

THURSDAY JANUARY 5, 2023

Life • Selena Tan's 'summer camp' with J. Lo | C4



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THE STRAITS TIMES

Workplace injury • Firm fined \$170k

Construction firm EC Builders has been fined \$70,000 for failing to properly supervise a worker who suffered a brain injury after falling from a height of 12m. Mr Ali Mohammad Sobag had been told to inspect and tighten the lifelines at a worksite when he slipped and fell.

SEE THE BIG STORY - A2

Myanmar • Junta pledges 'fair' elections

Myanmar's junta on Wednesday said that it would hold "free and fair" multiparty elections and an election commission was meeting parties for discussions.

SEE THE BIG STORY - A4

US says no cause for China reprisals over travel curbs

WHO tells Beijing its data does not give accurate picture of Covid-19 surge, deaths

BEIJING - The White House has said there was no reason Beijing should retaliate against the US and other nations that have imposed Covid-19 restrictions on its travellers, adding that the moves were justified on public health grounds as China experiences a surge in cases. "There's no cause for retaliation here, just because countries around the world are taking prudent health measures to protect their citizens," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said at a Tuesday briefing, a day after China suggested it could take "countermeasures" against countries placing curbs on passengers. "This is coming from our experts

Celebration of art in the Civic District



The Padang is host to Ephemeral (above), an immersive light and sound installation which uses inflatable spheres to mimic bubbles, by Sydney-based design studio Atelier Situ. Aimed at capturing ephemerality in visual form and evoking a sense of childlike wonder, it is among newly commissioned works by local and international artists featured in the Light to Night festival, which is themed "Here and Now" this year. There will also be over 60 programmes aimed at fostering a greater appreciation for art during the festival, which runs from Jan 6 to 26 in the Civic District. Admission is free. ST PHOTO: DESMOND WEE

US says no cause for China reprisals over travel curbs

WHO tells Beijing its data does not give accurate picture of Covid-19 surge, deaths

BEIJING - The White House has said there was no reason Beijing should retaliate against the US and other nations that have imposed Covid-19 restrictions on its travellers, adding that the moves were justified on public health grounds as China experiences a surge in cases. "There's no cause for retaliation here, just because countries around the world are taking prudent health measures to protect their citizens," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said at a Tuesday briefing, a day after China suggested it could take "countermeasures" against countries placing curbs on passengers. "This is coming from our experts

government's official newspaper on Wednesday rallied citizens for a "final victory" over the virus. "China and the Chinese people will surely win the final victory against the epidemic," the Communist Party of China's People's Daily said in an editorial, rebutting criticism of its tough anti-virus regime that triggered historic protests last year. China reported five new Covid-19 deaths for Tuesday, compared with three a day earlier. The latest figure brought the official death toll to 5,258, very low by global standards. But the death toll is widely believed to be much higher. British-based health data firm Airtinity has said about 9,000 people in China are probably dying each day from Covid-19. While global health officials are trying to determine the facts of China's Covid-19 situation, the

transparency of its data on the spread of the virus, has come under increasing scrutiny abroad. "Due to... the lack of adequate and transparent epidemiological and viral genome sequence data being recorded from the PRC, we're taking deliberate, proactive steps to slow the spread of Covid-19 and to be on alert for any potential Covid-19 variants," State Department spokesman Ned Price said in a briefing on Tuesday, referring to China's official name, the People's Republic of China. Ms Mao took issue with Mr Price's comments at a briefing on Wednesday, saying, "China has been sharing data and information with the international community responsibly". The World Health Organisation's (WHO) emergency director, Dr Mike Ryan, told a media briefing on Wednesday that Chi-

na's Covid-19 data is not giving an accurate picture of the situation there and under-represents the number of hospitalisations and deaths from the disease. The comment came as the WHO prepares to meet Chinese scientists on Thursday as part of a wider briefing among member states on the global Covid-19 situation. The two sides had earlier met on Tuesday. Earlier in the briefing, WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus also asked China "for more rapid, regular, reliable data on hospitalisations and deaths, as well as more comprehensive, real-time viral sequencing". No new coronavirus variant has been found in China, data released by the WHO showed on Wednesday, easing some concerns about the outbreak. Mr Willie Walsh, head of the world's biggest airline association Iata, criticised decisions by governments to impose Covid-19 tests and other measures on travellers from China as ineffective "knee-jerk" reactions. European Union health officials were also to meet on Wednesday to discuss a coordinated response to the China outbreak. BLOMBERG, REUTERS

