

The 'morphing' wheel from South Korea that may transform lives and robots

DAEJEON, South Korea, Nov 14 (Reuters) - Imagine a wheelchair equipped with wheels flexible enough to navigate all manner of obstacles from kerbs to humps and even staircases.

Or perhaps an unmanned delivery vehicle using the same wheels that takes the stairs to deliver food and groceries right to your doorstep.

This is what researchers from the Korea Institute of Machinery and Materials (KIMM) envision for their 'morphing' wheel, which can roll over obstacles up to 1.3 times the height of its radius.

Inspired by the surface tension of water droplets, it goes from solid to fluid when it encounters impediments.

Other possible applications include robots that spy on the enemy in the battlefield.

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