

ISSUE 01



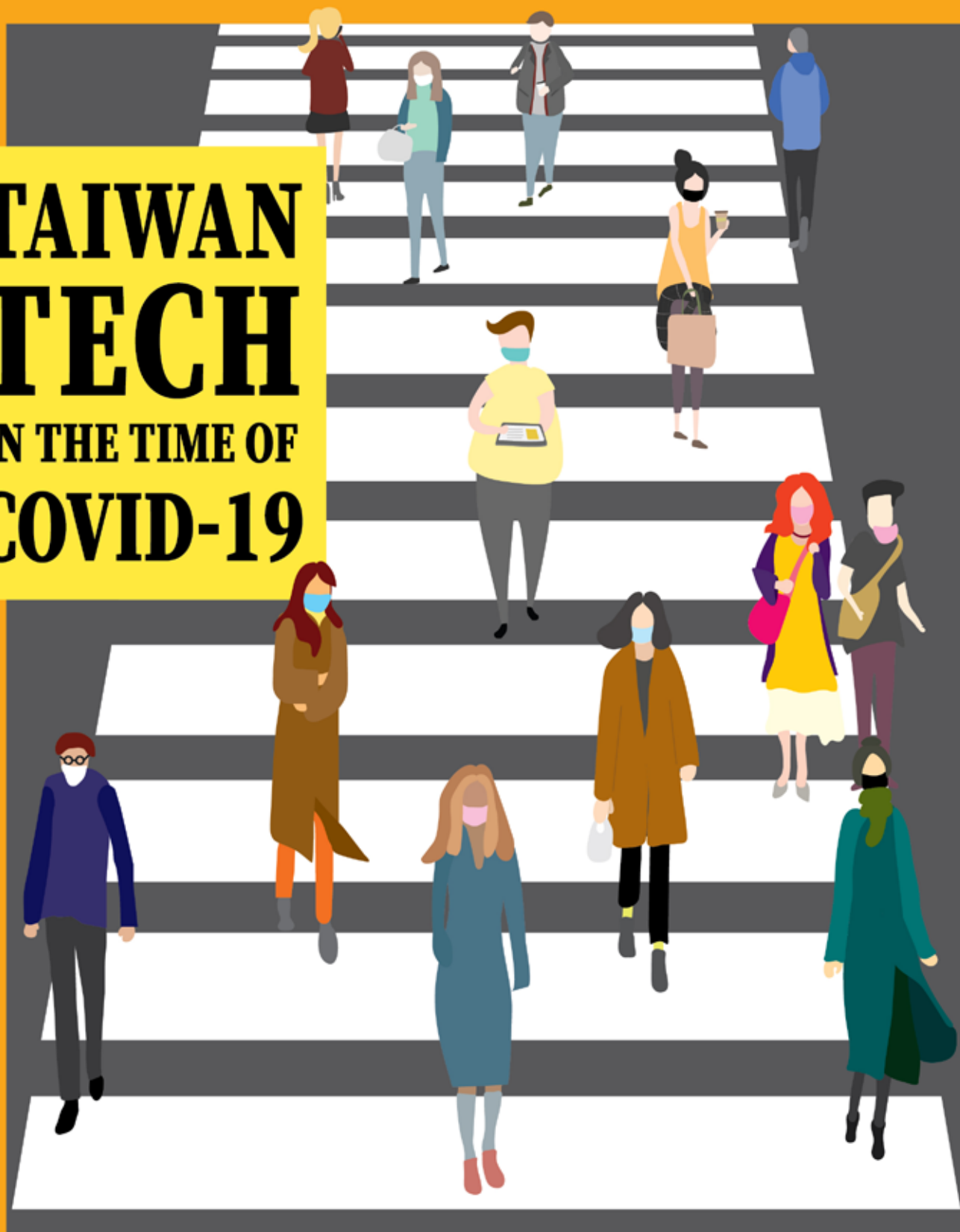
TAIWAN TECH

NATIONAL TAIWAN UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

JULY 2020

NEWSLETTER

**TAIWAN
TECH**
IN THE TIME OF
COVID-19



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TAIWAN TECH IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

If you wish to enter the Taiwan Tech campus these days, you will only find two gates open. Your body temperature will be taken, and you will see that most people on campus are wearing face masks. In elevators and cafeterias, "Let's not talk" signs are posted, and dispensers with hand sanitizer are deployed at the entrances of all buildings.



All Taiwan Tech student cafeterias implement epidemic prevention measures.

Taiwan Tech is impacted by the outbreak of the disease as other universities worldwide, but classes are held on campus, and there is the usual vibrant mixture of local and international students.