SEE THE BIG STORY - A4

Govt may set emission limits on formaldehyde fumes, a health risk

Ang Qing

The Government will "very seriously" consider recommendations by industry leaders to set formaldehyde emission limits in building products and household furnishings, said Minister for Sustainability and the Environment Grace Fu on Wednesday. Formaldehyde is found in adhesives, composite wood and paint, which are used in some indoor products like cabinets. The pungent pollutant, commonly found in these items, releases particles that are hazardous to health at high levels of exposure and can result in cancer after long periods of time. Ms Fu was speaking at the official launch of guidelines and recommendations by the Alliance for Action on Sustainable Spaces to ensure that air breathed indoors is cleaner and greener. They were developed in consultation with industry stakeholders by the alliance, which was initiated by the Singapore Business Federation (SBF), Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) and Singapore Green Building Council in November 2022. Under the alliance's proposal for regulation, companies will have to submit test reports for all products for certification before sale and provide proof that the goods sold meet emission limits. These guidelines come as the spread of Covid-19 due to poor ventilation and poor air quality led the Government and many businesses to tackle the issue. Among them was C&W Services, where the official launch was held. The firm, the facilities and engineering arm of global real estate services firm Cushman & Wakefield, remodelled its office in Chai Chee between October 2021 and March 2022 to monitor and maintain good indoor air quality. The alliance said on Wednesday that as people spend about 90 per cent of time indoors, poor indoor air quality poses a health risk. But before accepting the alliance's recommendation to put in place regulations, the Government will need to consider criteria, including the level at which emissions should be considered harmful, and which parties should be regulated. "So we have to think through all levers for policymaking before we can arrive at a decision, but this is something we are seriously looking at."

She was responding to concerns that the guidelines lack regulatory teeth at a fireside chat session with more than 40 members of the alliance and industry stakeholders. The guidelines are to adopt emission limits for products and indoor furnishings, keep local standards for good indoor air quality, acquire certifications that recognise efforts to maintain good indoor air quality, implement workplace safety and health guidelines, and monitor indoor air quality. Other recommendations are incentivising the industry to create and adopt low-emitting products, as well as fostering greater industry-public collaboration. "Supported by the Building and Construction Authority and National Environment Agency, the alliance also aims to help the industry seize opportunities in the green economy and support the Singapore Green Plan 2030. SBF chairman Lim Ming Yon said the new guidelines will help fill the gap in existing guidelines for air quality in buildings, which might not cover situations where tenants conduct their own renovation af-

CONTINUED ON PAGE A2

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Must-reads

THE BIG STORY US says no cause for China reprisals over travel curbs The United States and at least a dozen other countries are requiring travellers from China to show a negative Covid-19 test before entering. The White House has said there was no reason for Beijing to retaliate against them, and the moves were justified on public health grounds as China experiences a surge in cases. A1

THE BIG STORY Taiwan's Evergreen gives massive year-end bonuses Taiwan's Evergreen Marine has rewarded staff with year-end bonuses worth between 30 and 52 months of salary each, after posting bumper profits. Local media reported how most of the shipping giant's junior staff with a monthly salary of NT\$40,000 (S\$1,750) took home a bonus worth NT\$2 million each. A6



Supporters of Congress Party leader Rahul Gandhi participating in his Bharat Jodo, or Unite India, march in New Delhi on Dec 24. Mr Gandhi has covered more than 3,000km so far. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

WORLD Congress Party leader's epic walk across India may not lead to votes

Bharat Jodo, or Unite India, march. His aim is to connect with the ordinary people and revive the fortunes of the party. While it seems that he has accomplished what he had set out to do, all this love may not translate into votes. A14

LIFE A full spectrum of art for Singapore Art Week A full spectrum of artworks will light up Singapore Art Week 2023, which opens on Friday. Highlights include Art SG, South-east Asia's largest art fair, and the Artwalk Festival, where Katong Joo Chiat and Little India will have four new murals, including Dekar Di Mata, Joah Di Hati (right) by Mohammed Zulkarnaen Othman. C13

