

Best of Last Week – The Gangotri wave, how quickly COVID vaccines lose strength, clues about long COVID

November 29 2021, by Bob Yirka



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It was a good week for space science as an international team of researchers discovered [two exoplanets orbiting a sun-like star known as](#)

[HD 137496](#). The extrasolar worlds were found using NASA's Kepler spacecraft data. Another international team found that [orbital harmony limits the late arrival of water on TRAPPIST-1 planets](#)—their near perfect orbital ratios were found to reduce late accretion. And a team of researchers from Germany, France and the U.K. discovered [a long, thin filament of dense gas connecting two of the Milky Way galaxy's spiral arms](#), and they named it the Gangotri wave.

In technology news, a combined team from the University of Bath and Trinity College developed [a deep learning method to automatically enhance dog animations](#), and they presented their findings at this year's Motion, Interaction & Games 2021 conference. And a small team of researchers from Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the University of California has found that [battery-powered trains could become economical as soon as 2023](#) because improvements in battery technology have made them [cost effective](#) compared to diesel powered trains. Also, a trio of researchers at MIT uncovered [the reasons behind lithium-ion batteries' rapid cost decline](#). Micah Ziegler, Juhyun Song and Jessika Trancik, found it was mostly due to recent research and development efforts, not economies of scale. And Carnegie Mellon University Ph.D. student Matthew Weidner made [arguments for decentralizing secure group messaging](#).

In other news, a team at the Research Institute of Leumit Health Services in Israel found [a gradual increase in COVID infection risk after the second vaccine dose](#), starting approximately 90 days after the second shot. And a team at Harvard University, conducted research that involved [outlining how longer lives are tied to physical activity](#).

And finally, a pair of researchers from the University of California and Harvard Medical School, William Murphy and Dan Longo, found evidence suggesting that [human antibodies may be mimicking the coronavirus, leading to long COVID and rare vaccine side effects](#).

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