Taiwan is just a short flight away from mainland China, where COVID-19 is believed to have originated in the city of Wuhan. As the outbreak took hold in January, Taiwan's Centre for Disease Control reacted quickly and started to roll out a series of epidemic control measures.

And so did Taiwan Tech. Although most Taiwan Tech faculty and staff were still on Lunar New Year vacation, a university-wide Epidemic Prevention Response Team was set up to coordinate measures. The decision to delay the beginning of the semester by two weeks until 2 March, followed the guidelines set up by

the Ministry of Education for all schools and universities in Taiwan.

"Taiwan's experience with SARS in 2003 has certainly helped to deal with the situation," said Taiwan Tech Vice President Rong-Huay Juang, who is a trained biochemist, *"and what is more, several public health experts are currently serving in high government positions, including our vice-president. I am quite confident that Taiwan and Taiwan Tech will go through this crisis smoothly."* As a matter of fact, measures adopted by the Taiwan government turned out to be effective. By mid-June, Taiwan has successfully controlled the outbreak and not seen any new domestic infections for two months.

Of course, it is not just business as usual on the Taiwan Tech campus, with almost all cultural, sports, and social events cancelled – including the celebration for Taiwan Tech's 45th anniversary. With quarantine regulations in force, international students from a number of countries were required to quarantine themselves for two weeks before the start of the term.

Another challenge is to safeguard the right to education of Taiwan Tech students who are currently stuck in China or other places, with no option to leave their countries any time soon. Taiwan Tech has been setting up training sessions and workshops for online teaching tools, so that classes can still be followed through distance learning.





With visits by international delegations, academic conferences, and other important events, like the annual APAIE conference, cancelled or postponed, the Office of International Affairs now focuses on providing information on epidemic prevention measures for international students and staff.

"Overall, the impact has not been dramatic," says Dean Wang of the International Office. "As for international degree students, we have only seen a decline of 6%, and with our incoming exchange programs, we've eventually had cancellations of 25%. Most affected were our outgoing exchange students who

planned to go to European or Asian countries. Some cancelled their plans, but went, but had to come back. As for the upcoming term, students are caught in a limbo. They would love to go, but have to adopt a wait-and-see attitude."



Students and staff wear masks on Taiwan Tech Campus



OIA staff also offered support to students who were confronted with university closures in European countries, Korea and Japan. The current situation not only thwarted their study plans, but also has administrative and logistical implications such as deferring scholarships or rebooking plane tickets.

The current situation has also added to the work load of Taiwan Tech academic staff, as they are doing their best to offer distance learning materials in addition to their on-campus courses. Wannie Wang, Professor in the College of Liberal Arts of Social Sciences, still tries to stay positive: *"Now, I am often chatting with the security staff who are doing the temperature measurements. Before, I would just rush through the gates without thinking too much of their work. So, in all that gloom, there are still some good things happening."*

Denzel SU: 14 days in Quarantine

I came back to Taiwan on the 15th of March, just one day after the 'Europe travel restrictions' were announced by the Taiwan Government. So, when I arrived at the Taoyuan airport, I was asked to fill in some personal information, like the place that I would stay during the quarantine and the phone number of my cell phone that I would have to carry with me all the time. The health officials checked if my cell-phone number worked by calling me right there to prevent people from filling in wrong numbers. And since we were not allowed to take public transport, my parents picked me up at the airport. They had installed some protective devices in their car, and drove me directly to our home. During the quarantine period, I stayed at home alone, while my parents moved into a hotel. But they had bought and prepared a lot of food for me! Two weeks of quarantine is not that long for a person who had lived in Germany for seven months! It took me a lot of time to get over my jet lag, so I slept a lot.

Apart from that, I also finished some TV-series and books that I have always wanted to watch or read, and I was video chatting with my friends a lot. So, it was just like a long vacation at home. Every day, I received two or three phone calls from health officials to check if I was in good condition and if I stayed at home. So, all in all, I felt quite safe and quite relaxed during my quarantine, and it was a really special experience.



All Taiwan Tech student cafeterias implement epidemic prevention measures.



Killing time with video chats during 14 days of quarantine

Holy Bob Prokop – My quarantine story in Taiwan

I am from Prague, Czech Republic, and I am a Master's student here at Taiwan Tech. During the Chinese New Year holiday, I left Taiwan for several days. Back at that time, it was still safe to travel. When I arrived back in Taiwan, everything was normal, no need for quarantine. However, the day after my arrival, the government policy was changed. I remember, I was in a bank when I received a call. The lady on the other side told me to go into quarantine as soon as possible.

