



The SMART FM's autonomous scooter.
PHOTO: SMART FUTURE MOBILITY

Locally designed autonomous scooter ready for market

An autonomous scooter designed by a team of researchers in Singapore is ready to hit the market.

It could be deployed for use in areas such as within hospitals, tourist attractions and university campuses, if plans come to fruition.

Although it is marketed as a scooter, it will be designed to be classified as a personal mobility aid and will be a safe mode of transport, a researcher behind it said.

The scooter is one of the four variants of autonomous vehicles that are being worked on by the Singapore-MIT Alliance for Research and Technology Future Urban Mobility (Smart FM) research group, which is the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's research enterprise in Singapore.

It was on show at Suntec City as part of Smart's exhibition at the 26th Intelligent Transport Systems World Congress earlier this week.

Smart FM collaborator Marcelo Ang said the device will be safer than other electric scooters due to its slower speed of 15kmh and built-in safety features.

"We have all the sensors around it that see everything," said Dr Ang, who is also acting director of the Advanced Robotics Centre at the National University of Singapore.

"If we put the same technology in personal mobility devices, it will prevent accidents..."

He said the group is looking to work with manufacturers to commercialise the scooter even as work to improve it continues. - **TOH TINGWEI**