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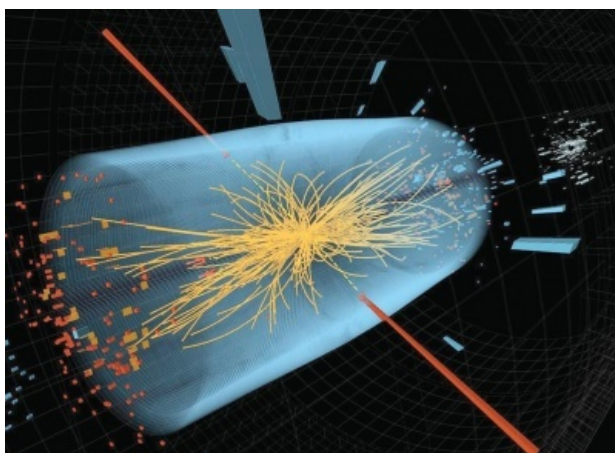
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Boson ... but is it Higgs?

05 Jul 2012

Media24-Reuters

GENEVA —TO cheers and standing ovations, scientists at the world's biggest atom smasher yesterday claimed the discovery of a new subatomic particle, calling it "consistent" with the long-sought Higgs boson — popularly known as the "God particle" — that helps explain what gives all matter in the universe size and shape.



"We have now found the missing cornerstone of particle physics," Rolf Heuer, director of the European Centre for Nuclear Research (CERN), told scientists. He said the newly discovered subatomic particle is a boson, but he stopped just shy of claiming outright that it is the Higgs boson itself — an extremely fine distinction. A team of physicists from Wits university had a hand in the search of the Higgs-boson-particle. Dr Trevor Vickey, one of the chief physicists in this team, has since 2005 been exploring different ways to observe the particle at the Atlas experiment in Geneva, Switzerland. Vickey said the announcement heralded the start of an exciting new era in physics, but warned that it would take decades to find all the answers.



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