



Press Review Taiwan Science, Technology and Education

Trade Office of Swiss Industries, Taipei, February 1-29, 2020

Science / Technology	2
Taiwan researchers successfully extract sample of coronavirus (The China Post, 02.02.2020)	2
One in two Taiwan users addicted to smartphones: survey (The China Post, 02.02.2020)	2
Use of HIV medication to be investigated as coronavirus treatment (Focus Taiwan, 05.02.2020)	2
NCTU unveils device for detecting feline kidney disease (Taiwan Today, 05.02.2020)	2
Taiwan cold-storage technique opens agriculture markets in Middle East (Taiwan Today, 06.02.2020)	2
Google Maps launches major update, featuring new design and functions (Focus Taiwan, 07.02.2020)	2
Researchers use ultrasound to treat mice with Parkinson's disease (Focus Taiwan, 07.02.2020)	2
Experts find how moderate 2019-nCoV infection ends with death (Focus Taiwan, 09.02.2020)	3
Taiwan to launch first indigenous rocket February 13 (Focus Taiwan, 10.02.2020)	3
Taiwan accelerates coronavirus vaccination research (Taiwan Today, 10.02.2020)	3
Diagnostic test for diabetic kidney disease receives EU approval (Focus Taiwan, 11.02.2020)	3
Tsai pledges to advance Taiwan's smart technology development (Taiwan Today, 11.02.2020)	3
No scientific proof of coronavirus 24-day incubation: health minister (Focus Taiwan, 12.02.2020)	3
Launch of first indigenous rocket canceled due to bad weather (Focus Taiwan, 13.02.2020)	3
Taiwanese firm teams up with U.S. to develop coronavirus vaccine (The China Post, 18.02.2020)	4
Taiwan companies listed among top 100 global innovators for 2020 (Focus Taiwan, 19.02.2020)	4
Taiwan successfully synthesizes antiviral drug remdesivir (Focus Taiwan, 21.02.2020)	4
Tsai praises progress on Taiwan's COVID-19 antiviral drug research (Taiwan Today, 21.02.2020)	4
Taiwan successfully synthesizes antiviral drug remdesivir (The China Post, 22.02.2020)	4
TSMC to recruit over 4,000 new staff for high-end process development (Focus Taiwan, 25.02.2020)	4
GlobalWafers, GlobalFoundries to expand ties in wafer development (Focus Taiwan, 25.02.2020)	4
Taiwan to start clinical trials on antiviral drug remdesivir (The China Post, 26.02.2020)	5
Taiwan Tech unveils mask disinfection device amid virus scare (Focus Taiwan, 27.02.2020)	5
Taiwan Tech unveils mask disinfection device (The China Post, 27.02.2020)	5
SARS antibody could lead to rapid testing for COVID-19: NHRI (Focus Taiwan, 27.02.2020)	5
Education	5
Taiwan universities to start spring semester after February 25: Ministry (The China Post, 03.02.2020)	5
Taiwan to deepen cooperation with UK research council (Taiwan Today, 18.02.2020)	5



Science / Technology

Taiwan researchers successfully extract sample of coronavirus (The China Post, 02.02.2020)

Taiwanese researchers have successfully extracted a sample of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), which could eventually lead to the development of a vaccine, Health and Welfare Minister Chen Shih-chung said January 31. The virus, which was first detected in the Chinese city of Wuhan last December, has been declared a global emergency by the World Health Organization. As of February 2, China had recorded 14,380 confirmed cases of the coronavirus and 304 deaths, while nearly 160 confirmed cases have been reported in other countries around the world, including 10 in Taiwan.

One in two Taiwan users addicted to smartphones: survey (The China Post, 02.02.2020)

One of every two young Taiwanese has admitted to being addicted to their smartphone, according to the results of a survey conducted by the National Development Council (NDC) in July 2019 but whose results were not released until last month. According to the survey, 54.0 percent of Taiwanese smartphone users below 20 years old considered themselves addicted to their device in 2019, higher than the 29.3 percent who felt that way in a similar survey the previous year. Among users in the 20-29 and 30-39 age groups, the self-rated smartphone addiction was 36.4 percent and 37.9 percent, respectively, roughly an increase of 10 percentage points in each age group compared to a year earlier.

Use of HIV medication to be investigated as coronavirus treatment (Focus Taiwan, 05.02.2020)

Taiwan's National Health Research Institutes (NHRI) will investigate the use of an HIV medication as a treatment for the coronavirus that has been declared a global public health emergency, according to an institute researcher Tuesday. John Hsu, an investigator with the NHRI's Institute of Biotechnology and Pharmaceutical Research, said reports indicate that Kaletra, which is used to treat HIV-1, has shown promising results when used in conjunction with interferons in treating the coronavirus.