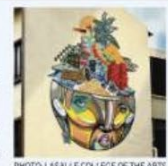


PHOTO: LASALLE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

WORLD Divided Republicans leave US House in limbo

The top post in the United States House of Representatives was left vacant as the legislative body adjourned after failing to choose a Speaker, leaving it unable to govern. Republican leader Kevin McCarthy failed to win the vote of a simple majority in the Chamber, amid opposition from some members of his party. A8

SINGAPORE Walk-in for Covid-19 jobs off to smooth start

The walk-in option for Covid-19 jobs at vaccination centres got off to a smooth start, with most people saying they waited between five and 10 minutes for their turn. Eligible individuals of any age group can now walk into vaccination centres from Mondays to Saturdays without an appointment. A17

Firm fined \$170k over worker who fell from height

Sarah Koh

Construction company EC Builders has been fined \$70,000 under the Workplace Safety and Health Act for failing to properly supervise an employee, who fell from a height and suffered a traumatic brain injury. The employee, Mr Ali Mohammad Sobag, was hired as a construction worker, the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) said on Wednesday.

The incident happened on Aug 1, 2021, after a supervisor told him to inspect and tighten the lifelines at a worksite in Tampines Road. Mr Ali, whose age and nationality were not disclosed by MOM, walked on top of steel bars that were placed on a formwork structure to do the work. But he was not anchored to a lifeline, the ministry said. He slipped and fell from a height of 12m, about four storeys high. He was taken to Changi General Hospital, and was diagnosed with traumatic brain injury. MOM said its investigations revealed that the company failed to ensure Mr Ali had relevant training and instructions to install lifelines, and did not ensure that he was properly supervised when he was tightening the lifelines at a height. The ministry also found that the company failed to properly consider the hazards relating to installation of lifelines, and the health and safety risks posed by this work activity. "In the case of EC Builders, there was a lack of basic safety precautions and respect for safety standards and requirements. As a result, a worker was seriously injured," said MOM. It added that providing a safe work environment is a basic responsibility of all employers. Falling from a height is among the top causes of workplace deaths in 2022. The year saw 46 workplace fatalities, the highest number recorded since 2016, when 66 people died. sarahkoh@sph.com.sg

Ensuring cleaner air

Ang Qing looks at how good air quality is maintained at the Chai Chee office of C&W Services, the facilities and engineering arm of Cushman & Wakefield, and summarises new guidelines proposed by the Alliance for Action on Sustainable Spaces to improve indoor air quality.

Sensors Indoor air quality sensors are installed, with each covering an area of about 300 sq m, to monitor 10 parameters. These include PM2.5, which is fine particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in size - or a twentieth of the diameter of a strand of human hair.

Air purifiers They help to clean the air, including reducing contaminants such as airborne microbes and fungi.

Dashboard Information about the parameters is captured every 15 minutes by a cloud platform and can be viewed on a dashboard. The reliability of the monitoring and measurement system is checked annually by a laboratory.



- GUIDELINES**
- 1 Adopt emission limits for products and furnishings used indoors**
 - The guidelines propose emission limits for formaldehyde in items that cannot be easily removed or changed once installed or applied.
 - These include paint, adhesives and composite wood, used in cabinets, for instance.
 - Emissions of formaldehyde are known to occur over a long period of time and can cause cancer.
 - 2 Adopt Singapore standards for good indoor air quality**
 - Although there are no specific regulations governing indoor air quality here, building owners, facility managers and occupants can take guidance from existing standards.
 - 3 Acquire certifications**
 - Industry stakeholders are encouraged to obtain certifications as endorsement of their efforts to maintain good indoor air quality.
 - 4 Implement workplace safety and health guidelines**
 - Employers should aim to follow these guidelines for their employees' welfare.
 - 5 Monitor indoor air quality and implement mitigating measures**
 - Indoor air quality should be monitored after any renovation.
 - If emission levels do not comply with proposed limits, actions should be taken to reduce them.

