## Thailand enters global race for vaccine

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内容：Thailand is conducting tests on macaque monkeys as it races to produce a cheaper, alternative coronavirus vaccine it hopes will be ready by 2021, a top researcher has said. More than 100 candidate vaccines are currently in various stages of development around the world, at least eight of which are in clinical trials with humans, according to the World Health Organisation. Oxford University researchers are considered the frontrunners in the race, starting clinical trials last month on a version based on a different virus that causes infections in chimpanzees. Dr Suchinda Malaivitjitnond, director of the National Primate Research Centre of Thailand who oversaw Saturday's vaccine injections to an initial group of 13 monkeys, said on Monday she hoped a "Made in Thailand" vaccine would be cheaper than a European or American drug. The testing phase on the macaque monkeys came after trials on mice were successful, researchers said. They are working in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania in the US using a new technology based on MRNA, a type of genetic material never before used to make a vaccine. The process entails injecting a short sequence of viral genetic material to trigger an immune response by producing proteins acting against the virus. At least two other companies – pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and Usbased Moderna – are developing vaccines using the same technology, with the latter reporting positive preliminary results last week from clinical trials. Thailand was the first country outside of China to detect an infection in midjanuary but has so far reported just over 3,000 cases and 57 deaths. If the tests on the macaques go well, human trials should start in October, said Dr Kiat Ruxrungtham, chair of the Chula Vaccine Research Centre at Chulalongkorn University. "Our dream is that low and middleincome countries should not stay a buyer for our whole lives." No school Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte said he will not allow students to go back to school until a coronavirus vaccine is available, even as some countries resume inperson classes. Children were due to return to school at the end of August after classes for more than 25 million primary and secondary students were shut down in March as the contagion took off in the Philippines. But in a speech aired late on Monday, Duterte said the risk was too great, even if it held students back academically. "Unless I am sure that they are really safe it's useless to be talking about opening of classes," the president said. "For me, vaccine first. If the vaccine is already there, then it's okay," he added. "If no one graduates, then so be it." Though researchers have launched an unprecedented global effort to quickly develop a vaccine, it is not clear when a viable candidate will be proven and distributed on a large scale. Public school normally runs from June to April in the Philippines, but authorities pushed back the start as cases rose and a strict lockdown brought most of the nation to a halt. In order to ease classroom crowding, the education ministry had already announced a mix of distancelearning measures, including online classes, would be used for the coming school year. Millions live in deep poverty in the Philippines and do not have access to computers at home, which would be key for the viability of online classes. The pandemic has kept children around the globe home for months, but inperson classes have begun to resume in countries including South Korea and France. The Philippines' coronavirus case count reached more than 14,300 on Monday, including 873 deaths.