NCTU unveils device for detecting feline kidney disease (Taiwan Today, 05.02.2020)

A domestically developed photoelectric device for early detection of feline kidney disease was unveiled by Hsinchu City-based National Chiao Tung University last month in northern Taiwan. Produced by NCTU in collaboration with Kaohsiung City-headquartered Jong-Shing Animal Hospital in southern Taiwan and the Ministry of Science and Technology, the device—known as a dual optical fiber reaction tank—works by testing urea concentration in feline litter. According to NCTU, the process uses an acid-based solution to test litter samples.

Taiwan cold-storage technique opens agriculture markets in Middle East (Taiwan Today, 06.02.2020)

Taiwan-grown leafy greens are set to tantalize the taste buds of Saudi Arabia consumers courtesy of advanced cold-storage technology developed with the assistance of the Cabinet-level Council of Agriculture. The vacuum cooling method extends the maximum shipping and storage time from 20 to 28 days, giving the produce a seven-day shelf life. According to the COA, the innovation opens up markets in the Middle East and Europe to agricultural exports from Taiwan.

Google Maps launches major update, featuring new design and functions (Focus Taiwan, 07.02.2020)

In celebration of Google Maps' upcoming 15th anniversary, multinational tech firm Google launched a major update to its web mapping service on February 7 that provides a fresh look and several new features for iOS and Android platforms. Replacing the old cluttered menu, the app's new layout features five simple tabs (Explore, Commute, Saved, Contribute and Updates) reorganized at the bottom of the screen for a more user-friendly experience.

Researchers use ultrasound to treat mice with Parkinson's disease (Focus Taiwan, 07.02.2020)

A research team from Taiwan's National Tsing Hua University has discovered why some animals can hear ultrasound while others cannot and further used ultrasound to activate the brain cells of laboratory mice suffering from Parkinson's disease, which subsequently led to improvements in their condition. In a statement released by the university on February 7, the research team, headed by associate professor Lin Yu-chun, an expert in molecular medicine, and professor Yeh Chih-kuang from the department of biomedical engineering, said it treated Parkinson's disease in mice by injecting soundwave sensitive protein into infected mice brains.



Experts find how moderate 2019-nCoV infection ends with death (Focus Taiwan, 09.02.2020)

Experts have blamed a form of systemic inflammatory response syndrome called "cytokine storm" for killing some novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)-infected patients who were not very sick in the early stage of infection but eventually died of multiple organ failure, according to Chinese media reports. The epidemic, which started mid-December in Wuhan, in China's Hubei Province, had claimed more than 800 lives in China as of Feb. 8, including Li Wenliang, a 34-year-old ophthalmologist at Wuhan Central Hospital who tried to issue the first warning about the deadly coronavirus outbreak late last year but was silenced by the Chinese authorities.

Taiwan to launch first indigenous rocket February 13 (Focus Taiwan, 10.02.2020)

Taiwan's first domestically built rocket, the HAPITH-1, will be launched in the eastern county of Taitung on February 13, the developer Taiwan Innovative Space Inc. (TiSPACE), said Monday. The rocket will be launched at 6 a.m. in the county's Nantian Village, home to a community of the indigenous Paiwan people, and the ceremony will include a traditional Paiwan blessing, TiSPACE said. The HAPITH-1 was scheduled to be launched December 27 last year, but TiSPACE called off the plan due to protests by the indigenous community.

Taiwan accelerates coronavirus vaccination research (Taiwan Today, 10.02.2020)

The government is accelerating research and innovation on a Taiwan-developed vaccination for the new coronavirus, according to National Health Research Institutes under the Ministry of Health and Welfare February 7. NHRI, headquartered in northern Taiwan's Miaoli County, immediately initiated R&D cooperation with the country's suppliers of biological agents following first reports of the virus in the Chinese city of Wuhan late last year. It is currently testing more than 96,000 pharmaceuticals and botanicals to identify substances capable of inhibiting the virus—a critical step in producing a cure.

Diagnostic test for diabetic kidney disease receives EU approval (Focus Taiwan, 11.02.2020)

A clinical test designed by a Taiwanese biotech company that predicts a patient's risk of diabetic kidney disease has been approved for sale in the European Union, the company said February 11. The test, called DNlite-IVD103, has obtained a CE Marking, indicating that it complied with EU safety requirements and can be sold on the EU market, according to its developer Bio Preventive Medicine Corp. The company said it is now applying for permission for the product to be sold in Malaysia and Singapore as well.

