

DISCOVERY OF A NEW PRIMARY MAGNETITE DEPOSIT IN WELLAWAYA

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A large primary magnetite deposit has been discovered at Kukurampola in Wellawaya lying in the proximity of the lithological boundary between the Highland and Eastern Vijayan Complexes of the Sri Lankan Precambrian.

The deposit consists of three main bodies of magnetite intruded in to NS trending country rocks. The exposures of these bodies vary in thickness from 1 to 20 m. The linear extent of the deposit is about 2 km with minimum local vertical relief of 150 m. The investigations have revealed that the main mineral constituent of the deposit is magnetite (Fe_3O_4), exceeding 90% in concentration.

The preliminary geophysical investigations have also confirmed that the deposit extends to depths below 30 m. In addition to the main deposit, scattered occurrences of smaller magnetite bodies were observed in an area of about 10 sq. km.

Preliminary investigations suggest a large extent of this deposit. The quality and quantity of the ore should permit profitable extraction of iron in the future. Detailed investigations are in progress.