SOURCE: C&W SERVICES, SINGAPORE BUSINESS FEDERATION, SINGAPORE GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL, SINGAPORE FURNITURE INDUSTRIES COUNCIL. PHOTOS: C&W SERVICES, LIMMIE ZAOBAO, ST FILE. STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

Guidelines proposed to boost indoor air quality

FROM A1

neering arm of global real estate services firm Cushman & Wakefield, remodelled its office in Chai Chee between October 2021 and March 2022 to monitor and maintain good indoor air quality. The alliance said on Wednesday that as people spend about 90 per cent of time indoors, poor indoor air quality poses a health risk. But before accepting the alliance's recommendation to put in place regulations, the Government will need to consider criteria, including the level at which emissions should be considered harmful, and which parties should be regulated. "So we have to think through all levers for policymaking before we can arrive at a decision, but this is something we are seriously looking at."

ter a building is constructed. Citing his experience as the former president and group chief officer of Capitaland, he added: "In that process of additional renovation, if the users or tenants are not aware of the type of materials that

they are using, it may compromise the indoor air quality." SFIC president Phua Boon Huat said the council had committed to supplying or adopting low- or no-formaldehyde products and solutions.

"These new industry guidelines would mean the public and consumers will be able to enjoy cleaner and greener urban indoor spaces in future," he noted. aar@sph.com.sg

民众俱乐部现人龙 年长者排队领取邻里购物券



约20名以年长者为主的公众，星期三（1月4日）下午2时左右在大巴窑民众俱乐部排队，准备领取社区发展理事会邻里购物券。（李瑞祥摄）

卢慧萍 报道
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2023年社区发展理事会邻里购物券发放第二天，一些民众俱乐部排队领取人龙，他们大多为年长的市民，平均等候30分钟至一小时才拿到邻里购物券。

《联合早报》记者星期三（1月4日）上午走访义顺、坎基拉、大巴窑的民众俱乐部，发现一些没有智能手机或不熟悉数码购物券的年长者，纷纷前往自家附近的民众俱乐部排队领取购物券。

上午10时，坎基拉民众俱乐部购物券排队第一波，正在处理领取购物券手续，约两个小时后才结束。

居民委员会代表李明平（60岁）早上9时55分带着两名俱乐部成员及两名东家，准备领取邻里购物券，却遇上网络问题，他看到现场有约五千人排队，以年长者居多。多人向工作人员表示先别排队，但有人拒绝在等候区等待。

“工作人员很抱歉，上面有民众俱乐部来电，说下午快回家，中午12时才开始排队，排队人数已减少，我排队到40分钟后才拿到购物券。”

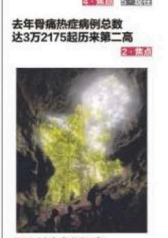
在义顺中巴民众俱乐部排队的年长者卢慧萍（50岁），获得工作人员快速派发邻里购物券大赞工作人员，她利用智能手机领取数码购物券。

“我虽然有用Supers电子账号，但习惯用手机上网，因此排队领取购物券，需要排队等候，也方便家人购买，如今有了数码购物券，会很方便。”来自志愿者的退休人士陈春美（67岁）说，不想去排队购物券，她表示不介意排队等候，但需要排队等候，工作人员确认后就会打印纸质购物券，过程不到5分钟。

在大巴窑中巴民众俱乐部，工作人员安排一些椅子，避免让排队等候的年长者久候，多人可在40分钟内拿到购物券。

昨日，近12万张数码邻里购物券，可换取价值300元的社区发展购物券，其中150元可在300多家连锁店使用，另外150元可在高等商店和小贩中心使用，全年可与100多家商家和商店使用，全年可与100多家商家和商店使用，全年可与100多家商家和商店使用。

创作《上海滩》等金曲 潘乐坛教父文耀辉逝世



潘乐坛教父文耀辉逝世

王瑞婷 报道
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首个在我国研发的抗体偶联药物获得美国食品和药物管理局的批准展开人体试验，可为无法通过手术治疗，却已用尽标准治疗疗法的癌症患者带来新希望。

这款抗体偶联药物（antibody-drug conjugate）EBC-129可选择性地靶向一系列实体瘤中的癌细胞，包括肺癌、胃癌、卵巢癌、乳腺癌、以及结直肠癌等。

