

Canister Launched Anti-Armour Loiter Ammunition

April 13, 2022

In news— Recently, the Indian Army has issued a Request for Information (RFI) for the Canister Launched Anti-Armour Loiter Ammunition (CALM) System.

About the Ammunition system-

- Loiter munitions are a **mix of a surface-to-surface missile and a drone.**
- The CALM System is a **pre-loaded canister with loiter ammunition or a drone** which **once fired can remain aloft for a period of time over the area of operation**, and when a target is sighted it can be guided down to destroy the target with the explosive payload that it carries.
- If a mission is aborted or there are no suitable targets, loiter munitions can be recovered.
- They are smaller, cheaper and less complex systems than combat or armed drones.
- **Loitering munitions fit in the niche between cruise missiles and unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs)**, sharing characteristics with both.
- **They differ from cruise missiles in that they are designed to loiter** for a relatively long time around the target area, and from UCAVs in that a loitering munition is intended to be expended in an attack and has a built-in warhead.
- Usually, **they carry a camera which is nose-mounted** and which can be used by the operator to see the area of operation and choose targets.
- They also **have variants which can be recovered and reused** in case they are not used for any strike.
- **They can be used on enemy tanks and other targets in the plains and deserts of Western India** as well as on high

altitude areas (heights up to 5,000 meters) in the Northern borders in Ladakh.

- It will be **employed by the Mechanized Infantry units of the Army for surveillance of beyond line of sight targets** by day and night in real time and beyond visual range engagement of enemy armored fighting vehicles and other ground based weapon platforms over extended ranges.
- **The Army has specified that it intends to procure 150 such systems** which will be launched from the BMP Infantry Fighting vehicles of the Mechanized Infantry which are especially modified for this purpose.

Its usage by other countries-

- **The CALM System had been very effectively used in the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict in 2021** where the Azerbaijan forces made extensive use of Israeli systems to wreak havoc on Armenian tanks, radar systems, communication hubs and other military targets.
- **The Russian military is also using their ZALA KYB loiter ammunition in Ukraine** while some reports say that the **US has also provided Ukraine with its Switchblade loiter munitions** that could target Russian armour 10 km away.