Uber steps up efforts on artificial intelligence

SAN FRANCISCO, USA: Uber announced on Monday it was buying the artificial intelligence group Geometric Intelligence, to form the core of the ride-sharing giant's own research center. The move signals a stepped-up effort in artificial intelligence, helping research efforts to bring self-driving car technology into the mainstream.

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The acquisition, terms of which were not announced, will allow the 15 employees of the New York startup to form the base of Uber's artificial intelligence efforts.

"Uber is in the business of using technology to move people and things in the real world. With all of its complexity and uncertainty, negotiating the real world is a high-order intelligence problem," Uber's Jeff Holden said in a blog post.

"It manifests in myriad ways, from determining an optimal route to computing when your car or UberEats order will arrive to matching riders for UberPool.

"It extends to teaching a self-driven machine to safely and autonomously navigate the world, whether a car on the roads or an aircraft through busy airspace or new types of robotic devices."

Uber, which operates in more than 60 countries and has a valuation of more than $60 billion, this year launched a test project for self-driving vehicles in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

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