文耀辉曾任香港无线电视音乐部总监，创作了《上海滩》、《铁血丹心》、《世间始终你好》等经典金曲。他于2022年12月28日逝世，享年88岁。

改善空气质量避免损害健康 新行业准则吁政府监管室内甲醛排放

甲醛是一种室内空气污染物，具有强烈刺激性气味，一般上从建筑材料或家具装修挥发，高浓度甲醛危害肝脏、神经系统和免疫系统，长期接触甚至可能致癌。

刚装修的房子和新家具容易造成室内空气超标，长期吸入体内可引发呼吸系统和过敏反应。为了改善室内空气品质，我国出台了室内空气质量标准，对新建住宅、公共建筑、学校、医院、商店、办公室、住宅等场所的室内空气质量提出了具体要求。产品应符合室内空气质量标准，这个标准于2021年11月由新加坡工商总会、新加坡家具工业理事会和新加坡绿色建筑委员会联合发布。

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新加坡工商总会、新加坡家具工业理事会和新加坡绿色建筑委员会联合发布。

欧盟多国支持强制撤离前新冠病检测 IATA: 收紧中国旅客入境措施无助防疫

李婉莹 整理
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《布鲁塞尔条约》欧盟成员国大多支持要求中国旅客在登机前接受新冠检测，并一同同意有必要对中国不断变化的疫情形势，以及中国不同省份检测增加带来的影响。

不过，国际航空运输协会（IATA）表示，入境检测措施无法有效阻止病毒传播。IATA理事长佐佐木表示（1月4日）发表声明，批评一些国家对中国游客实施强制检测的措施，是起不到作用的“条件反射反应”。他说：“过去三年中已经发生无数的错误，看到了错误的条件反射反应令我们失去信心。”

佐佐木说，这些措施在过去一年中已造成全球航空业损失约1000亿美元。IATA表示，2021年底新冠病毒在欧洲流行的研究，显示病毒在入境前就已经传播开来。IATA表示，入境检测措施无法有效阻止病毒传播。IATA理事长佐佐木表示（1月4日）发表声明，批评一些国家对中国游客实施强制检测的措施，是起不到作用的“条件反射反应”。他说：“过去三年中已经发生无数的错误，看到了错误的条件反射反应令我们失去信心。”

为癌患带来新希望 我国研发抗体偶联药物获准人体试验

这款抗体偶联药物EBC-129可选择性地靶向一系列实体瘤中的癌细胞，包括肺癌、结直肠癌等。因此，比起同时杀死癌细胞和损害健康细胞的传统化疗，使用抗体偶联药物的副作用更少。

王瑞婷 报道
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首个在我国研发的抗体偶联药物获得美国食品和药物管理局的批准展开人体试验，可为无法通过手术治疗，却已用尽标准治疗疗法的癌症患者带来新希望。

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首个在我国研发的抗体偶联药物获得美国食品和药物管理局的批准展开人体试验。新药物EBC-129由本地多个机构合作研发，有望帮助无法通过手术治疗的实体肿瘤患者。（新加坡科技研究局提供）

昼夜璀璨艺术节周五登场 60艺术装置与活动吁珍视当下

尹云芳 报道
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为期三天的艺术节于星期五（1月6日）正式登场，聚集新加坡、泰国、英国和澳大利亚等七个国家的艺术作品。

今年的主题是“此时此刻”（Here and Now），在迈入新的一年之际，邀请公众反思所处的时代和环境，并整合艺术作为记录和回应个人经历的作用。

国家美术馆穹顶天花板缓缓绽放的花朵，和随访客步伐从日轮更迭到日落色彩的天空雕塑，以及大屏幕上缤纷多彩的“泡泡”装置等，带领访客感受时间的拥有与流逝。

拥有超过50个餐饮、艺术品牌和户外艺术装置的“Art X Social”节日期间，每隔两小时重返皇后坊（Empress Lane）与安泰廊路，让访客尽情吃喝玩乐。

昼夜璀璨艺术节由策展人陈伟强主持，陈伟强说，希望透过这些艺术活动，由于无惧创作人，访客也能找到自己的步调，与艺术交流。

期间，还有趣味问答之夜。

这款抗体偶联药物的副作用更少。新加坡科技研究局星期三（1月4日）发布公告宣布上述消息时说，新药物和癌症筛选的试验由新加坡科技研究局生物物理研究中心、实验药物研发中心，以及新加坡国立癌症中心协力研发。