School management prepared a separate room in the school dorm just for me. They took care of me pretty well. They called me every day and provided food delivery three times a day.

When I woke up the third day I didn't feel well, I had a high temperature, headache, and other symptoms which were so similar to Covid-19. I was immediately sent to a hospital where I was tested. The test itself was pretty painful, for they tried to put a really long cotton swab into my nose, but it got stuck halfway in, so they had to punch me in the back of my head to put it deep inside. After this procedure, they screened my lungs as well. The doctor said it was probably food poisoning, not a Covid-19 virus, so I was sent back to my quarantine room. When I came back to school from hospital, I received many messages and calls from people whom I had met before, asking me if I had caught the virus, and if they should be worried.

After several days I was moved to the international building. The room looked much better than the previous one, Taiwan Tech tried their best to make me feel comfortable. One day I was told that the Taiwan Minister of Health Chen Shih-Chung wanted to visit the quarantine facilities, so I was asked not to leave the room. Unfortunately, I didn't have the chance to see this brave man in person.

After 14 days, when I could finally leave the quarantine room, my leg muscles were pretty weak because I hadn't walked that much. It was an interesting experience to be alone for such a long time, not speaking with anyone face to face. Thanks to the NTUST management, and all the people who took care of me, it wasn't that bad, but nothing that I would like to experience again.



HWANG GWO-JEN: WORLD-RENNED EXPERT FOR UBIQUITOUS AND MOBILE LEARNING

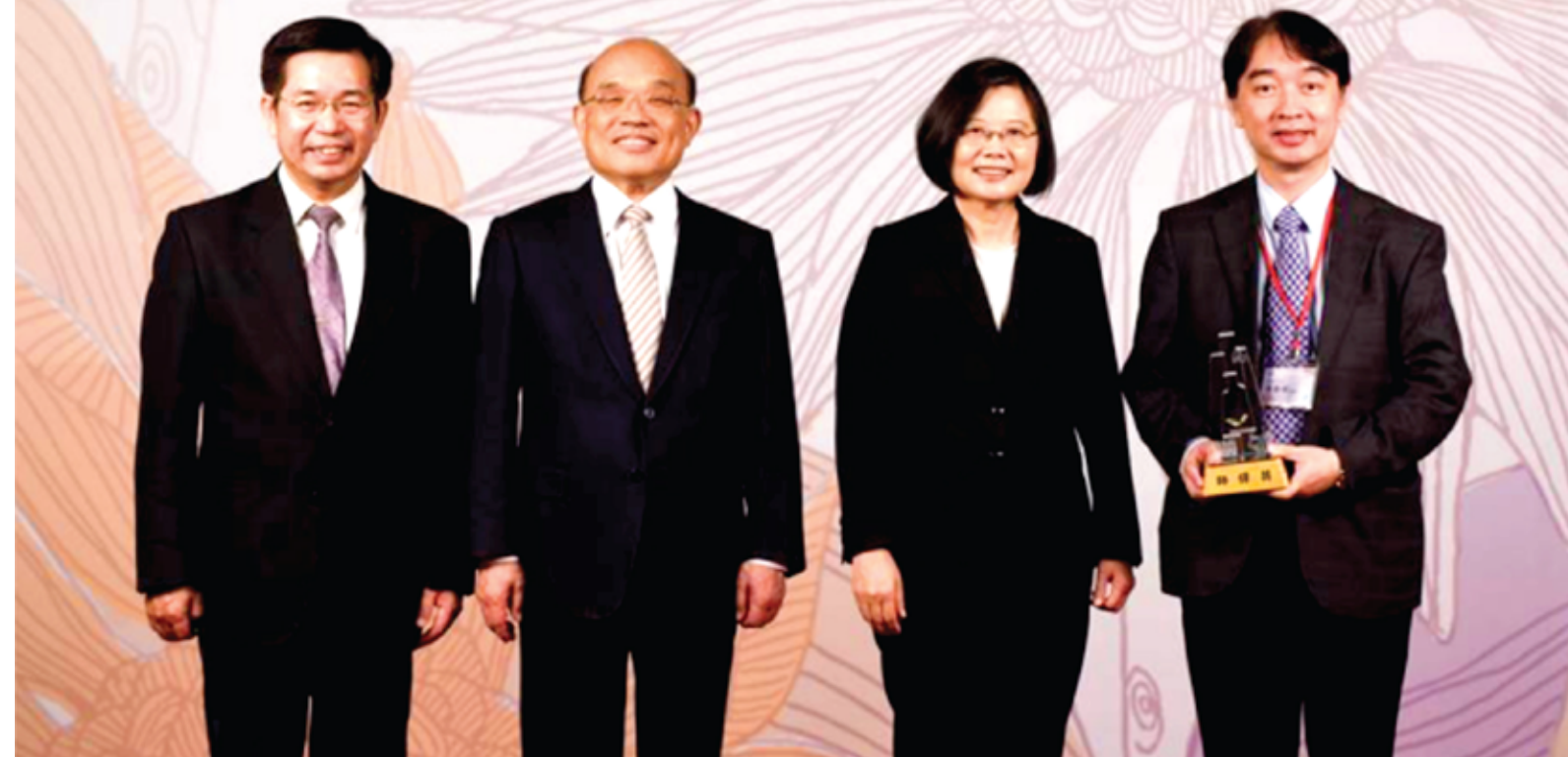
As the COVID-19 crisis forces educational institutions world-wide to switch to distance education, research on digital education and online teaching has moved into the focus of attention. A group of researchers at Taiwan Tech's Graduate Institute for Digital Learning and Education, established in 2010 as part of the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, has pursued research in this field for more than decade. The director of this institute, Professor Hwang Gwo-Jen, is an internationally acclaimed, highly prolific researcher in his field, and also one of Taiwan's most awarded educators. His research interests include mobile and ubiquitous learning, flipped classrooms, digital game-based learning, and artificial intelligence in education.



