

VEDANTA MUST BE STOPPED

Pollution, looting, killing and communities fighting back..

Everywhere Vedanta operates in India and Africa they are being opposed for the same reasons: illegality, looting, displacement, pollution, illness, exploitation and corruption. Vedanta Resources is a British registered FTSE250 mining, power and oil & gas company. It is 69.9% owned by Chairman Anil Agarwal and his family through a series of tax havens and holding companies making Vedanta one of the most tax evading companies on the London Stock Exchange. Agarwal has been one of the richest men in Britain with a £20 million home in Mayfair, London. Vedanta is a debt based company, with net debt of \$9.4 billion in August 2015, which has been called unsustainable by analysts, forcing Vedanta to constantly re-structure the company and its debt. Vedanta has a clear pattern of operation across India, as this newsletter aims to demonstrate: build and operate without permission, influence politicians and judiciary, and weaken affected communities to prevent damaging mass protest. He does this by threatening families with hired thugs, police and private security, by paying them to stay silent, by coercing people with Corporate Social Responsibility schemes and self help groups, and by making them wait through years of lengthy court processes while they are forced to live in appalling conditions in polluted areas.

Vedanta has been stopped in several Indian communities! To fight a unified global company we must also unite! By sharing our stories, struggles and successes we can find the strength and the strategy to resist. This leaflet tells the story of seven Vedanta affected communities in India and Africa.

Goa, India Vedanta's iron ore subsidiary is the largest iron ore miner in Goa and has been found guilty of mining without a license between 2007 and 2011. In 2010/11 they exported 150 million tonnes of iron ore in while only declaring 76 million, their agreed export allowance. Illegal mining in Goa has lost the State an estimated \$5.5 billion. Environmental licenses have been repeatedly violated and mine waste dumped outside the lease areas or directly into local rivers. In June 2009 a Sesa Goa pit wall collapsed drowning Advpal village in toxic mine waste. Following the disaster 9 year old local boy Akaash Naik filed a petition to stop the mine and mass protests were held, successfully halting it later that year. Two more major mine waste floods occurred in Mulgao and Bicholim in 2011. In South Goa a 90 day road blockade by 400 villagers succeeded in stopping another iron ore mine. Sesa Goa are paying villagers silence funds of between Rs.2000 and Rs.5000 per month at their South Goa mine to prevent similar action.



Tuticorin, India Vedanta's Sterlite copper smelter in Tamil Nadu has one of the worst records of all Vedanta's projects. The 2nd hand plant imported from Chile was turned down by four states before settling in Tamil Nadu. Sterlite has flouted laws without remorse, operating and expanding without consent, violating environmental conditions, and illegally dumping toxic effluents and waste. In 1997 a toxic gas leak hospitalised 100 people sparking an indefinite hunger strike by a local politician and a 'siege on Sterlite' that led to 1643 arrests. In 2013 another gas leak hospitalised hundreds of people and brought 5000 to the streets in protests. 16 workers died at the plant between 2007 & 2011. Police recorded most workers deaths as suicides. Pollution Control Boards, judges and expert teams have on several occasions reversed damning judgements of the company, demonstrating large scale corruption and bribery. Activists are waging a court battle which has stopped operations at the plant for several short periods. Local water is undrinkable due to contamination, and high toxin levels have been found in the blood of villagers. Contaminated copper concentrate imported by Sterlite generated 2.2 tonnes of uranium & 441 tonnes of arsenic waste in 2009 & 2010 which is poisoning the residents of Tuticorin.

Vedanta's oil and gas Vedanta bought oil and gas company Cairn India in 2011 assisted by British Prime Minister David Cameron. In July 2014 parent company Vedanta borrowed \$1.25 billion from Cairn India to service its debts. Now Vedanta is trying to save itself from debt-defaults by merging its loss making subsidiaries with Cairn India and accessing its \$2.6 billion cash reserves. Cairn India are using dangerous and highly polluting fracking technology to get more oil from their Rajasthan fields. In Sri Lanka they used the military to enable drilling in coral reefs. They are now expanding into South Africa.

