



## Saving Forests From Foes

You are a senior Indian Forest Services (IFoS) officer in charge of a large forest range in a remote part of India. One day, you receive a proposal from a well-known mining company that wants to mine for valuable minerals in a protected forest area under your jurisdiction.

The owner company offers you a substantial bribe to overlook the environmental damage and allow the mining to proceed. They also claim that the mining will provide much-needed employment to the local population, many of whom are poor and underprivileged.

However, you know that the mining will cause severe ecological damage to the forest, leading to soil erosion, loss of biodiversity, and pollution of the water bodies.

Also, it will disrupt the traditional livelihoods of the indigenous communities who have been living sustainably in the forest for centuries. Some of the tribal leaders too are coming to you complaining that they are being coerced and bribed by the company to give their consent.

In such a situation, how would you ensure that forest resources and rights of the indigenous communities are protected along with reaping the potential benefits of economic development and job creation?

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