Tsai pledges to advance Taiwan's smart technology development (Taiwan Today, 11.02.2020)

President Tsai Ing-wen said February 10 that the government is progressing well in its plans to transform Taiwan into a digital nation and smart island, with preparations for industrial upgrades and economic restructuring in full swing as the country prepares for the coming 5G wireless era. Efficient transportation, smart health care and a thriving digital economy are key to fast-tracking Taiwan's technological development, Tsai said. The government is also overseeing the installation of comprehensive broadband infrastructure countrywide to narrow the urban-rural divide, she added.

No scientific proof of coronavirus 24-day incubation: health minister (Focus Taiwan, 12.02.2020)

Health Minister Chen Shih-chung on February 10 disputed one of the findings of a China-based study that found the incubation period of the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) could be as long as 24 days, saying it lacked scientific evidence. The findings, published February 10 by prominent Chinese epidemiologist Zhong Nanshan, were based on analysis of the medical records of 1,099 confirmed 2019-nCoV patients in China. The study, which has not yet been peer-reviewed, found that the incubation period of the 2019-nCoV ranged from 0-24 days, Zhong and his research team said.

Launch of first indigenous rocket canceled due to bad weather (Focus Taiwan, 13.02.2020)

The launch of Taiwan's first domestically built rocket, the HAPITH-1, was canceled February 13 due to bad weather, the developer, Taiwan Innovative Space Inc. (TiSPACE), said that day. The space technology company was scheduled to launch its first rocket at 6 a.m. in Nantian Village in the eastern county of Taitung, but heavy rain and strong wind shear forced TiSPACE to cancel. According to TiSPACE Chairman Chen Yen-sen, many weather balloons the company released to test wind speed and direction burst before reaching their designated altitudes because of the weather.



Taiwanese firm teams up with U.S. to develop coronavirus vaccine (The China Post, 18.02.2020)

Taiwan-based Medigen Vaccine Biologics Corp. (MVC) announced February 17 that it has teamed up with the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) to develop a vaccine against COVID-19 coronavirus. According to MVC, it signed an agreement with the NIH the previous day allowing it to obtain the candidate vaccine virus and related material developed by the U.S. health institution for potential use in humans to jump-start candidate vaccine development for COVID-19 in Taiwan. The company said it will soon start animal testing in Taiwan, the results of which will be used to assess the possibility of applying it to clinical testing on humans and developing a new generation of vaccines.

Taiwan companies listed among top 100 global innovators for 2020 (Focus Taiwan, 19.02.2020)

Four Taiwan entities are among the world's top 100 innovators, according to a 2020 list released February 19 by Clarivate Analytics, a Philadelphia and London-based company that provides insights and analytics to accelerate the pace of innovation. Taiwan's Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI), smartphone brand HTC, Quanta Computer Inc., and Foxconn Technology Group, the world's largest provider of electronics manufacturing services, are among the best innovators in the world, according to Derwent Top 100 Global Innovators 2020 list.

Taiwan successfully synthesizes antiviral drug remdesivir (Focus Taiwan, 21.02.2020)

Two Taiwanese research teams have synthesized remdesivir, an experimental medication that has shown promise in fighting the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) that has left more than 2,200 people dead since the outbreak began in December. At a press event February 21, Chein Rong-jie, an assistant research fellow with Academic Sinica's Institute of Chemistry, said his seven-member research team completed the synthesis of over 100 milligrams of remdesivir in two weeks at a 97 percent level of purity.

Tsai praises progress on Taiwan's COVID-19 antiviral drug research (Taiwan Today, 21.02.2020)

President Tsai Ing-wen said February 20 that efforts by national institutions researching the virus behind COVID-19 are already showing promising results, with progress toward producing an antiviral drug right on target. State-backed National Health Research Institutes is heading related R&D by leveraging its biotechnological prowess and cutting-edge production facilities, Tsai said. It can now produce Remdesivir, an experimental antiviral drug thought to be effective against coronaviruses, in milligram batches with 97 percent purity, and will proceed to gram batches in two weeks, she added.

Taiwan successfully synthesizes antiviral drug remdesivir (The China Post, 22.02.2020)

Two Taiwanese research teams have synthesized remdesivir, an experimental medication that has shown promise in fighting the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) that has left more than 2,200 people dead since the outbreak began in December. At a press event February 21, Chein Rong-jie, an assistant research fellow with Academic Sinica's Institute of Chemistry, said his seven-member research team completed the synthesis of over 100 milligrams of remdesivir in two weeks at a 97 percent level of purity.