Korba, India Vedanta bought BALCO's alumina refinery, smelter and bauxite mines from the Indian government for \$86.5 million in 2001 when it was worth between \$549 and \$785 million. 7000 workers opposed the sale by holding a landmark 61 day strike. Since privatisation work conditions have worsened - wages have been slashed, unionised workers are losing jobs in favour of contract labour and there are more accidents. Vedanta is currently attempting to buy the remaining 49% of government owned shares in the company, which is being opposed by the BALCO trade union. In 2009 a factory chimney collapsed during construction. BALCO claimed 42 were killed, but evidence later revealed that 60 – 100 people are still missing. Witnesses claim these workers from poor families in neighbouring states are buried underground in the rubble, which was bulldozed over immediately after the collapse. Their families have no idea where they are. Their names are not even known.



Rajasthan, India Hindusthan Zinc Limited (HZL) was a public company disinvested to Vedanta in 2001. It is the world's 5th largest zinc asset and also has silver, lead, chromium and copper mines and refineries/smelters. Vedanta bought HZL for only \$64 million (600 crore rupees), using a valuation by BNP Paribas which is estimated to be more than 20x undervalued. The true value of HZL is estimated to be £2.5 billion (24,000 crore rupees). Vedanta are now attempting to buy the remaining 30 odd % from the government which would free up \$4.6 billion of cash reserves which they will use to pay off Vedanta Group's huge debts. Trade union activists are trying to stop this sell-off in the Supreme Court. Vedanta has extensively sponsored local press (taking out large adverts) and silenced local NGOs through money for CSR projects. Vedanta have reduced permanent workforce to only 2500 of 18,000 workers, with the rest contracted.

Zambia Vedanta bought Zambia's biggest copper asset Konkola Copper Mines (KCM) in 2004 for just \$25 million in cash. In the first three months of operation they had made profits of \$26 million. The true valuation of KCM's 79.4% share in the mines and factories is estimated at between \$705 and \$1460 million. Vedanta have long claimed that they are making a loss on KCM and hence pay virtually no tax. Their 2013 accounts showed a \$6.3 million loss. However in April 2014 Anil Agarwal bragged on film to the Jain International Trade Organisation in Bangalore that he was making between \$500 million and \$1 billion a year from KCM and mocked the Zambian President. These profits are being hidden by 'transfer pricing' – selling metals underpriced to Vedanta's own subsidiary who then trades them on at a huge profit. KCM have been found guilty of persistent water contamination, including a major pollution incident in 2006 which turned the river Kafue into a 'river of acid' and contaminated drinking water for at least 40,000 people. They refused to pay a \$2 million fine awarded to 2000 victims in 2011 by the Zambian High Court. Communities are suffering illness & birth defects and are fighting a UK court case.

Niyamgiri, Orissa Vedanta bulldozed 12 villages to illegally construct its Lanjigarh refinery in 2003-4, planning to extract 73 million tonnes of bauxite from the Niyamgiri mountain above it. For 15 years the local Dongria and Kutia Kondh tribes, plus Dalits and farmers opposed the mine and six fold expansion of the refinery with protests, blockades and court cases stating that they did not subscribe to the rationale of 'development' and would defend their traditional way of life. In 2013 they won the battle, losing Vedanta their \$10 billion investment. In the process community members were beaten, harassed and jailed. Local activist's Sukru Majhi and Arsi Majhi were killed by the company in 2005 and 2010. This story is being globally heralded as an example of people's victory over powerful corporations backed by the State. The community is demanding that the refinery is decommissioned & are helping other grassroots struggles.



WE MUST STOP THIS LOOTING, KILLING, LAW-BREAKING COMPANY

Keep Vedanta out of your community before it's too late! People's action works!

Get connected and know each other's strengths! Together we are many and they are few!

Don't let them get away with murder, exploitation, pollution and corruption...