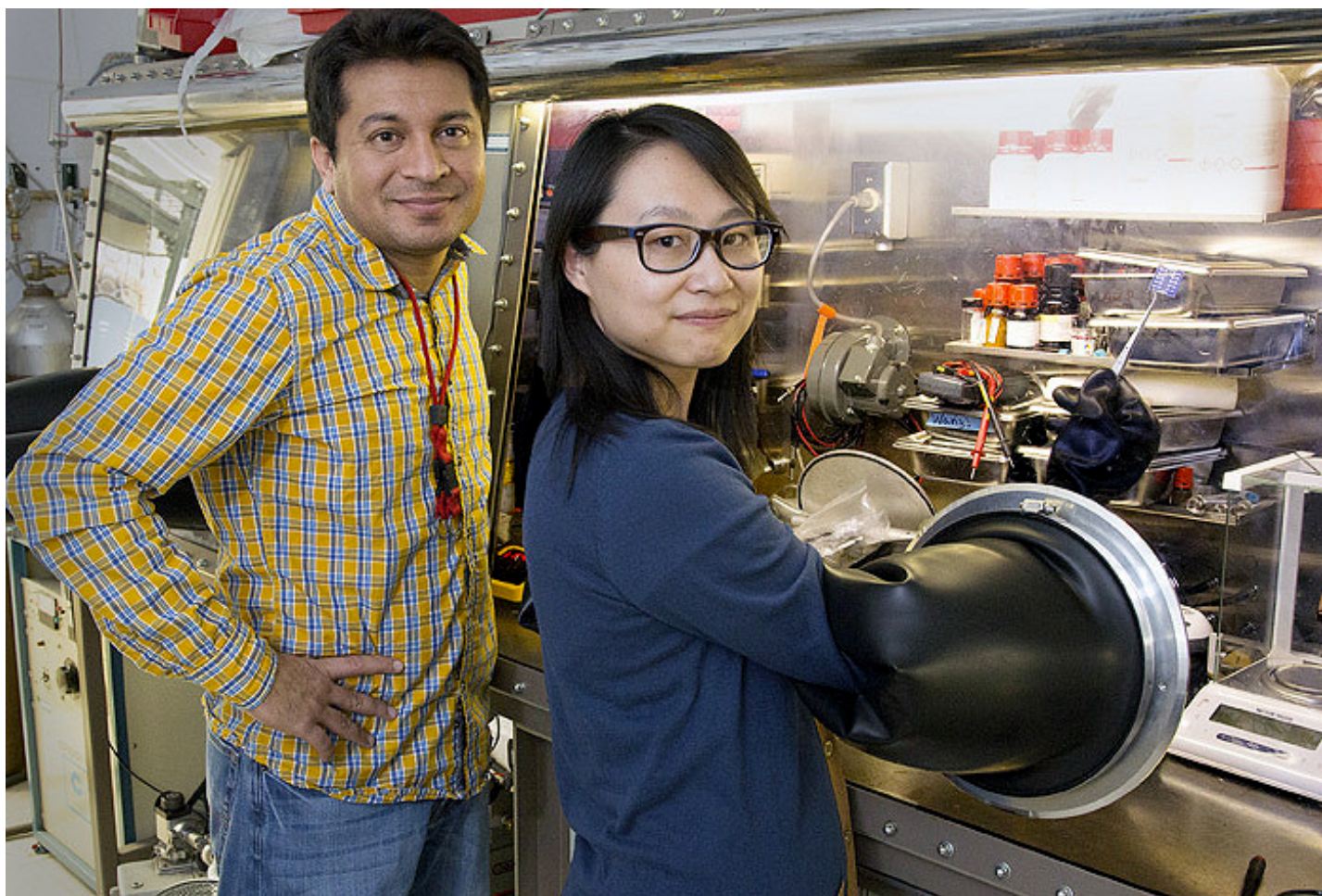




ENERGY

New technique may make solar panel production less expensive

BY **CAREY REED** *January 31, 2015 at 7:30 PM EST*



Scientists Aditya Mohite (l) and Wanyi Nie (r), along with other researchers at Los Alamos National Laboratory, published a report on a new technique for solar cell production Jan. 30. Photo by Los Alamos National Laboratory.

Scientists have developed a more efficient method of creating the material that makes solar panels work, according to a report published this week, which researchers say could be key to creating clean global energy in the future.

The report, published on Friday in the journal [Science](#), details the feat by researchers at the [Los Alamos National Laboratory](#) who used a technique called hot-casting to grow solar cells from a mineral called perovskite. Clusters of these cells, which convert light to energy, are used in solar panels.

Scientists hope this method of creating solar cells will offer a more cost-effective alternative to silicon, currently the most commonly used material in solar-panel production.

“These perovskite crystals offer promising routes for developing low-cost, solar-based, clean global energy solutions for the future,” said Aditya Mohite, the project’s leading scientist. “If you can harvest that [solar energy] at a very very low cost... then that gives us a route to become really completely energy independent as a nation and even as a planet.”

Recently, the city of Burlington, Vt., became the first in the country to use 100 percent renewable energy for its electricity needs. Watch the signature piece from NewsHour Weekend below:

