

# **POLONNARUWA METEORITE AS PROOF OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE GETS SUPPORT AT PRESIDENTIAL LEVEL IN SRI LANKA**

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I delivered a lecture entitled “New evidence for life as a cosmic phenomenon” at the Astronomical Society of Oman in Muscat on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014, at the University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. The audience at Peradeniya included Professor Rohana Chandrajith, Professor of Geology, who had been reported as being antagonistic to the idea that the Polonnaruwa (Aralaganwila) stones that fell on 29<sup>th</sup> December 2012 were indeed meteorites<sup>1</sup>. In a discussion that followed the lecture Professor Chandrajith agreed that the Polonnaruwa stones in question did not resemble any that can be found anywhere locally. He further confirmed that his earlier reservations were based on the fact that these stones were different structurally and compositionally from any of the known and documented classes of meteorites. He also agreed that there is no possibility that these could be fragments of industrial slag as was proposed by some critics.

The most recent studies of the Aralaganwila stones by Jamie Wallis et al<sup>2,3</sup> that show oxygen isotope compositions inconsistent with Earth material, as well as extraordinarily high amounts of the terrestrially rare chemical element iridium strengthens the case for the Polonnaruwa stones being meteorites, and if so they contain unequivocal evidence of the existence of extraterrestrial microbial life. This discovery would then transform the way we think about the Earth and of life upon it as radically and profoundly as did the Copernican revolution some 500 years ago.

The view that the Polonnaruwa meteorites represent fragments of loosely held siliceous grain material within a cometary bolide from which water and volatiles were boiled off upon entry, thus leaving a highly porous structure, remains the most plausible explanation of all the available facts. A provisional identification with meteoroids in the annual Taurid meteor stream<sup>4</sup> which we originally made is interesting particularly in view of the fact that the large bolide which led to the Tunguska event of 1908 did not lead to the recovery of any large meteorite fragments.

On 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014 I had an audience with His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapakse, President of the Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka. I appraised the President of the latest findings regarding the Aralaganwila meteorite and urged His Excellency to declare the location of the 29<sup>th</sup> December 2012 meteorite fall as a site of national scientific heritage. In the fullness of time the events of this day that took place in Sri Lanka would be regarded as having established beyond doubt that life is a truly cosmic phenomenon. President Rajapakse gave

assent to this proposal without reservation and immediately set in train the protocol that would ensure its implementation.

**New Evidence for Life as a Cosmic Phenomenon**

At Senate Room, University of Peradeniya  
on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2014 at 3.00 P.M

*Resource Person,*

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Professor Chandra Wickramasinghe is a product of the University of Ceylon. He obtained a First Class Honours degree in Mathematics and won a Commonwealth scholarship to proceed to Trinity College Cambridge where he was awarded a PhD degree in Mathematics in 1963 and was elected a Fellow of Jesus College Cambridge in the same year. In the following year he was appointed a Staff Member of the Institute of Astronomy at the University of Cambridge. Here he began his pioneering work on the nature of Interstellar Dust, publishing many papers in this field that led to important paradigm shifts in astronomy. He published the first definitive book on Interstellar Grains in 1967. In 1973 he was awarded Cambridge University's highest doctorate for Science, the ScD. Chandra Wickramasinghe is acknowledged as a leading expert on interstellar material and the origins of life. He has made many important contributions in these fields, publishing over 350 papers in major scientific journals, over 75 in the journal Nature. In 1974 he first proposed the theory that dust in interstellar space and in comets was largely organic, a theory that has now been vindicated.

Flier for lecture to University of Peradeniya delivered on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2014



Meeting with H.E. President Rajapakse and handing copy of autobiography entitled “A Destiny of Cosmic Life”



Discussions about the Polonnaruwa meteorite

## References

1. N. C. Wickramasinghe, J. Wallis, D.H. Wallis and Anil Samaranayake, Fossil diatoms in a new carbonaceous meteorite, *Journal of Cosmology*, Vol.21, 9560-9571, 2013
2. Jamie Wallis, Nori Miyake, Richard B. Hoover, Anthony Oldroyd, Daryl H. Wallis, Anil Samaranayake, K. Wickramarathne, M.K. Wallis, Carl H. Gibson and N. C. Wickramasinghe, The Polonnaruwa meteorite: Oxygen isotope, crystalline and biological composition, *Journal of Cosmology*, Vol.22, pp 10004-10011, 2013
3. Jamie Wallis, N.C. Wickramasinghe, D.H. Wallis, et al, Physical, chemical and mineral properties of the Polonnaruwa stones, *Proceedings of SPIE*, Vol.8865, 2013
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