

# *Elderly Drivers*

There is \_\_\_\_\_ in central Japan to encourage elderly drivers to stop driving. A company \_\_\_\_\_ homes is offering \_\_\_\_\_ on funeral services to any driver \_\_\_\_\_ who \_\_\_\_\_ their driving licence. The discount also \_\_\_\_\_ family members of \_\_\_\_\_ their licence. The scheme has the \_\_\_\_\_ of the local police force. Drivers must visit a police station to \_\_\_\_\_ their licence. Police officers then provide a document, which the elderly person hands to the funeral home \_\_\_\_\_ to drive. Similar schemes in Japan have included \_\_\_\_\_, discounts on \_\_\_\_\_ and cheaper noodles.

The \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_ to reduce the number of traffic accidents \_\_\_\_\_, which is becoming a serious problem in Japan. There are \_\_\_\_\_ licence holders in Japan over the age of 75. This is \_\_\_\_\_ from a decade ago. In that same period, there \_\_\_\_\_ the number of \_\_\_\_\_ involving elderly drivers. Drivers aged 75 or older \_\_\_\_\_ per cent of fatal traffic accidents in central Japan's Aichi Prefecture last year. This is up from \_\_\_\_\_ in 2007. Aichi police say some of those accidents involved seniors \_\_\_\_\_ and brake pedals or mistakenly putting the vehicle into reverse.

There is a new road-safety strategy in central Japan to encourage elderly drivers to stop driving. A company that operates 89 **funeral** homes is offering a 15 per cent **discount** on funeral services to any driver over the age of 75 who **surrenders** their driving licence. The discount also applies to family members of those **relinquishing** their licence. The scheme has the full **backing** of the local police force. Drivers must visit a police station to hand in their licence. Police officers then provide a document, which the elderly person hands to the funeral home as proof that they are no longer allowed to drive. Similar schemes in Japan have included cut-price taxi fares, discounts on entry to public baths and cheaper noodles.

The latest **initiative** is a further attempt to reduce the number of traffic accidents involving seniors, which is becoming a serious problem in Japan. There are almost 5 million licence holders in Japan over the age of 75. This is double the number from a decade ago. In that same period, there has been an increase in the number of **fatal collisions** involving elderly drivers. Drivers aged 75 or older **accounted for** 13.2 per cent of fatal traffic accidents in central Japan's Aichi Prefecture last year. This is up from 7.7 per cent in 2007. Aichi police say some of those accidents involved seniors confusing the **accelerator** and brake pedals or mistakenly putting the vehicle into reverse.

## **Pre-Listening**

1. Who do you think are dangerous drivers?
2. What are the risks of driving at an older age?
3. Would you give up your driver's license at a certain age?
4. In what situations would you want your parent(s) to give up driving?
5. How would the government encourage elderly drivers to give up their license?

## **First Listening (Summary)**

A company in Japan is offering a \_\_\_\_\_ on its \_\_\_\_\_ services to any \_\_\_\_\_ over the age of \_\_\_\_\_ who gives up their \_\_\_\_\_. Supported by the local \_\_\_\_\_, this scheme aims to \_\_\_\_\_ the number of \_\_\_\_\_ involving \_\_\_\_\_ in Japan.

## **Comprehension Questions**

1. *How many funeral homes does the company operate?*
2. *Who else can benefit from the discount?*
3. *Where do drivers have to go to hand in their licence?*
4. *What other discounts have similar schemes included?*
5. *How many drivers over the age of 75 in Japan have a driving license?*
6. *How many drivers over the age of 75 in Japan had a driving license ten years ago?*
7. *What percentage of fatal accidents in Aichi last year involved seniors?*
8. *What do some seniors confuse with the brake pedals?*
9. *What do some seniors mistakenly put their car into?*

## Word Booster

Match the letter of the definition in the box with the same meaning as the word or phrase **in bold**.

- A. a device, typically a foot pedal, which controls the speed of a vehicle's engine
- B. voluntarily stop keeping or claiming; give up
- C. an act or strategy intended to resolve a difficulty or improve a situation
- D. a reduction in the usual price of **sth**
- E. causing death
- F. make up (a specified amount or proportion)
- G. help or support
- H. an instance of one moving object or person striking violently against another
- I. a ceremony or service held shortly after a person's death
- J. give up **sth** or **sb**, especially because you are forced to

1. According to the Restaurant Report website, labor costs in the food and beverage industry **account for** 22 to 40 percent of total sales.
2. The Premium Friday **initiative** is also part of a wider attempt to address the punishingly long hours many Japanese are expected to work.
3. When I put my foot down on the **accelerator**, I got a cramp in my leg, which was painful.
4. Speeding is now a factor in one out of four **fatal collisions** on our roads.
5. Japan's Emperor Akihito has expressed his intention to retire and **relinquish** his title in the next few years, rather than reduce his duties as he ages.
6. It is difficult for elderly drivers to **surrender** their driving licences in a local city like Kanazawa, where public transportation is not readily available.
7. All they needed was public support and financial **backing**.
8. Recently I attended the **funeral** service of a man who retired less than one year ago.
9. The magazine is offering readers a 15% **discount** on its subscription fees.