

Project of a Heavy-Duty Truck in Japan

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The air pollution situation in Japan is serious, particularly in major metropolitan areas, and the main cause is the nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and particulate matter (PM) emitted by heavy-duty diesel trucks. For that reason, reducing the amounts of PM and NO_x emitted by heavy-duty diesel trucks has become an urgent issue, as has the development of ultra-low-emission heavy-duty trucks that can replace heavy-duty diesel trucks. In April, 2002, Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport started a project to develop the next-generation environmentally friendly heavy-duty trucks with both low emissions and good fuel consumption. Under this project, a prototype of a heavy-duty dimethyl ether (DME) truck (in GVW 18-ton class) will be made with PM and NO_x emission-free and output, fuel consumption, and driving range equal to those of a conventional diesel truck. During the project, its performance will be evaluated, and the feasibility of the DME heavy-duty truck will be studied by March 2005.