Hwang Gwo-Jen has devoted himself to the study of technology-enhanced learning since 1991, when he received his Ph.D.-degree in Computer Science and Information Engineering from the National Chiao Tung University in Taiwan. In his research work, that comprises more than 700 publications, he delves deeply into theoretical issues, but also shows how mobile and wireless communication technologies can be applied to different fields of education: From elementary schools to universities, from science subjects to language instruction, from art and design courses to nursing.

"In my view, the goal of education is to nurture an attitude of lifelong, self-directed learning," he says. "The biggest problem with traditional teaching is that students are not engaged enough. Students have to experience the joy of acquiring knowledge. Digital game-based learning is a way that allows students to experience a certain situation, for example the historical anecdotes of the Confucian classics. And this will lead to a real appreciation of Confucius' thought."

The High School Mobile Learning Facilitating Project, launched by the Taiwan Ministry of Education, is one of the many educational projects that Huang



Excellent Teacher Award ceremony: From left to right: Minister of Education Pan Wen-chung, Prime Minister Su Tseng-chang, President Tsai Ing-wen, Professor Hwang Gwo-Jen

has led. In this project, 200 high schools were assisted in designing teaching activities built on mobile learning. It is worth mentioning that Hwang has worked not only with well-resourced high schools in urban centers, but also with elementary schools in less-developed rural areas. One such school was the Tainan Municipal Haidong Elementary School. Through the innovative use of information technology in teaching, children from a rural school in Taiwan were able to compete with students from advanced countries in the Global Virtual Classroom Contest 2015. The gold medal that the school won in this contest belongs among Hwang's most remarkable success stories.

Although he has been very successful in his research, winning the Ministry of Science & Technology Outstanding Researcher Award in the years 2007, 2010 and 2013, Huang considers himself most of all to be an educator. Thus, he is particularly proud of the Excellent Teacher Award that he was granted by the Ministry of Education in 2019.

At the award ceremony, he summarized his experiences of a 30-year career in teaching: *"After nearly 30 years of teaching, I am still feeling enthusiastic about it. Every year, we are facing new students, and that means new challenges. We teachers need to continuously upgrade, and we have to integrate new, innovative approaches into our teaching. And we have to win our students' trust so that they will approach us when they encounter problems."*

SEAN KILMARTIN



Sean Kilmartin has been the head coach of the Taiwan Tech basketball teams, and a PE instructor at Taiwan Tech since 2018. The Irish national has had an international career as a professional basketball player in the US and in Spain. After an injury, he turned to coaching at the Canarias Basketball Academy in Tenerife. From there, he was recruited by Songshan High School in Taipei to train the school's basketball team. After one season with Songshan High School, Sean joined Taiwan Tech.

Q: Did you just finish a class?

Sean: Yes, I just finished training the school teams. We start at 6:30 in the morning. I am training both the men's and the women's teams.

Q: Basketball has not been a popular sport for girls in Taiwan traditionally. What is your impression of the women players here?

Sean: Actually, the girls work really hard, and they are very focused and attentive. Although we have had only a small team for the last two years, they have been doing very well in competitions with larger teams. Also, in the girls' team, the language barrier is less of an issue.

