

Finding Could Undercut Einstein's Theories

GENEVA (AP) — Betting against Einstein and his theory of relativity is a way to go broke.

For more than a century, everyone from physicists to the Nazi Party — which encouraged the publication of the tract "One Hundred Authors Against Einstein" — has tried to find cracks in his work. And all have failed.

On Thursday, the world's biggest physics lab unveiled a shocking finding: that one type of subatomic particle was clocked going faster than the speed of light. If true — a big if, even the scientists there concede — it could undercut Einstein's theories. Physicist Michio Kaku of City College of New York called it "the biggest challenge to relativity in 100 years."

Antonio Ereditato, who participated in the European experiment as head of the Albert Einstein Center for Fundamental Physics in Bern, knows what is at stake. After his team fielded two hours of technical questions, some a bit sharp, from a skeptical audience Friday, Ereditato had a beer in hand and was asked about the idea that his work was challenging the secular saint of modern physics. "Yes, that's why I'm concerned," he said with a laugh.

Pope Moved After Meeting With Abuse Victims

ERFURT, Germany (AP) — Pope Benedict XVI met with German victims of sexual abuse by priests and expressed "deep compassion and regret" at the suffering of those abused by members of the clergy, the Vatican said Friday.

The pope met for half an hour with five victims on the second day of his four-day state visit to his native Germany, following an ecumenical service with members of the country's Lutheran church and an evening vesper held in a small chapel nestled deep in the former East Germany.

Germany's Catholic church has seen the numbers of faithful leaving the congregation jump, after hundreds of people came forward last year with stories of having been physically or sexually abused by members of the clergy. Church leaders had expressed hope that Benedict's visit could help heal wounds left by the scandal.

Benedict has been accused by victims groups and their lawyers of being part of systematic practice of cover-up by church hierarchy for pedophile priests, in his earlier roles as an archbishop in Germany and later at the helm of the Vatican morals office.

The Vatican said in a statement following Friday's meeting that the pope was "moved and deeply shaken" and is close to the victims. He expresses the hope that God "may heal the wounds of the victims and grant them inner peace," the Vatican said.

Defunct NASA Satellite Slows Down In Plunge

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A 6-ton NASA satellite on a collision course with Earth clung to space Friday, apparently flipping position in its ever-lower orbit and stalling its death plunge.

The old research spacecraft was targeted to crash through the atmosphere sometime Friday night or early Saturday morning, putting the U.S. back in the potential crosshairs, although most of the satellite should burn up during re-entry.

"It just doesn't want to come down," said Jonathan McDowell of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics.

McDowell said the satellite's delayed demise demonstrates how unreliable predictions can be. That said, "the best guess is that it will still splash in the ocean, just because there's more ocean out there."

Until Friday, increased solar activity was causing the atmosphere to expand and the 35-foot satellite to free fall more quickly. But late Friday morning, NASA said the sun was no longer the major factor in the rate of descent and that the satellite's position, shape or both had changed by the time it slipped down to a 100-mile orbit.

Jury Gets Fla. Millionaire's Wife Murder Case

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Jurors deciding the fate of a Florida real estate developer charged with shooting his wife to death asked to see the handgun Friday, the first day of deliberations.

Jurors listened to instructions from the judge overseeing Bob Ward's murder trial before heading to the jury room after 9 a.m. About an hour and a half later, they asked to see the gun.

Ward is accused of fatally shooting his wife, Diane, in September 2009. It came days before she was to give a deposition in a lawsuit alleging that he blew millions of dollars on big houses and expensive cars while his business failed.

Defense attorneys say Ward's wife was suicidal and he was trying to stop her from killing herself.

Jurors later asked to see a yardstick that defense attorneys used to demonstrate the distance between Ward and his wife at the time of the shooting. Circuit Judge Jenifer Davis refused to send it to the jury room out of concern jurors would conduct their own demonstrations without the scrutiny of prosecutors and defense attorneys. The judge said jurors could view it in the courtroom, if they wished.

The jurors also asked to have the transcripts of some witnesses read back to them.

