



Forest dept takes over 3,035 hectares of land leased to HNL

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The Forest department on Wednesday took over 3,035 hectares of forest land leased to Hindustan Newsprint Ltd (HNL) in view of the expiry of the lease period. The land, spread over five divisions in Central Kerala and the hill ranges, was leased to HNL around 15 years ago for growing eucalyptus and acacia trees used as raw materials for manufacturing paper.

The leased plantations are located at Devikulam, Adimali and Neriamangalam under Munnar division, Nellipatty under Marayur division, Mekkappala in Malayattoor division, Erumeli and Nagarampara under Kottayam division and Kottambathur under Thrissur division. Forest officers visited the plantations, checked the documents and completed the takeover process by Wednesday evening. As there were allegations of encroachment, the authorities will conduct a field survey to demarcate the boundaries in the coming days.

Located at Velloor in Kottayam, the HNL was under the administrative jurisdiction of the Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises. The company which was making profit till 2009 plunged into crisis after that due to mounting losses. The National Company Law Tribunal had granted permission for disinvestment on November 25, 2019, and the state government had expressed willingness to pay `25 crore and take over the company.

Source: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/kochi/2020/apr/02/forest-dept-takes-over-3035-hectares-of-land-leased-to-hnl-2124561.html>