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Mining CEO quits after destruction of ancient caves – 16th September, 2020

Level 4

The CEO of a mining company resigned after the destruction of sacred Aboriginal sites. The CEO of Rio Tinto has until March to empty his desk. He quit because of the anger created by the demolition of 46,000-year-old caves in the Juukan Gorge in Australia. They are sacred to indigenous people. Evidence shows people lived in them in the Stone Age. The company was mining for iron ore. The CEO said he could have made "better decisions".

The blasts caused global anger and damaged Rio Tinto's image. The mining was against the wishes of the traditional owners of the site. They said Tinto disregarded their traditions to get big profits. They said: "We cannot and will not allow this type of devastation to occur ever again." Rio Tinto apologised and said what happened was wrong. It said the destruction of a heritage site of such exceptional archaeological significance would never happen again.

Level 5

The CEO of the mining giant Rio Tinto has resigned following the destruction of sacred Aboriginal sites. The CEO has until March to empty his desk and head for the door. He handed in his notice after the anger created by the demolition of 46,000-year-old caves in the Juukan Gorge in Australia. The ancient caves are sacred to indigenous people. Evidence shows they were dwellings as far back as the Stone Age, when humans were developing stone tools. The company was mining for high-grade iron ore. The CEO said there was no doubt the company could have made "better decisions".

The blasts caused international condemnation and tainted Rio Tinto's reputation. The mining took place against the wishes of the traditional owners of the site, indigenous Australians. They accused Rio Tinto of disregarding their culture and traditions to get greater profits. They said: "We cannot and will not allow this type of devastation to occur ever again." The Rio Tinto chair apologised. He said: "What happened at Juukan was wrong and we are determined to ensure that the destruction of a heritage site of such exceptional archaeological and cultural significance never occurs again."

Level 6

The CEO of one of the world's largest mining companies, Rio Tinto, has resigned following the destruction of two sacred Aboriginal sites. However, it will not be a speedy exit. The CEO has until March to empty his desk and head for the door. He handed in his notice after the furor created by the demolition of 46,000-year-old caves in the Juukan Gorge in Western Australia. The company was mining for high-grade iron ore. The CEO acknowledged that was no doubt the company could have made "better decisions". The ancient caves are sacred to Australia's indigenous Aboriginal communities. There is evidence to show they were used as dwellings as far back as the Old Stone Age, when humans were developing stone tools.

The blasts at the caves led to international condemnation and adversely affected Rio Tinto's reputation worldwide. The blasting took place against the wishes of the traditional owners of the site, the Puutu Kuntj Kurrama and Pinikura people. They accused the mining giant of a blatant disregard of their culture and traditions, purely in a quest for greater profits. They said: "We cannot and will not allow this type of devastation to occur ever again." The Rio Tinto chair offered an apology. He said: "What happened at Juukan was wrong and we are determined to ensure that the destruction of a heritage site of such exceptional archaeological and cultural significance never occurs again at a Rio Tinto operation."