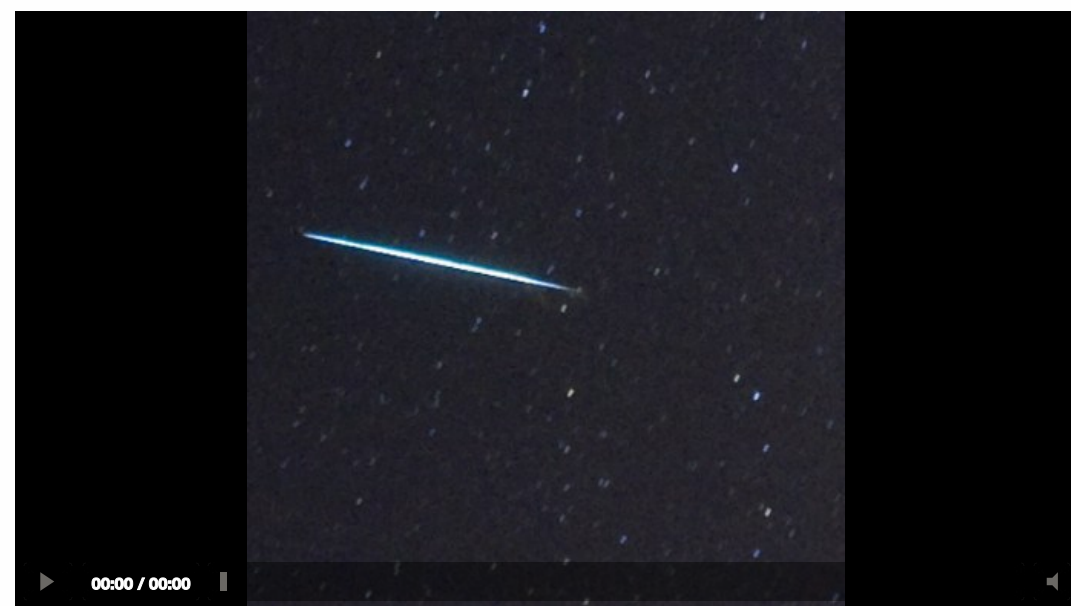


Was it a meteorite? Tests will determine what killed Indian man



By **Roshni Majumdar** and **Tim Hume**, for CNN
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A bus driver was killed in India's Tamil Nadu when object fell from sky Saturday

It caused a loud noise and left an impact crater 60 cm (2 feet) deep

If debris is confirmed as a meteorite, it would be the first such death on record

New Delhi (CNN) — Indian scientists will examine remains from an object that fell from the sky Saturday, causing a large explosion which killed a man, to determine if it is a meteorite, police say.

If the object is confirmed to be a meteorite -- a fragment of a comet or asteroid that has fallen to Earth -- the death would be the first fatality from a meteorite on record, it is believed.

P. K. Senthil Kumari, the police chief in Vellore district in the southern Indian state of

Tamil Nadu, told CNN that the object struck the grounds of an engineering school at about midday Saturday, making a loud noise and leaving an impact crater about 60 cm (2 feet) deep.



The resulting blast killed a 40-year-old named Kamaraj, who worked as a bus driver on the campus of the Bharathidasan Engineering College, the police chief said.

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Police roped off the impact site at Bharathidasan Engineering College in India's Tamil Nadu state.

Like many in the state, the victim only used one name.

Two gardeners and a student at the college were also injured in the incident, and are receiving treatment at a hospital in Vellore, the chief added.

The impact shattered the windows of a number of buses on campus, she said.

Meteorite or space junk?

Senthil Kumari said it was yet to be confirmed whether the object that caused the blast was a meteorite, as opposed to falling space junk or some other form of debris.

Police recovered a piece of debris from the collision, which will be analyzed by a scientist from the Indian Institute of Astrophysics.

"We wait until the investigation is over to confirm if the object was a meteorite," she said.

Tamil Nadu's state government released a statement on the incident Sunday, describing it as a meteorite strike and offering 100,000 rupees (\$1471) in compensation to the victim's family.

In 2013, a [large meteor exploded over the Russian region of Chelyabinsk](#), producing a huge flash and shock wave, and showering the territory below with many small meteorites.

The incident left more than 1,000 people injured, but caused no fatalities.

Journalist Roshni Majumdar reported from New Delhi and Tim Hume wrote and reported from London.

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