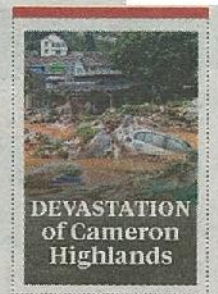


Tajuk Perkara : BENCANA: AUDITORS TO PROBE INTO LAND USE IN CAMERONS

Tajuk Suratkhobar: NEW STRAITS TIMES

Tarikh: 15/11/14 Muka surat: 4 & 5

Auditors to probe into land use in Camerons



ACTION: Checks likely to start next year, says National Audit Department

KUALA LUMPUR

THE Auditor General's office had two years ago pointed out massive problems in the administration of land for cultivation.

Yesterday, the office was shocked to have learnt through the *New Straits Times* that the problem seemed to be unabated, with the revelation that influential hands had allegedly compounded environmental issues Cameron Highlands is facing.

It sparked a discussion at the National Audit Department, and led to the decision for a thorough audit on the handling of land and permit issues by the district's administrators.

A high-ranking official in the department said the call by NST for a full audit on the district's 2003-2015 Development Plan was timely.

Auditors, he said, were preparing for the audit, likely to be carried out next year.

"No stone will be left unturned."

He said the department would kick off their mission by singling out the root cause of the problem.

This, he said, was crucial as the district's officials could then review

department was waiting for replies from the authorities on the issue of slopes and land encroachment in the highlands, as cited in the 2013 AG's report.

The official said auditors from the department last year had also audited the condition of slopes in the highlands. The audit was done on areas where development and illegal activities were carried out in gazetted areas.

"Several gazetted areas, where development was not allowed, were opened for farming and development by the local authority under temporary occupation licences (TOL). This may be related to misuse of power, but we will study the matter again. We have yet to identify those involved."

The NST learnt that the issuance of TOL had been frozen since 2001, not 2008 as widely reported.

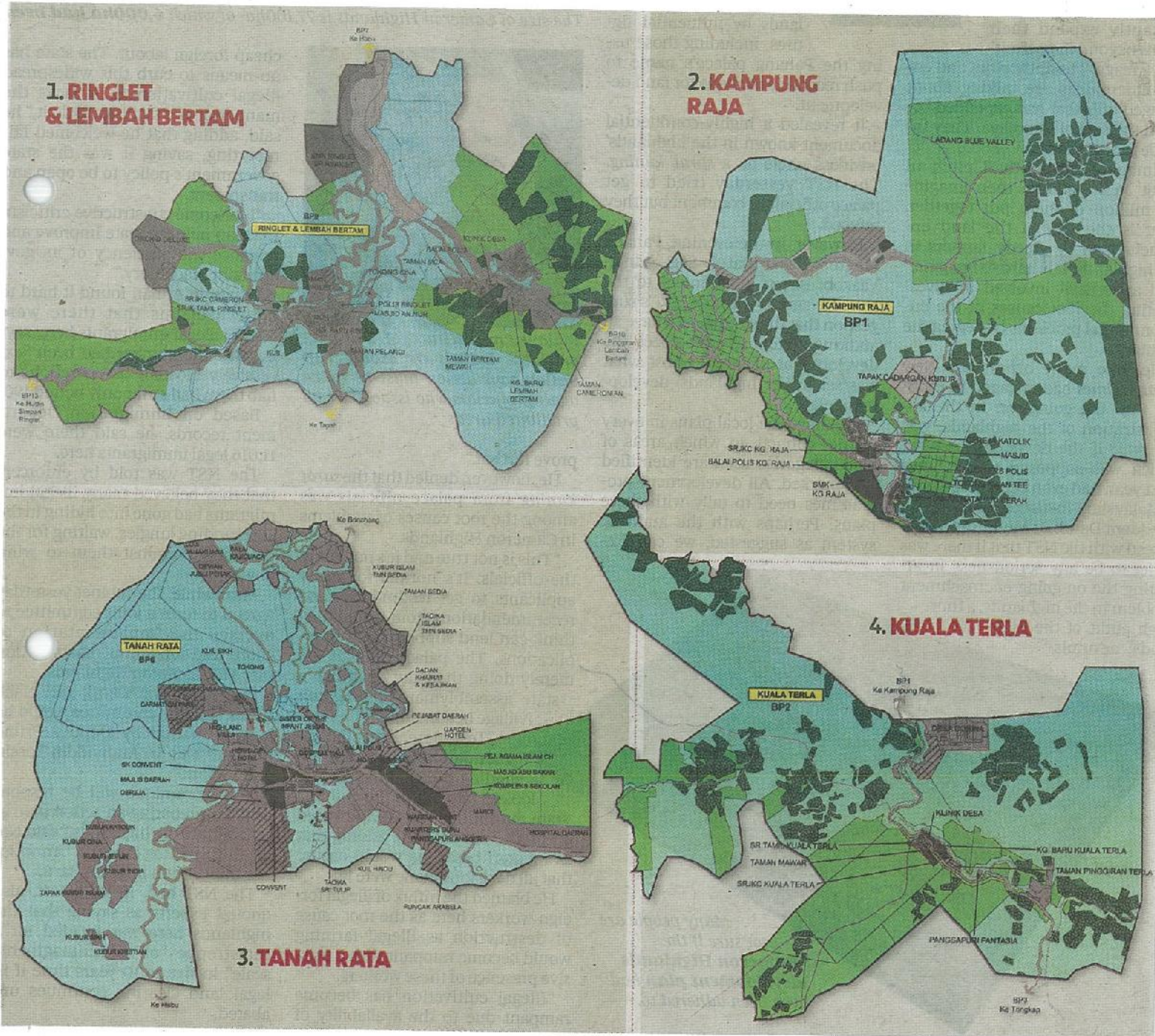
The official said measures would be taken to put an end to this issue.

