conceptual or aspirational stage, cost considerations appear less important. Filipino consumers may prioritize perceived usefulness, innovation value, and long-term social benefits over short-term cost concerns.
Perceived Risk	This may suggest that risk perceptions are not yet fully formed among Filipino consumers due to limited exposure to AV technology. In the Philippines, consumers may have prioritized perceived benefits, such as value and modernity rather than risk. This may indicate that risk perceptions about AVs have not yet developed in Filipino consumers
Social Influence	In the context of the Philippines, the absence of significant influence implies that there has not yet been sufficient time for society to form collective opinions about self-driving vehicles due to low levels of awareness and interaction with the technology. It is possible that Filipino consumers are relying more on their personal judgment or media information, rather than social acceptance, to evaluate usefulness.

Source: *Javines et al., 2026. Utility intention and acceptance evaluation of self-driving cars and its technology in the Philippines*

What is the biggest question about autonomous vehicles that your country still needs an answer to?

> “What regulatory, technological, infrastructure, and institutional framework must the government establish to safely deploy AVs while maintaining clear accountability and public confidence when autonomous systems fails or make mistakes?”

*The goal for the Philippines should **not be to be an early adopter**, but rather to **be a smart adopter** – using autonomous mobility to address the country's mobility challenges while simultaneously developing and establishing the regulatory, institutional, technological, infrastructural, and human capacity to influence its future.*

THANK YOU