

disregarding pressures from interested parties, issued by the Principal Secretary (Rev) was in force during 2010 and that prevented cutting and transportation of trees for a while. But based on the orders of the RDO, trees have been felled as per the first three cutting permissions. Fortunately cutting permissions have been refused to be complied with by Wildlife Warden Munnar in the last three cutting permissions issued by the RDO. All these cutting permissions are in Kottakamboor village. It is to be noted that, the whole area comprised in Block 58 has been declared as sanctuary. In the event of such clarity, issuing cutting permissions in Block 58 without settling the rights of the claimants under Section 19 of the Wildlife Act is highly irregular on the part of the RDO/Sub Collector.

6. VIOLATION OF STATUTES

As mentioned earlier, the Kerala Land Assignment Rules, 1964 and Special Rules, 1993 have been conveniently mixed up by the encroachers taking advantage of both, with the Government departments enforcing neither. Furthermore, from the information provided by the District Collector, it is evident that the land assignment has taken place quite until recently. In some cases, the assignment goes beyond the permissible limit prescribed under the Rules. It has also come to notice that some families hold more than 15 acres; yet, no action under the Kerala Land Reforms Act, 1963 is reported to have been taken. Regarding the systematic removal of forest and planting of *Eucalyptus Grandis*, it is a clear violation of extant Statutes. Against the encroachers, specially large-scale ones, action under the Kerala Land Conservancy Act, 1957 is called for. The Kerala Promotion of Tree Growth in Non-forest Areas Act, 2005 has actually had an adverse impact on the forest lands in general and on the areas covered in this Report in particular. Based on the provisions, contractors and others have systematically cut down all trees including forest trees, sometimes including sandalwood, and obtained illegal returns from their sales. Thus the State has