

SEVEN DAYS

The news in brief

RESEARCH

Study retracted

A landmark paper proposing a link between an influenza vaccine and narcolepsy was retracted on 31 July. The study, published last year (A. K. De la Herrán-Arita *et al. Sci. Transl. Med.* 5, 216ra176; 2013), reported that some people with narcolepsy had immune cells that target a wakefulness-maintaining neurotransmitter. The cells also recognize some components of flu vaccines, it said, and the results explained why some children in Europe developed narcolepsy after receiving a vaccine for H1N1 swine flu. But the team discovered that it could not reproduce its own findings, and so retracted the paper. See go.nature.com/hbrvri for more.

DOE opens access

The US Department of Energy (DOE) is making papers written by the researchers it funds freely available, it said on 4 August. A DOE online portal will link to peer-reviewed manuscripts and final-text journal papers within 12 months of their publication. Up to 30,000 studies are expected to be made available annually. The department is the first US federal agency to respond to orders for public access and data-sharing issued by the government 18 months ago. See go.nature.com/jp5owp for more.

Stellar survey

The European Space Agency's Gaia space telescope is ready to begin its five-year survey of about 1 billion stars in the Milky Way, the agency said on 29 July. Gaia will produce the most accurate three-dimensional map of the Galaxy yet. As it orbits the Sun, it will measure distances to stars by recording tiny shifts



ISAAC KASAMANI/AFP/GETTY

Anti-gay law overturned on technicality

Uganda's anti-gay law, which punishes some homosexual behaviour with life in prison, was nullified by a court in Kampala on 1 August. The move could help efforts to study HIV transmission and control the spread of the virus. Gay people in Uganda and other African nations are frequently unable to access

information on HIV, and those who become infected are often denied treatment (see *Nature* 509, 274–275; 2014). The court ruled that the Anti-Homosexuality Act was invalid because too few members of parliament voted. It is not yet clear whether Uganda's government will appeal the ruling.

in their positions, and will observe the stars' movement through space. The telescope launched on 19 December but operations were delayed by light leaking into the detector, where it could have degraded observations of the faintest targets.

EVENTS

Hacker attack

Information technology (IT) systems at Canada's National Research Council have come under a cyberattack, the agency said on 29 July. The Canadian government blamed the intrusion on Chinese state-sponsored hackers. No details were provided about what data were accessed, but the council told scientists to expect disruptions. It

said it is overhauling its IT infrastructure and security, including integrating the system with the broader government network to help protect against future attacks. This work could take around one year to complete.

Ebola emergency

Officials are stepping up efforts to contain the West African Ebola outbreak, which had killed 887 people as of 1 August. The president of Sierra Leone declared a state of emergency on 30 July, allowing the police and military to quarantine infected homes and villages. The World Health Organization (WHO) also announced a US\$100-million plan to boost the number of emergency-response staff and scheduled

a meeting for 6 August to discuss the international implications of the epidemic.

FACILITIES

Space instruments

NASA's Mars 2020 rover mission will carry seven instruments to collect rocks for transport back to Earth. On 31 July NASA announced the winning instruments, which were chosen from 58 competitors. They include a zoomable camera, a machine to generate oxygen from carbon dioxide, and radar to explore geology up to half a kilometre deep. On 30 July, NASA also announced that the International Space Station will get two new instruments to observe how changes in Earth's climate and land use affect

HANS SAUTTER how forests and ecosystems function. See go.nature.com/zrbun7 for more.

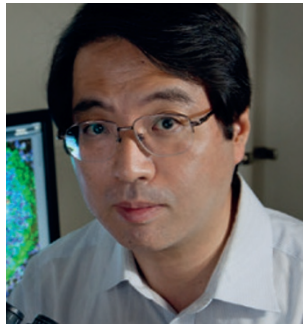
Neutrino detector

An international collaboration to build a neutrino detector in China was announced on 30 July in Beijing. The Jiangmen Underground Neutrino Observatory (JUNO) project, led by the Institute of High Energy Physics in Beijing, will bring together researchers from countries including France, Russia and the United States. The detector will study neutrinos coming from supernovae, Earth and nearby nuclear reactors. It will be the world's largest liquid scintillator detector, which captures luminescence when a neutrino interacts with atomic nuclei in the liquid, and aims to give the first measurement of the relative masses of the three known types of neutrino. The facility will be completed by 2020.