On why an audit of the highland's land management could not be carried out immediately, he said the

AGENCI REMOTE SENSING MALAYSIA
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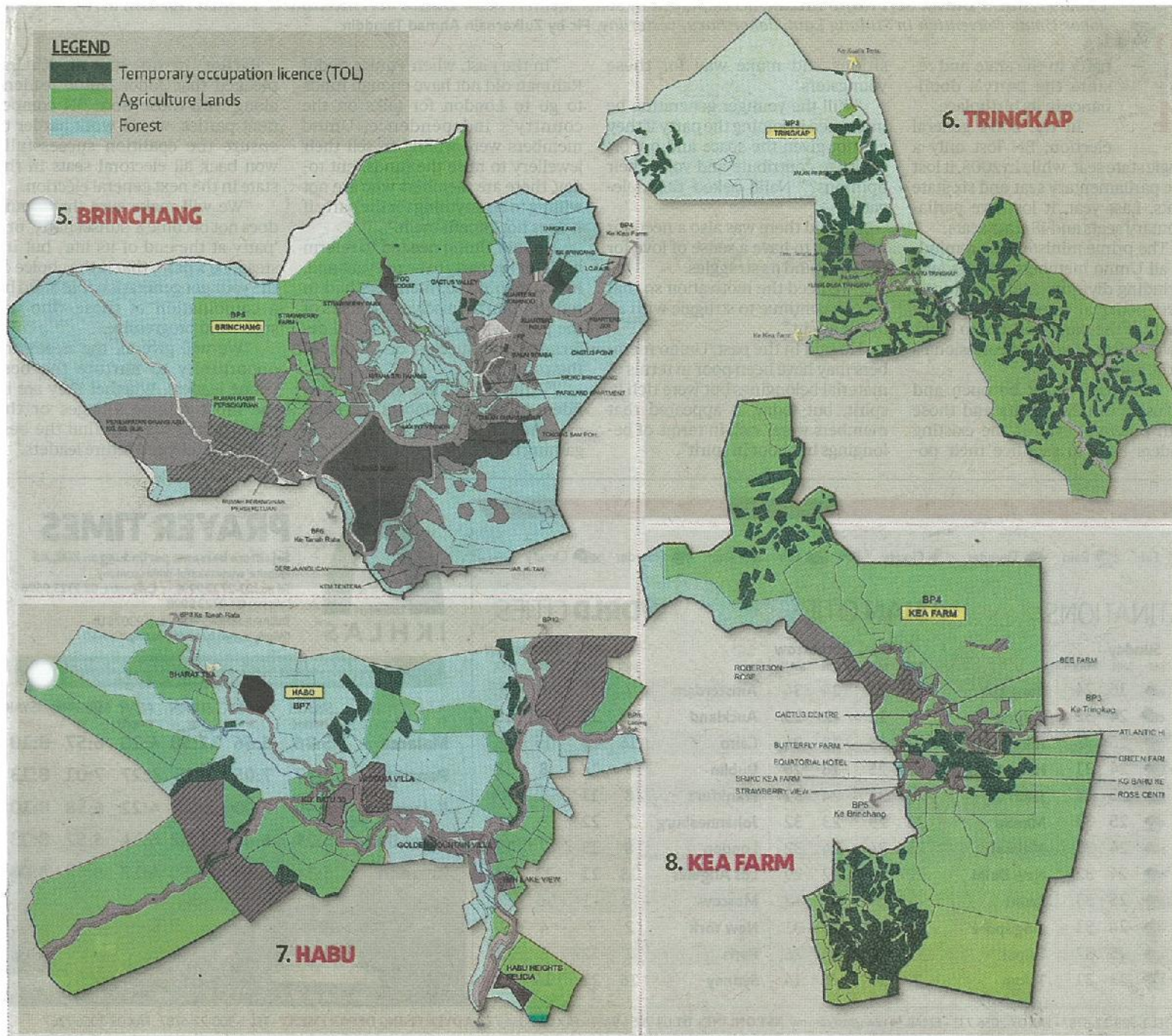