Q: Is the language barrier a big problem in general?

Sean: My Mandarin is not yet good enough, so I am teaching my classes in English. There is a language barrier, but I have managed to get over it. I am using a lot of visual materials such as videos, and I show moves for them to practice immediately. For the theory part, I would use translations. The great thing is, that students are becoming more and more confident with their English. It's good that they can use English in a relaxed atmosphere.

Q: You are also teaching regular PE classes. How popular is basketball with Taiwan Tech students?

Sean: I am teaching beginner classes. Taiwan really has a basketball culture, most students are into watching games, and most of them have played during their high school years, but not many of them had the chance to receive

instruction. My classes are always over-subscribed, but I never reject anybody, so I have classes with 60 - 70 students. Fortunately, we have really good facilities here, with three outdoor basketball courts, and rooms inside the gymnasium.

Q: How has the current pandemic impacted you?

Sean: There was a lot of discussion within the sports department and with the school on how to deal with the situation. We decided to go on with the outdoor classes and with the training of the school teams, but we are taking precautions. We split students into smaller groups to reduce contact and make sure each group has got its own ball. We disinfect the basketballs after use, and we encourage frequent hand-sanitizing.

Q: Do you have students who are thinking about a professional career in basketball? What kind of advice do you give them?

Sean: Of course, I am happy about their passion for basketball, but I also tell them that it is education that will make them stand in the long run. Taiwan Tech is one of the best schools in Taiwan, so students come here to get an academic degree. They have to understand that it takes a lot extra to become a basketball professional.

Q: Are you also playing on a basketball team here?

Sean: Yes, Taiwan Tech has a great faculty team, and every Thursday I am playing with the Taiwan Tech professors, some of whom are excellent players. And all of them are very ambitious, so there's a real competitive spirit in the air!



109年度
U-start 創新創業計畫

勇於挑戰 大膽創新

歡迎大專院校在校生及
近五學年度畢業生踴躍參加

TAIWAN TECH SUCCESSFUL IN U-START PLAN FOR INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

While most countries are in lockdown mode, life in Taiwan is still largely normal, and on-site events can still be organized. One such event was the U-start Plan for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Project, which aims to nurture a culture of entrepreneurship in Taiwan's higher education institutions. The project encourages students, including international students, to present innovative business ideas in four categories, i.e. Manufacturing Technology, Innovative Services, Cultural and Creative Education, and Social Enterprises.

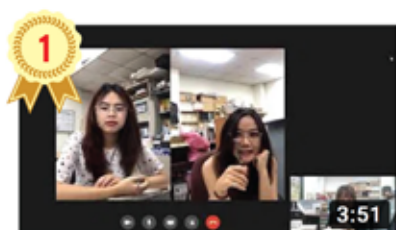


For a second year in a row, ten Taiwan Tech student teams managed to convince jurors of the U-start Plan for Innovation and Entrepreneurship with their innovative business ideas. Out of the 75 student teams from all over Taiwan that were successful in the first round of the 2020 U-start contest, ten were from Taiwan Tech, more than from any other institution. U-start offers funding of 350,000 NTD (US\$ 11,500) for each of the 75 teams that made it to the first stage, and another 150,000 NTD (US\$ 5,000) per team will go to on-campus incubation

centers which support the students in preparing their projects. Thus, once again, Taiwan Tech has been living up to its reputation of being one of Taiwan's most entrepreneurial universities!

2020 INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VIDEO COMPETITION: LIFE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

This spring term, Taiwan Tech's usually vibrant campus life was heavily impacted by the Covid19 pandemic, with most of our on-campus activities cancelled. To make up for this, the Office of International Affairs held an International Student Video Competition inviting foreign students to share their experiences during the epidemic prevention period with a video. We received 14 interesting and highly creative submissions that showed how students perceived and experienced this exceptional time in Taiwan. The following five videos received the most likes on YouTube - you are welcome to watch them and enjoy the creativity of Taiwan Tech students!



Nguyen Thi Mo
<Distancing but still in touch>

youtu.be/bY_BPSFTItY



Shienny Lilianto
<The differences between pandemic prevention measures in Taiwan and Indonesia>

youtu.be/Tyf6xh1Tx1Y



Fendy Yoesin
<COVID-19 Video>

youtu.be/TO176Nji6Yo



Nguyen Huynh Minh Tam
<My Life During COVID-19 >

youtu.be/AGm8pl5JJL4



Shelly Intan Kusuma
<COVID-19 Video>

youtu.be/oZWFcXjjau0



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More videos ...

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