

Singapore disinfecting robot trialled in virus fight

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Singapore researchers have invented a disinfecting robot with an arm that mimics human movement, to help take the load off overworked

cleaners during the coronavirus pandemic.

The "XDBOT" is a box-shaped creation on wheels mounted with a dexterous robotic limb, which can reach awkward locations such as under tables and beds.

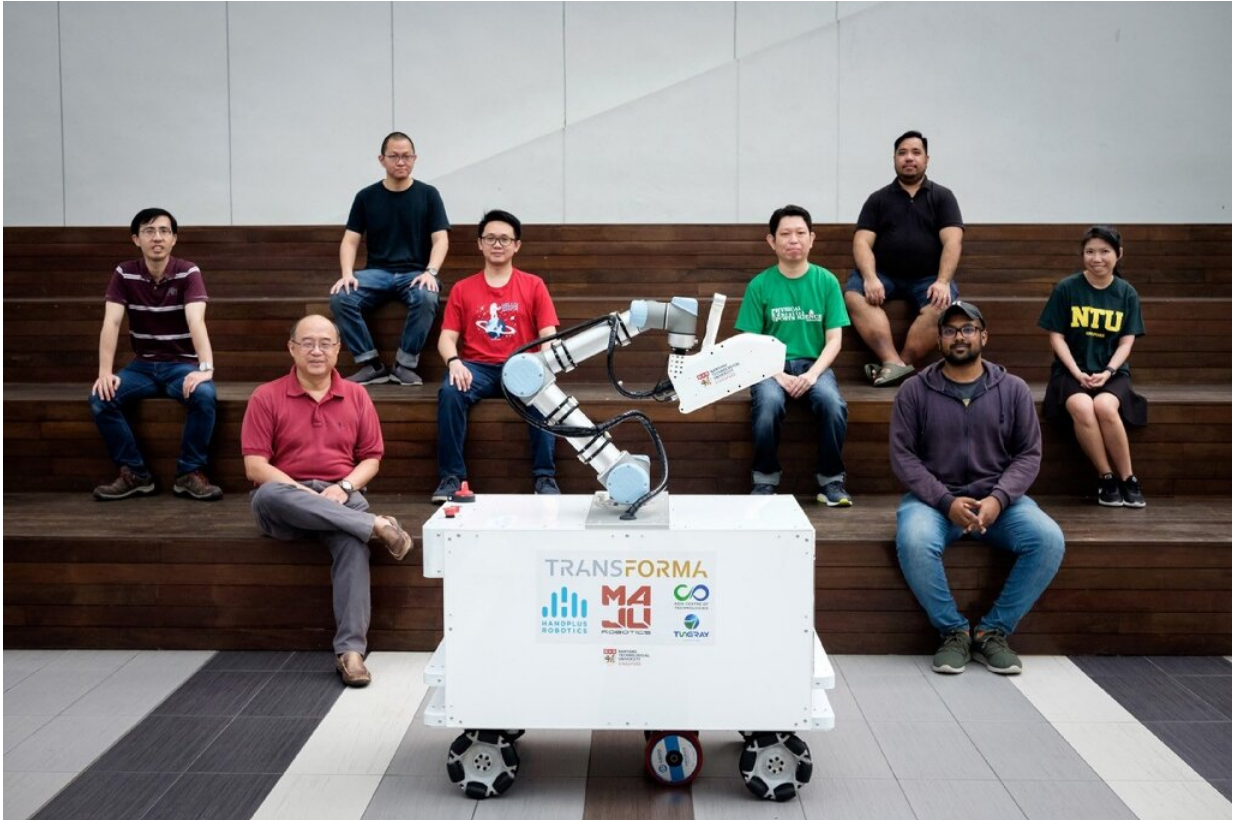
The [robot](#), built by researchers at the city-state's Nanyang Technological University (NTU), has a high-powered nozzle for spraying disinfectant and can tackle large surfaces rapidly.

It can be controlled remotely with a laptop or tablet, reducing the risk to cleaners of becoming infected with the virus, which has killed over 140,000 people worldwide.

"Using our new robot from a distance, a [human operator](#) can precisely control the disinfection process... with zero contact with surfaces," said Chen I-Ming, an NTU scientist who led the project.

The cleaning robot differs from others on the market, which are mainly intended to clean floor surfaces and cannot disinfect odd-shaped objects.

The robot could help meet growing calls in Singapore for more deep-cleaning and disinfection services, with reports suggesting cleaners are having to work long hours as demand explodes during the pandemic.



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Singapore is battling a fast-moving second wave of infections, with case numbers jumping by 728 Thursday to bring the total to 4,427, including 10 deaths. The outbreak's epicentre are crowded foreign worker dormitories.

From Thailand to Israel, robots are increasingly being used in the fight against the coronavirus, as they are seen as fast, efficient, and contagion-proof.

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