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First Fireline Project Under VB-G RAM G Scheme Launched in Idukki

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Mains: General Studies III (environment, rural development); Prelims: VB-G RAM G scheme, forest-fire management, Keralam



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What is the news

According to officials, a fireline project under the VB-G RAM G scheme has been launched for the first time at Vannappuram grama panchayat in the Elamdesam block of Idukki district (Keralam). The project has been implemented in collaboration with the Forest Department, with the aim of building climate resilience and preventing forest fires.

What is a fireline

A fireline is a cleared strip of land created by cutting and removing vegetation between a forest and adjoining areas or roads. When a fire spreads, this strip helps limit its advance because it contains no combustible vegetation. It is a standard preventive technique in forest-fire management.

Key facts of the project

- **Location:** Vannappuram grama panchayat, Elamdesam block, Idukki district (Keralam); work is under way in the Mullaringad forest range, one of the most forest-fire-prone regions in the state.
- **Two firelines:** in the Teak Plantation-Kanjirappara and Elav Plantation-Potta areas.
- **Cost and employment:** according to the Joint Block Development Officer's statement, the Elav Plantation-Potta stretch has an estimated cost of ₹2,24,458, 547 man-days, 17 workers; the Teak Plantation-Kanjirappara stretch has an estimated cost of ₹2,24,548, 547 man-days, 15 workers.
- **Length:** together the two stretches will create a 6-kilometre fireline.
- **Why it is a first:** according to officials, fireline-related works were not previously included under the VB-G RAM G scheme; the scheme is now also being used for climate resilience and environmental protection.
- **Expansion:** the project will be extended to three more forest-bordering panchayats in the Elamdesam block, Udumbannoor, Karimannoor and Velliyamattom; following its success, authorities have decided to expand it to the Azhutha, Idukki, Thodupuzha and Devikulam blocks of Idukki district.

Related reading: VB-G RAM G: Work Restrictions Lifted in All 38 Districts of Bihar

Scheme background

The Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025 is the rural employment-guarantee law that replaced the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), 2005. Under it, rural households receive livelihood security through panchayat-level works. (A detailed article on the scheme already exists on the site, this article supplements it.)

Why it matters for the exam

- Prelims: the definition of a fireline, the first fireline under VB-G RAM G (Idukki, Keralam), the man-day details.
- Mains: linking employment-guarantee schemes with environmental works, an example of convergence; useful in GS-III (environment + rural development).

Prelims Practice Questions

Question 1. With reference to a fireline, consider the following statements:

Statement 1: It is a cleared strip of land created by removing vegetation between a forest and adjoining areas.

Statement 2: It is used to stop the spread of forest fires.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a) 1 only

(b) 2 only

(c) Both 1 and 2

(d) Neither 1 nor 2

▼ **Answer and Explanation**

Correct answer: (c)

A fireline is a cleared strip made by cutting vegetation between a forest and adjoining areas/roads; in the absence of combustible material it helps limit a fire's spread, a standard preventive technique in forest-fire management.

Question 2. Where was the first fireline project under the VB-G RAM G scheme implemented?

(a) Wayanad, Keralam

(b) Idukki, Keralam

(c) Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu

(d) Shimla, Himachal Pradesh

▼ **Answer and Explanation**

Correct answer: (b)

The project was launched at Vannappuram grama panchayat (Mullaringad forest range) in the Elamdesam block of Idukki district, in collaboration with the Forest Department; the two firelines will together create a 6-kilometre strip.

Mains Practice Question

"Linking employment-guarantee schemes to climate resilience and environmental protection is a meaningful step towards convergent development." Comment with reference to the first fireline project implemented under the VB-G RAM G scheme in Idukki. (250 words)

Answer Outline

Introduction:

Introduce the first fireline project under VB-G RAM G at Vannappuram grama panchayat, Idukki (Keralam); reference the fire-prone Mullaringad range.

Main Body:

(a) the convergence model - employment-guarantee scheme plus Forest Department; two firelines generating 1,094 man-days and a 6 km protected strip; (b) the role and limits of firelines in climate resilience and forest-fire risk reduction (fuel control only, maintenance essential); (c) replicability - the decision to extend to three forest-bordering panchayats and four blocks; (d) challenges - maintenance, regular monitoring, community participation.

Conclusion:

This meeting of livelihood security and ecological security is a living example of convergent development; lasting success will depend on maintenance and community participation.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Does a fireline stop a forest fire completely?

No, there is no guarantee. By removing fuel (vegetation), a fireline reduces the chance of a fire spreading, but embers and strong winds can carry fire across the strip. According to US Forest Service (USDA) fire guidance, cleared or thinned fuel breaks rarely stop a fire's spread on their own, their effectiveness depends on weather, width, maintenance and the presence of suppression personnel (sources listed below).

What does 'man-day' mean in employment-guarantee schemes?

One day of work by one worker counts as one man-day, that is, total man-days = number of workers × days of work. This is the unit used to measure employment generated and to estimate wage budgets under employment-guarantee schemes.

Sources

- www.thehindu.com
- research.fs.usda.gov
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