

SEVEN DAYS

The news in brief

POLICY

Greek education law

A higher-education law passed by the Greek parliament on 2 August restricts the power of rectors in university governance, reversing some reforms introduced six years ago. Major decisions will now be taken by a council comprising the rector, vice-rector and representatives from students and non-academic staff. Students will again be allowed to vote for rectors and vice-rectors, but a newly introduced electronic system to prevent vote rigging will be banned. Rectors say that the measures will make progressive governance difficult.

Embryo work halted

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has ordered a clinic to stop offering to create and implant embryos that contain DNA from three people. In a 4 August letter, the agency warned John Zhang of the New Hope Fertility Center in New York City that the experimental procedure, which attempts to prevent the inheritance of mitochondrial diseases, does not have regulatory approval and will not receive it. Federal law prohibits the FDA from considering procedures that involve genetic modification of human embryos. The agency also said that Zhang cannot make embryos in the United States and implant them in women overseas. Zhang started a company called Darwin Life last year to commercialize the procedure, which produced at least one baby in 2016.

EU drug agency

The European Union's drug regulator will suspend parts of its work as it prepares to cope with the disruption from Britain's decision to leave the bloc. The European Medicines



SIMONE SCHIAVONI/ISTITUTO NAZIONALE DI FISICA NUCLEARE

Virgo rejoins gravitational-wave hunt

After a five-year upgrade, the Virgo detector near Pisa, Italy, officially rejoined the Laser Interferometer Gravitational-wave Observatory (LIGO) in the United States in the hunt for gravitational waves on 1 August. Virgo will ultimately extend LIGO's reach in the Universe and improve its ability to locate cosmic sources of gravitational waves. This is the observatories'

first joint science run since 2010 — when LIGO went offline for its own upgrade — and will last until LIGO's planned shutdown on 25 August. Virgo (pictured, one of the interferometer's two arms) is running at a lower sensitivity than planned, after breakages in the fused-silica fibres that hold its 42-kilogram mirrors forced a switch to metal wires, which transmit more noise.

Agency will have to relocate from its base in London, and said in a 1 August statement that it could lose "skilled and experienced" staff. Work to be halted includes the development of transparency measures and a project to enable electronic submission of documents required for the approval of medicines. Separately, the EU published 19 bids from countries that wish to host the agency after Brexit; proposed cities include Amsterdam and Zagreb.

RESEARCH

Universe survey

The biggest map yet of the Universe's structure suggests that it is less lumpy than estimated by previous surveys. The ongoing Dark Energy

Survey, which released its findings on 3 August, charted the distribution of matter in the Universe, and found that clumping into structures such as galaxies might have happened more slowly than indicated by earlier estimates. See page 143 for more.

Climate shortfall

A review of climate science in Australia has found climate modelling to be critically under-resourced. The Australian Academy of Science report, released on 3 August, also identified gaps in climate observation, certain areas of climate understanding, and services such as climate projections. It recommends that 77 climate scientists should be hired across the four areas over the next 4 years.

Without more resources, Australia's ability to provide adequate climate and weather information to government, industry and national and international organizations is at risk, the report says.

Neutrino results

Results from an experiment in Japan, announced on 4 August, strengthen the idea that neutrinos and their antimatter counterparts behave differently, which could help to explain why the Universe is filled with matter rather than antimatter. The particles come in three 'flavours' and oscillate between types as they travel. The Tokai to Kamioka (T2K) experiment sent beams of particles of one flavour — muon neutrinos — and separately of muon antineutrinos, from an

accelerator in Tokai to the Super-Kamiokande detector in Kamioka. Some particles changed from muon to electron flavour in transit. But more electron-type neutrinos and fewer electron antineutrinos were found than should have been the case if matter and antimatter particles switched flavour at the same rate. There's still a 1-in-20 chance that the results were a fluke, but they bolster T2K's 2016 finding, which was based on less than half the data.

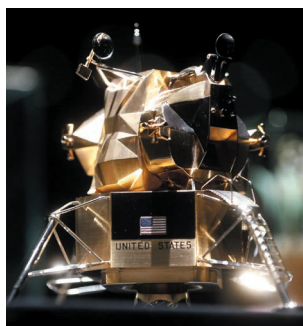
EVENTS

Telescope protest

Six people were arrested on 2 August on the Hawaiian island of Maui as they tried to stop delivery of the primary mirror of the Daniel K. Inouye Solar Telescope, a next-generation observatory atop Haleakalā mountain. Some Native Hawaiians have protested against the construction, saying that the huge telescope — which stands more than 40 metres high — desecrates a mountain that they hold sacred. Police forcibly removed the protesters, and the mirror was delivered. The telescope is meant to start operations in 2020.