Mo. Lawmakers Vote To Repeal Facebook Law

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (AP) — Missouri lawmakers voted overwhelmingly Friday to repeal part of a contentious new law that had prohibited teachers from chatting privately with students over Internet sites such as Facebook.

If the repeal is signed by Gov. Jay Nixon, school districts instead would have to develop their own policies on the use of electronic media between employees and students.

But Nixon was noncommittal Friday when asked if he would sign the new measure, saying he wanted to talk with teachers and local school boards before making a decision.

A judge placed Missouri's law on hold shortly before it was to take effect Aug. 28, declaring that "the breadth of the prohibition is staggering" and the law "would have a chilling effect" on free-speech rights guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution.

Shortly after the judge's order, Nixon added the online communications law to the agenda of a special session that began Sept. 6. Nixon's written message to lawmakers specifically limited them to repealing the law, but lawmakers decided to also make districts develop their own policies. That's part of the reason why Nixon is pausing before signing the bill.

"It would appear that they've gone in a broader focus than what my intent was when we brought folks to town" for a special session, Nixon said.

The Missouri Constitution gives the governor the authority to determine which matters lawmakers can consider during extraordinary sessions. But lawmakers contend that does not mean the governor can limit how legislators act on those matters — for example, by restricting them only to repealing a section of law instead of amending it.

Lawmakers removed the original law's most publicly controversial provision, which barred teachers from using websites that allow "exclusive access" with current students or former students who are 18 or younger, such as occurs with private messages on Facebook. But the repeal went a step further by also requiring public school districts to adopt policies by March 1 on employee-student communications, including "the use of electronic media," in order "to prevent improper communications."

Senate Blocks Disaster Aid Bill

BY ALAN FRAM
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Democratic-led Senate blocked a House bill on Friday that would provide disaster aid and keep government agencies open, escalating the parties' latest showdown over spending and highlighting the raw partisan rift that has festered all year.

In a tit-for-tat battle, the Senate used a near party-line vote of 59-36 to derail the measure passed earlier by the Republican-run House. That bill would fund federal agencies and provide \$3.7 billion in disaster assistance, partly paying for that aid with cuts in two Energy Department loan programs that finance technological development.

With the support of 10 GOP senators, the Senate had voted last week to provide \$6.9 billion in disaster aid and no cuts to help pay for it.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., offered a compromise Friday that would accept the House's lower level of disaster spending but lacked the loan program cuts. Republicans delayed a vote on Reid's measure until Monday, and they seem likely to block it then because Democrats would need 60 votes to win passage — exceeding the 53 votes they have.

The dispute pitted GOP objections that the disaster spending would worsen the government's budget problems unless savings were in-



Reid

cluded against Democratic complaints that cutting the energy loan programs would stifle the economy and cost jobs.

The fresh round of brinksmanship came with lawmakers facing two deadlines. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's fund for disaster victims could run out of money early next week, even as claims from Hurricane Irene and other recent disasters continue to accumulate. And Congress has completed none of the 12 annual spending bills for the federal fiscal year that begins Oct. 1, meaning agencies would have to close their doors that day without fresh funding.

"We've agreed to their number on FEMA," Reid said. "I mean, do they want the government to shut down? Do they want FEMA to close?"

Reid said he believed the Senate would consider the issue on Monday and that "reasonable heads will prevail."

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., said Democrats want to continue the Washington custom of financing emergency spending by adding to colossal federal deficits.

"If there's any lesson we can draw from the debates we've been having here over the last six months, it's that the American people won't

accept that excuse anymore," McConnell said. "The whole, 'that's the way we've always done it' argument is the reason we've got a \$14 trillion dollar debt right now."

Besides its emergency aid, the measure the House passed early Friday would temporarily prevent a federal shutdown by financing government agencies from the Oct. 1 start of the new fiscal year through Nov. 18. It was approved by a near party-line 219-203 vote.

White House spokesman Jay Carney faulted House Republicans for the deadlock, saying they had passed legislation knowing it would die in the Senate, just as they had during last month's fight over extending the federal debt limit.

"The fever hasn't broken — the behavior that we saw this summer that really repelled Americans continues," Carney said.

