



**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**

## **Vedanta, corporate accountability, right to health and a healthy environment, right to water, India**

*In a landmark victory for Indigenous rights and corporate accountability, the Indian government rejected plans to mine bauxite in the Niyamgiri Hills, eastern India. The decision, announced on 24 August, followed years of campaigning by the Dongria Kondh and other Indigenous communities who described the proposed mining project as a threat to their very existence. Amnesty International's intervention in the campaign played a crucial role in its success.*

Amnesty International joined the campaign in mid-2008 and published a damning report, *Don't mine us out of existence*, in early 2010, documenting human rights abuses and violations of the law. Six months later, an Indian government report, which came to similar conclusions, formed the basis of the government's decision to axe the mine. Plans for a six-fold expansion of an alumina refinery in Lanjigarh, at the base of the hills, were quashed by the government on 20 October 2010. The refinery has been linked to water and air pollution and has blighted the lives of local communities.

The Indian government found that the proposed bauxite mining project had already extensively violated forest and environmental laws and would perpetrate further abuses. The refinery expansion plans were found to be illegal.

The ruling was a blow to the companies involved – a subsidiary of UK-based Vedanta Resources and the state-owned Orissa Mining Corporation – who were behind the proposal to mine the Niyamgiri Hills.

Amnesty International worked with the Dongria Kondh communities to challenge the environmental clearance granted for the mine at an appeals tribunal. More than 30,000 members wrote to the Indian authorities while the organization engaged in talks with the company. Meanwhile, Amnesty International members and other NGOs working on the issue launched protests outside Vedanta's London offices during the company's annual general meeting. Amnesty International's campaign and advocacy helped to stall the mining and refinery expansion plans for several months before the ultimate decision to reject the mine was made.

A Dongria Kondh leader told Amnesty International: **“After years of struggle and visits by committees our voice has finally reached Delhi.”**

Several investors have pulled out of Vedanta because of what was happening in Orissa. In 2007, the Norwegian Pension Fund withdrew its \$15.6m share in the company on human rights grounds after receiving information from several organizations, including

Amnesty International. In February 2010, the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and the Church of England withdrew their investments from Vedanta.

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[DON'T MINE US OUT OF EXISTENCE - Report](#)

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