NASA model stolen

A solid-gold replica of the first vehicle to land on the Moon was stolen from the



Armstrong Air and Space Museum in Wapakoneta, Ohio, on 28 July, according to local police. Readers of French newspaper *Le Figaro* gave the 18-carat model of NASA's 1969 Lunar Module to US astronaut Neil Armstrong in October 1969. Armstrong's Apollo 11 crewmates, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins, received identical golden mini-modules (pictured); like Armstrong's, these were roughly 13 centimetres high and made by the French jeweller Cartier. The Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and the FBI are working with local police to investigate the theft of Armstrong's model.

NgAgO study pulled

The authors of a high-profile gene-editing paper retracted their study on 2 August, citing scientists' inability to replicate the main finding. The paper, published in *Nature Biotechnology* in May 2016, described how an enzyme

called NgAgO could knock out or replace genes in human cells by making incisions at precise points on the DNA (F. Gao *et al. Nature Biotechnol.* **34**, 768–773; 2016). But others quickly raised doubts, and several papers asserted that NgAgO could not edit genomes as suggested. (*Nature's* news team is editorially independent of *Nature Biotechnology*.) See go.nature.com/2fojarr for more.

PEOPLE

Caltech resignation

Astrophysicist Christian Ott at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in Pasadena has resigned. His decision, announced by the university on 1 August, stemmed from allegations of harassment towards two female graduate students. Caltech had temporarily suspended Ott in late 2015 for a full academic year, following an internal investigation that found “unambiguous gender-based harassment” of the two students, according to a Caltech statement in January 2016. A university committee had been considering his return to campus this autumn, which resulted in student protests. Following the committee's recommendation to the provost on whether or not Ott would return, Ott resigned, effective from 31 December.

BUSINESS

GM salmon sale

Genetically engineered salmon has been sold as food for the first time, the company that developed it announced on 4 August. AquaBounty Technologies of Maynard, Massachusetts, said it has sold some 4.5 tonnes of its product to customers in Canada. The company would not disclose who purchased the fish, but said the buyer paid US\$5.30 per pound (\$11.70 per kilogram). The salmon is engineered to grow faster than its non-modified counterpart. The United States approved the fish for sale in November 2015, and Canada followed six months later. See page 148 for more.

ENVIRONMENT

Giant ‘dead zone’

The Gulf of Mexico's dead zone — a marine region with little or no oxygen — is the largest ever recorded since researchers started keeping track in 1985, says the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The dead zone is the size of New Jersey, covering 22,729 square kilometres, according to the agency's 2 August announcement. Nutrient-rich run-off from the Mississippi River watershed sparks algal blooms that deplete oxygen levels as the cells decompose. This in turn drives animals such as fish out of the area and kills or harms many creatures, including crustaceans, which can negatively affect the Gulf fishing industry.

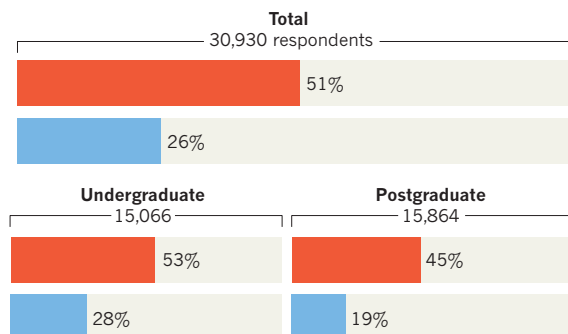
TREND WATCH

In a national survey of students at Australian universities, 51% said they were sexually harassed on at least one occasion in 2016. About half of those experienced the harassment, such as unwelcome touching or offensive comments, in a university setting. More than 30,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students answered the online survey run by the Australian Human Rights Commission. The results also revealed that 6.9% of students were sexually assaulted in 2015 or 2016.

HARASSMENT ON AUSTRALIAN CAMPUSES

More than half of students in Australia who responded to a national survey said that they were sexually harassed on at least one occasion in 2016.

■ Sexually harassed ■ Sexually harassed in a university setting



CORRECTION

The Trend watch in the 3 August issue (*Nature* **548**, 11; 2017) stated that the paper would be published on the arXiv preprint server. In fact, it was published at *PeerJ Preprints*.

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