

Statement from Dongria Kondh man Sahadev Kadraka of Khajouri village, who appeared in an interview on youtube expressing support for Vedanta’s mining plan.

‘It was raining when they came, by jeep. There were three people from Bissamcuttack [a large town near Niyamgiri], and three from Vedanta. They had a camera.

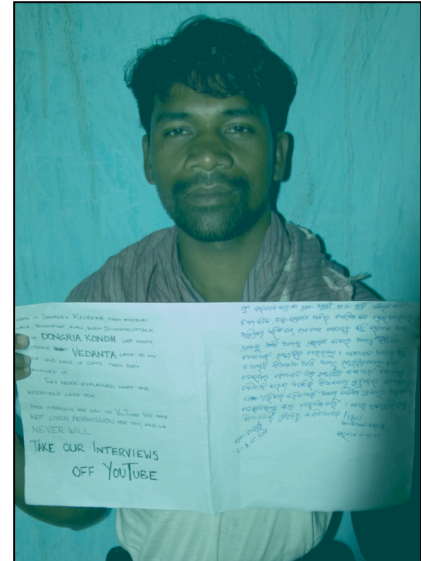
They said ‘we have brought some clothes for your village people, and we’ll give them to you.’ Then they said ‘we want to do some interviews with you. On behalf of our project, we want to help you again next time.’ They asked us ‘do you support Vedanta?’ and ‘do you want to mine bauxite?’ We said no, we do not want to give our mountain.

Then they said everyone from Sakata [a Dongria village] has agreed to mine bauxite. That’s why they have a school, roads, and self-help groups are getting machines. If you complain to us, then we can’t provide anything to you again. You have to say ‘yes.’

When they gave these clothes to my village, I thought if I say no in my interview, the villagers would be upset because they got these clothes. If I refuse them, they will mind me. So my mind didn’t work. Then I agreed. I said my name is Sahadev, I said the name of my village, then that we want to mine bauxite from Niyamgiri.

They told us ‘we’ll make a committee house and schools.’ And a grinding machine for turmeric. ‘We’ll give this, this and this, all these things we have given to Lanjigarh. If you don’t support us, you’ll not get anything.’ Then I said yes!

I am really against Vedanta, I’ve even been to Delhi [on an anti-Vedanta demonstration], and I have met different advocates and activists. In my heart I have never supported Vedanta. They offered me these temptations, that’s why I was tempted. But all our people in the area don’t want this company and don’t want to mine. We are actually totally against Vedanta.’



‘They told us “If you don’t support us, you’ll not get anything.” Then I said yes!’