

State govt acquires paper mill assets



STAFF REPORTER

GUWAHATI, March 28: Assam government has acquired the properties of Hindustan Paper Corporation located in the State, five years after the closure of the two paper mills of the PSU at Jagiroad and Panchgram due to various factors, including mismanagement.

AIDC was the only bidder in the sixth auction of the properties conducted by liquidator Kuldeep Verma and the assets were bought for Rs 375 crore, officials said.

The property at Jagiroad is around 573.95 acres and the Cachar Paper Mill located at Panchgram is spread across an area of 1008 acres. HPC also has a 10 katha property at Haflong which has been clubbed in the Rs 375-crore worth of

assets by the liquidator.

AIDC MD Adil Khan and Moley Ranjan Thakur, the authorized person of official liquidator Kuldeep Verma, signed an understanding at Nagaon Paper Mill in Jagiroad today. A team of AIDC officials has also taken over the assets of Cachar Paper Mill at Panohgram today.

Earlier, the 99.56-'cottah' HPC Housing Colony at Salt Lake in Kolkata was auctioned at Rs 70.07 crore against the reserve price of Rs 52.65 crore, three years after the liquidation of the defunct PSU properties had commenced.

Cachar Paper Mill was closed in October 2015 and Nagaon Paper Mill in March 2017. Liquidation proceedings had begun in 2019 after the creditors approached the NCLT.

Meanwhile, AIDC has in-

vited bids for the supply, installation and commissioning of CCTV surveillance systems in the HPC assets it has taken over.

The only HPC assets left unsold are a residential flat in Mumbai (pegged at a reserve price of Rs 95 lakh), a 547 sq metre office in New Delhi (Rs 5.02 crore), shares in Nagaland Pulp & Paper Company Limited (Rs 7.33 crore) and office equipment. The liquidator has issued a fresh auction notice inviting bids for these assets.

Last year, an agreement was signed between the representatives of officers and supervisors' associations and workers unions of the HPC Limited (in liquidation) and the Government of Assam. A relief package of Rs 700 crore was accorded approval by the Cabinet.

The Government of Assam has paid the amount of Rs 375 crore and will be distributed by the liquidator as per the norms of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) 2016. The remaining amount of Rs 700 crore will be utilized in clearing the dues of employees and workers of HPC.

The Government of Assam plans to develop the land to promote industrial and economic activities.