Republicans blamed Democrats, saying the House-passed bill had enough money for the Federal Emergency Management Agency and that Democratic opposition to it was all about politics.

"The American people are sick and tired of political games," said House Appropriations Committee Chairman Harold Rogers, R-Ky. "Shutting down the government and cutting off essential programs that our people rely on is bad enough, but leaving disaster-stricken families and communities in the lurch in their hour of greatest need is simply reprehensible."

Perry Draws Doubts From Some In GOP

BY STEVE PEOPLES
AND THOMAS BEAUMONT
Associated Press

EXETER, N.H. — Rick Perry is struggling.

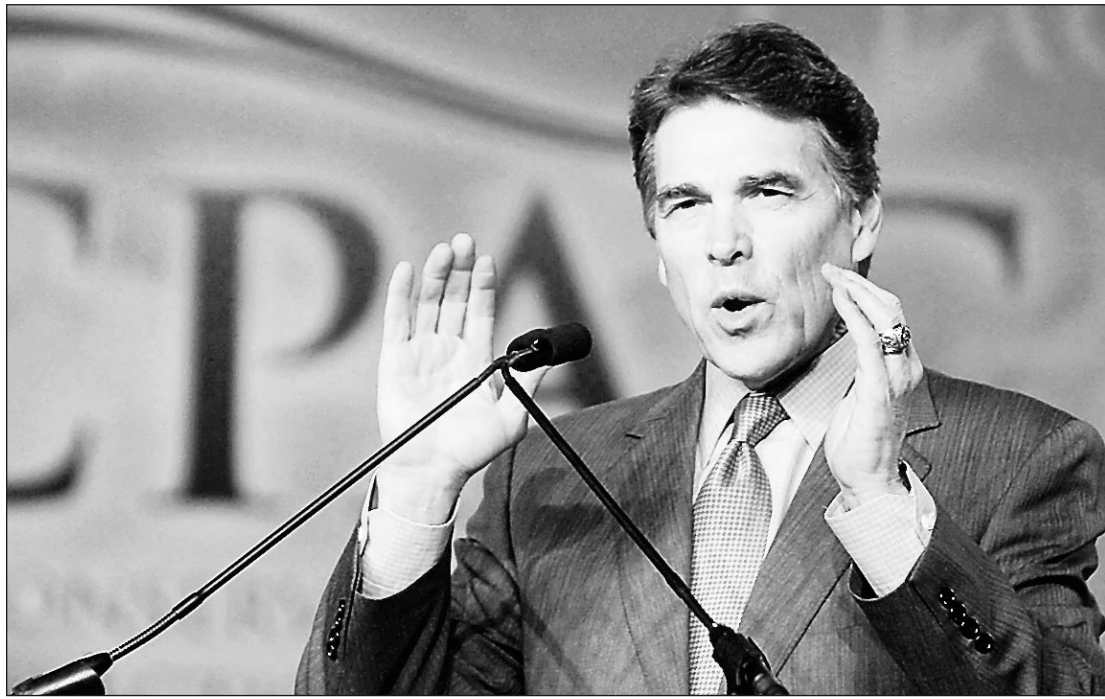
Republicans in early voting states, once excited about the Texas governor's presidential bid, are openly questioning the strength of his candidacy. High expectations have been met by the sudden national scrutiny that comes with the front-runner bull's-eye.

Perry is leading national polls, but he is also facing intensifying criticism from the right and left. Some Republicans in Iowa and New Hampshire are expressing doubts, especially after debates in which rivals raised questions about his record on immigration, public health and Social Security.

One national immigration group says Perry is finished. Conservatives are slamming his support of education benefits for illegal immigrants.

The campaign dismisses the criticism. After all, supporters say, he entered the presidential race just six weeks ago.

Things looked rosier then. Perry arrived to great fanfare and seemed poised to steal significant support from his top rival, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney. Many influential GOP activists saw Perry, with his executive experience and good jobs record, as an attractive alternative to Romney, who has struggled to win over conservatives who



JOE BURBANK/ORLANDO SENTINEL/MCT

2012 Republican presidential candidate Rick Perry addresses the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida, Friday, September 23, 2011.

make up a sizeable portion of the party base.