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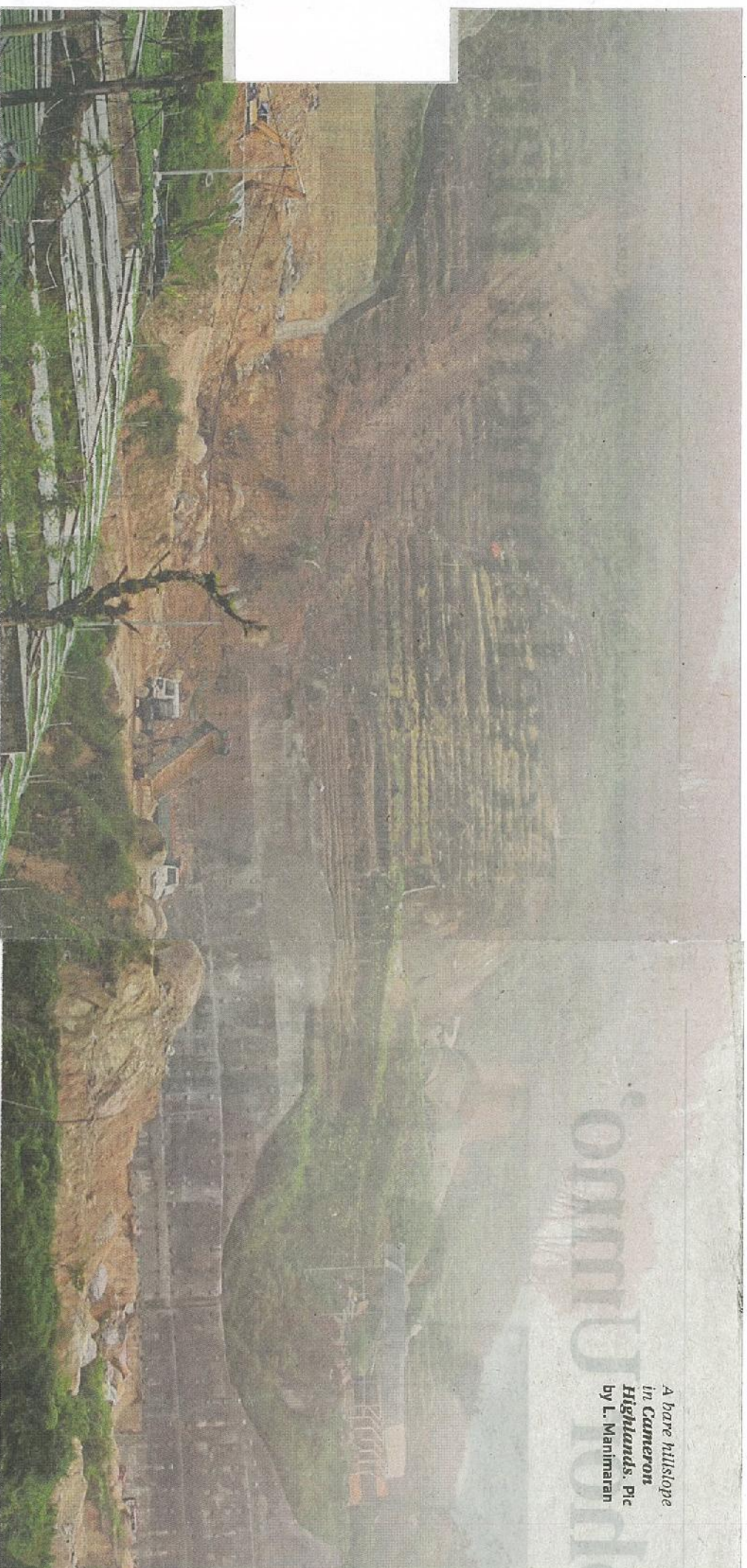
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*A bare hillside
in Cameron
Highlands. Pic
by L. Manimaran*