文耀辉指出，EBC-129作为抗体偶联药物，是将一种单克隆抗体（monoclonal antibody）与高毒性药物通过接头偶联形成，与此类药物的药物相似。但这类药物的抗体只会与癌细胞的表面受体（epitopes）结合，之后释放细胞毒性成分以摧毁癌细胞，不会损害健康细胞。

新药物使用的毒性成分为一甲基亚硝脲（monomethyl auristatin E，简称MMAE）。这款合成抗肿瘤药已在市上其他抗体偶联药物中，通过了广泛临床试验且获准用于临床。

此外，药物的研发过程可以加速进行，主要因团队可提前预测成分和副作用。也知道有效的剂量。

新药物提高综合疗法可能性

加上MMAE与检查点抑制剂（checkpoint inhibitors）等免疫治疗药物结合，显示可引起免疫反应性细胞死亡（immunogenic cell death）的强烈免疫反应，新药物也提高了综合疗法的可能性。

新加坡国立癌症中心临床试

验与流行病学科学部主任陈浩文副教授团队、美国食品和药物管理局的批准证明了新加坡机构之间的强大合作，可推动从实验室到临床治疗的开发过程。

“最重要的是，EBC-129解决了详尽标准治疗的病患需求，我提供了直接针对癌细胞，不损害健康细胞的新抗体偶联药物。”

临床试验将确定EBC-129在癌症病患中的安全性和耐受性，之后再评估药物在不同肿瘤类型中的抗癌活性。

研究将招募有扩散性实体肿瘤，却不能通过手术治疗的癌症病患。

文耀辉指出，团队接下来将向卫生科学局和有关的道德委员会申请批准，让试验通过国立癌症中心和加拿大国立癌症中心招募病患。

政府大厦大堂场出现两个“大号扇”，人们侧一说话，声音清脆地传送到另一端人的耳中，即使相隔50米。

这个面向最高法院旧址的互动艺术名为“聆听大堂”（Hearing Parlour），是今年昼夜璀璨艺术节（Light to Night Festival）的大型装置之一。

擅长听觉装置艺术的创作者陈惠华（47岁）说，装置的仿声装置反映法院的主要功能之一，即通过听证会解决人与人之间的纠纷。而走到角落能“无缝衔接”，听到所有的声音，寓意包容社会的不同声音。

有趣的是，她在狐狸装置的中央就会出现“拟声装置”，只能听到自己或相近人的声音，引人深思。

作为策展人陈伟强的牵头人，昼夜璀璨艺术节今年会融入实体、虚拟和互动的超160个艺术装置与活动，带动访客过去、去、去。



昼夜璀璨艺术节周五登场，聚集新加坡、泰国、英国和澳大利亚等七个国家的艺术作品。

泰湾S 浪漫花季 春之旅 \$1588 (7天)

即日起台艺人 唱跳

特别出发: 2023年2月6日(六) & 7日(日)

8天台湾精选游 (TWTS)

出发日期: 2023年1月6日

入住温馨和颐酒店

本地企业安装室内空气质量感应器 确保职员工作环境健康

王婉文 报道
angy@zhq.com.sg

1556名前线员工中，有130人确诊。无法回到公司上班。这让公司进一步了解到，健康工作环境对员工和企业都至关重要。

冠疫情促使公众更加重视空气质量，本地企业为了保障职员有健康的工作环境，在办公室安装11个室内空气质量感应器，并持续引入相关新技术。

疫情期间，高伟环（Cushman & Wakefield）旗下的设施服务公司C&W Services，10月翻新时，大量融入可提升室内空气质量的最新科技，让500多名员工安心回公司办公。

永续发展与环境部长傅海鹰星期三（1月4日）出席在C&W Services举办的室内空气质量行业论坛，疫情让人们认识到何处处理通风问题，了解什么是正确的换气方式，以确保工作场所安全，并且汇集各种想法，进而制定更好的管理模式。

C&W Services执行董事克雷格（Natalie Craig）受访时说，健康办公室共装置11个室内空气质量感应器，每个感应器覆盖的

活蟹促销 仅限一个月

peach garden