



MV Geography 5.3 Odisha Summary

In our times, there is great demand for bauxite, a mineral that contains the metal aluminium, of high commercial value. A lot of bauxite is located in the thickly forested Niyamgiri Hills in Odisha.

The Niyamgiri Hills have been inhabited by the Dongria Khond tribe for thousands of years. They worship the forests and all life within it, considering themselves part of nature. They have particular respect for the Niyamgiri Hills and worship their god, Niyam Raja, who helps them to survive and live peacefully.

The bauxite is obtained by evacuating the Dongria Khond and then using strip mining that destroys the dense forest.

When the mining corporations came to survey the site, the Dongria Khond sent them away. When they refused to move, the mining corporation bulldozed their houses. The Adivasi used their axes to cut down trees across roads, but it didn't work.

The mining corporation obtained official permission from the government to mine the bauxite, promising a better way of life for the Dongria Khond, with jobs, financial compensations and roads, schools and hospitals. Later, when the promises were found to be untrue, the Dongria Khond objected and resisted, but the corporation moved in with the help of the police, who used threats and force.

The outcome of the mining conflict in Odisha between the Dongria Khond of Niyamgiri and the mining corporation is still undecided. Only time will tell what will be the final outcome of this conflict between the forces of industrialisation and traditional societies.