

Baidu CEO's self-driving car stunt stumps police: media

July 5 2017

Chinese internet giant Baidu's roll-out of a new self-driving car may have police trying to figure out who to ticket, local media reported Wednesday, after CEO Robin Li took one of the vehicles for a joy-ride on a Beijing highway.

The company's billionaire founder livestreamed himself catching a ride in a semi-autonomous car on the way to a conference for developers hoping to learn about the [software giant](#)'s new artificial intelligence initiatives.

A packed auditorium, including an AFP reporter, oohed and aahed over the video of Li riding in the passenger seat of the car, part of a presentation introducing Baidu's new technology.

In the broadcast, a driver sat with his hands in his lap, watching as the vehicle apparently maneuvered itself along a highway on the outskirts of the city and headed towards the convention centre where Li was scheduled to speak.

As the car sped along the highway, a presenter asked the celebrity CEO to describe the trip.

"Even though... there are quite a few cars, it is very smooth," he replied to a round of applause.

But attendees were not the only ones watching the publicity stunt,

according to the Beijing Youth Daily, which said that local police were investigating whether the CEO had broken any laws by operating the car on the city's highways.

A spokesperson from the Beijing traffic management authority said that the incident had been "reported" but would not confirm there was an investigation.

Baidu declined to comment.

The company has previously tested its cars close to its campus in Beijing's northwest without incident, and it is working with the government to develop rules for self-driving cars, which currently exist in a legal grey area.

In any case, the car was not fully autonomous: it uses technology, similar to highly advanced cruise control, which allows its driver to take his hands off the wheel while staying in the proper lane, keeping up with traffic and even breaking to avoid obstacles.

The technology, however, may have a few bugs to work out. During the video, the car appeared to cross over a solid line on the [highway](#) and even seemed to cut off another driver.

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Citation: Baidu CEO's self-driving car stunt stumps police: media (2017, July 5) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-07-baidu-ceo-self-driving-car-stunt.html>

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