PEOPLE

Stem-cell suicide

One of Japan's top stem-cell researchers, Yoshiki Sasai (pictured), died on 5 August in an apparent suicide. The 52-year-old researcher, who worked at the RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology in Kobe, was best known for coaxing embryonic stem cells to differentiate into various



types of mature cells. In 2011, he stunned the world by mimicking an early stage in the development of the eye *in vitro* using embryonic stem cells. But over the past six months he became caught up in the controversy surrounding two *Nature* papers that claimed embryonic stem cells could be created through a method called stimulus-triggered acquisition of pluripotency (STAP). The papers were retracted on 2 July after evidence of misconduct was found. Sasai, a co-author, was cleared of direct involvement but was criticized for poor oversight of research. "The world scientific community has lost an irreplaceable scientist," said RIKEN president Ryoji Noyori. See go.nature.com/etrboi for more.

Director resigns

The director of the US National Institute of Neurological Disorders and

Stroke (NINDS) is stepping down, the institute announced on 31 July. Story Landis, who has headed NINDS since 2003, had prominent roles in programmes such as the BRAIN Initiative and the National Institutes of Health's programme to improve the reproducibility of science. Landis leaves at the end of September, when the deputy director of NINDS, neurologist Walter Koroshetz, will take over as acting director.

POLICY

Test clampdown

Hospitals and laboratories in the United States will soon no longer be able to design their own diagnostic tests without input from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). On 31 July, the FDA announced that it will regulate the development of diagnostic tests for various diseases, as well as genetic tests used to identify patients who may react to certain treatments. The regulations will be phased in over the next nine years and will prioritize tests for which an incorrect diagnosis could result in significant harm to a patient. See page 5 for more.

Lab safety

Laboratories working with hazardous chemicals must develop a culture of safety rather than just relying on

COMING UP

10–14 AUGUST

The American Chemical Society autumn meeting in San Francisco, California, has the theme 'chemistry and global stewardship'. go.nature.com/c2to6u

10–15 AUGUST

The Ecological Society of America conference in Sacramento, California, includes how fire affects ecology as a key topic for discussion. www.esa.org/am

compliance with regulations, says a report released on 31 July by the US National Research Council. The report was motivated by a series of recent high-profile accidents in university labs (see *Nature* 493, 9–10; 2013). It recommends better training, proactive analysis of hazards and rewards for researchers who take precautionary measures.

BUSINESS

Biotech job cuts

Biotechnology firm Amgen, of Thousand Oaks, California, announced on 29 July that it will cut up to 2,900 jobs — around 15% of its global workforce. The company said it could not yet specify how many of the lost jobs will be in research and development. But it did say that it will close facilities in Washington state and Colorado, which include research and manufacturing sites. The cuts will begin later this year and follow weak sales of the company's anaemia drug Aranesp (darbepoetin alfa). Amgen spent US\$979 million on research and development in the second quarter of this year, nearly 19% of its sales revenue.

NATURE.COM

For daily news updates see: www.nature.com/news

TREND WATCH

More than 20% of California shifted from extreme to exceptional drought — the most severe category — in the week up to 29 July. An update from the US Drought Monitor shows that exceptional drought now affects more than half of the state (see map), with more than 80% classified as under extreme drought or worse. California is short of more than a year's worth of reservoir water. "We wouldn't have expected it to be this dry," says a spokesman for the US Department of Agriculture.

CALIFORNIA DROUGHT

58% of the state is now under conditions of 'exceptional drought'.



Drought intensity in California

- Severe
- Extreme
- Exceptional