Since then, the Texan has campaigned repeatedly in New Hampshire and Iowa, states that host the nation's first presidential voting contests in roughly four months.

And unaligned Republicans in those states — including some who backed Romney four years ago and

are looking for an alternative — have watched Perry closely this month to see if the early buzz would become lasting campaign strength. But his debate performances, including bobbled attempts Thursday night in Florida at painting Romney as a flip-flopper, did not impress some influential activists.

"Perry has been doing damage

to himself over the last couple weeks," said Jamie Burnett, a New Hampshire-based Republican who led Romney's political operation here four years ago but is unaligned this year. "Perry's on shaky ground, but I'm not willing to say there's no path to victory. But he's definitely not in the place he was during the first two weeks of his campaign."

Palestinians Submit Request For U.N. Membership

BY AMY TEIBEL AND MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — The Palestinian leader took his people's quest for independence to the heart of world diplomacy Friday, seeking U.N. recognition of Palestine and sidestepping negotiations that have foundered for nearly two decades under the weight of inflexibility, violence and failure of will.

The bid to win recognition of a state in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem — submitted over the objections of the U.S. — laid bare the deep sense of Palestinian exasperation after 44 years of Israeli occupation.

"The time is now for the Palestinian Spring, the time for independence," Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas declared.

"The time has come to end the suffering and the plight of millions of Palestine refugees in the homeland and the diaspora, to end their displacement and to realize their rights."

After Abbas submitted his formal application, international medi-

"The time is now for the Palestinian Spring, the time for independence."

MAHMOUD ABBAS

ators called on Israel and the Palestinians to return to long-stalled negotiations and reach an agreement no later than next year. The Quartet — the U.S., European Union, U.N. and Russia — urged both parties to draw up an agenda for peace talks within a month and produce comprehensive proposals on territory and security within three months.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said the proposal "represents the firm conviction of the international community that a just and lasting peace can only come through negotiations between the parties."

Similar plans have failed to produce a peace agreement, and it was unclear how the two sides could bridge their huge differences and resume talks.

The Quartet statement was radically different from what diplomats

had been hoping to draft since it became clear that Abbas would not back down. U.S. and European officials had been trying to craft a statement that would outline parameters of the negotiations, including a reference to borders being based on the 1967 lines and affirm Israel's identity as a Jewish state.

Instead, the Quartet focused on proposing deadlines.

World sympathy for the Palestinian cause was evident from the thunderous applause that greeted Abbas as he mounted the dais in the General Assembly hall to deliver a speech that laid out his grievances against the Israeli occupation and why he felt compelled to take his appeal directly to the U.N.

In a scathing denunciation of Israel's settlement policy, Abbas declared negotiations with Israel "will be meaningless" as long as it continues building on lands the Pales-

tinians claim. He went so far as to warn that his government could collapse if the construction persists.

"This policy is responsible for the continued failure of the successive international attempts to salvage the peace process," said Abbas, who has refused to negotiate until the construction stops. "This settlement policy threatens to also undermine the structure of the Palestinian National Authority and even end its existence."

He ignored any Palestinian culpability for the negotiations stalemate, deadly violence against Israel, and the internal rift that has produced dueling governments in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as Jewish links to the Holy Land.

Some members of the Israeli delegation, including Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, walked out of the hall as Abbas went to the podium.

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American Heart Association

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Thank You

We owe a great debt of gratitude to the many friends and family members who were so kind in remembering our 40th Anniversary Sept. 18. Many congratulated us in person commenting on "the great picture of you two" which was taken by Jerry Smith. Thank you for all the great cards, many of which contained clippings of our picture, and thank you to all who attended our "Bumble Bees" dance party at the Elks Lodge which rounded out our celebration. See you in 10 years!

Jim and Kathy Van Osdel

The Family of Ernest R. Nepodal, Jr. wishes to thank everyone for their support at Ernest's passing. We are especially grateful to the nurses and staff at Avera Sister James for the loving care they provided to Ernest for nearly three years. Thank you all for your kindness!

Sincerely,
Virginia Nepodal & Family