TSMC to recruit over 4,000 new staff for high-end process development (Focus Taiwan, 25.02.2020)

Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. (TSMC), the world's largest contract chipmaker, said February 25 it is planning to hire more than 4,000 new staff this year at a time when the company is gearing up to develop high-end processes to maintain its lead over rivals. According to TSMC, it has listed plenty of job openings on the recruitment website TaiwanJobs run by the Ministry of Labor's Workforce Development Agency (WDA), and has also actively launched recruitment campaigns on campuses to expand its talent pool.

GlobalWafers, GlobalFoundries to expand ties in wafer development (Focus Taiwan, 25.02.2020)

GlobalWafers Co., a leading silicon wafer supplier in Taiwan, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with U.S.-based contract chipmaker GlobalFoundries Inc. to expand cooperation in wafer development. Under the MOU, GlobalWafers said, the two sides will develop a long term agreement for the Taiwanese firm to supply 12-inch silicon-on-insulator (SOI) wafers to the U.S. firm. GlobalWafers currently has a long and ongoing cooperative relationship with GlobalFoundries for the supply of 8-inch SOI wafers.



Taiwan to start clinical trials on antiviral drug remdesivir (The China Post, 26.02.2020)

National Taiwan University Hospital (NTUH) has consulted with the United States and is to start clinical trials in Taiwan of the antiviral drug remdesivir for the treatment of COVID-19 coronavirus, the Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) said February 26. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the first U.S. clinical trial involving the use of remdesivir on patients with coronavirus to evaluate the efficacy of the experimental antiviral drug developed by American biotech firm Gilead Sciences. Remdesivir could provide an effective treatment for COVID-19 victims and NTUH is preparing to make Taiwan part of the clinical research, said Shih Chung-liang, director-general of the Ministry of Health and Welfare's Department of Medical Affairs.

Taiwan Tech unveils mask disinfection device amid virus scare (Focus Taiwan, 27.02.2020)

National Taiwan University of Science and Technology (Taiwan Tech) on February 27 displayed a machine it has developed to disinfect used surgical masks, at a time when demand far outstrips supply due to the new coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic. Professor Joseph Kuo Yu-lin, who led the project in the school's Department of Mechanical Engineering, said the atmospheric pressure plasma mask disinfection machine is capable of killing bacteria and eliminating odors in 20 seconds, allowing for re-use of disposable masks.

Taiwan Tech unveils mask disinfection device (The China Post, 27.02.2020)

National Taiwan University of Science and Technology (Taiwan Tech) on February 27 displayed a machine it has developed to disinfect used surgical masks, at a time when demand far outstrips supply due to the new coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic. Professor Joseph Kuo Yu-lin, who led the project in the school's Department of Mechanical Engineering, said the atmospheric pressure plasma mask disinfection machine is capable of killing bacteria and eliminating odors in 20 seconds, allowing for re-use of disposable masks.

SARS antibody could lead to rapid testing for COVID-19: NHRI (Focus Taiwan, 27.02.2020)

A SARS antibody could be used to develop a rapid diagnostic test for the coronavirus responsible for COVID-19, National Health Research Institutes (NHRI) Vice President Sytwu Huey-kang said February 26. Rapid diagnostic tests are often used in Taiwan for flu screening. The test involves inserting a cotton swab into the patient's nose to collect fluid samples, then placing the swab onto a test strip, which changes color depending on what strain of flu the patient is infected with. Results can usually be obtained in 10-15 minutes, which is much faster than the four-hour testing method currently used to determine COVID-19 patients, Sytwu said.

Education

Taiwan universities to start spring semester after February 25: Ministry (The China Post, 03.02.2020)

Taiwan university students will begin their second semester after February 25, Education Minister Pan Wen-chung said on February 3, two weeks later than originally planned. Universities may again adjust the exact date of the spring semester pending new developments in the virus outbreak, Pan added, but classes won't start before the aforesaid date. Pan debunked earlier reports that claimed universities have reached consensus to postpone school until March 2, saying that the agreement reached was that school won't start before February 25.

Taiwan to deepen cooperation with UK research council (Taiwan Today, 18.02.2020)

Representatives from U.K.-based Economic and Social Research Council met with officials from Taiwan's Ministry of Education February 6, spotlighting government efforts to deepen academic cooperation between the two countries. Bi Cheu-an, director-general of the MOE's Department of International and Cross-strait Education, warmly welcomed the six-member delegation, praising the U.K. as one of the top destinations for local students looking to receive higher education abroad. The meeting is part of Taiwan's efforts to encourage advanced R&D and elevate its competitiveness in the international arena, he added.

[Top of the Document](#)