

Shinkansen conductor caught playing GPS smartphone game on train...for 10 years

Vocabulary

an anonymous tip

to investigate

to prohibit

to prevent

Article

A message was posted on the JR East website that read: "It appears that someone like a shinkansen driver or conductor was playing a location-based game on Nov 6".

The anonymous tip led JR East to investigate the matter, which resulted in the company finding a male conductor in his 40s playing a smartphone game while in the driver's cabin on the Tokyo-bound Joetsu Shinkansen at 11:30 a.m. on Nov 6.

Upon questioning, the man said he started his onboard gaming habit during his shift about ten years ago, playing about 10-20 times per trip. The man said he was competing for the number of places visited and wanted to get more locations.

In a formal announcement to the press, JR East Niigata branch stated, "We prohibit the use of personal mobile phones etc. while on board, and are taking this matter seriously, providing staff with thorough instructions to prevent this event from happening again."

Based on a Nov 12th, 2021 article from Yahoo News Japan, and Sora News.

Quiz

1. What did the JR East's investigation result in?
2. What reason did the man give for playing the game?

Conversation

- A: Look at this story about a conductor playing smartphone games on a bullet train!
- B: Seriously? I wish I could get paid while playing games during work.
- A: I guess everything is automated these days. It must be such a boring job.
- B: Even still.... hmm, I wonder if the whistleblower was a jealous crew member.

Discussion

1. How distracting is your phone during work? Would you work better without one?
2. Do you play smartphone or video games? Why or why not?
3. What tasks, services or jobs do you think will be automated in the future?