General Studies-3; Topic- Security challenges and their management in border areas;

Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS)

1) **Introduction**
   - The India-Pakistan border in the Jammu and Kashmir region has been vulnerable to infiltration and cross-border strikes.
   - These incidents had raised the demand for the deployment of high-tech border surveillance equipment.
   - The trigger for implementing the Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) was the Pathankot terrorist attack.
   - The Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS) is an integration of a number of new gadgets and technologies to ensure electronic surveillance of India's international borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh.
   - The smart border fencing projects built under CIBMS programme is the first of its kind in the country.

2) **Need for High-tech Border Surveillance**
   - The emphasis on the use of high-tech gadgets for border security is not new.
   - The need for effective technical means to prevent infiltration along the India-Pakistan border first arose during the 1980s when Punjab was in the grip by militancy and numerous incidents of infiltration.
   - Border Security Force (BSF) has detected number of cross-border tunnel in the Jammu sector along the India-Pakistan international boundary.
   - Besides tunnels, the Jammu sector has also witnessed quite a few instances of successful infiltration by terrorists.
   - Large consignments of heroin and fake Indian currency notes in these stretches highlights their vulnerability.
   - There were attacks on strategic installations — prominent among these being the Pathankot and Uri terrorist attacks in 2016.
   - These incidents have raised serious concerns about the efficacy of the existing border security system.
   - This demands for the deployment of high-tech border surveillance equipment.
   - The Madhukar Gupta Committee on border protection had reported to the Union Government to strengthen border protection and address vulnerabilities in fencing along the Indo-Pakistan border.
   - It is generally felt that the one who has better technology will dominate in the future.

3) **Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS)**
   - At present, the CIBMS is being implemented along two stretches in the Jammu sector of the India-Pakistan border.
   - The CIBMS is capable of addressing the gaps in the present system of border security by seamlessly integrating human resources, weapons, and high-tech surveillance equipment.
   - The purpose of the CIBMS is to eventually replace manual surveillance/patrolling of the international borders by electronic surveillance to enhance detection and interception capabilities.

4) Advantages

- Technical solutions are necessary to augment and complement the traditional methods of border guarding.
- They enhance the surveillance and detection capabilities of the border guarding forces.
- They also improve the impact of the border guarding personnel against infiltration and trans-border crimes.
- The stress level among the border guarding personnel would also reduce to a large extent.
- The CIBMS enables round-the-clock surveillance on border and under different weather conditions.

5) International Practice

- The use of high-tech equipment as an integrated instrument for border security has been experimented in various countries.
- Many, including the United States, have tried high-tech solutions for securing their borders.

6) Concerns / Challenges

- The operation and maintenance of the existing sophisticated equipment remain a problem.
- Many of the high-tech surveillance devices deployed by the BSF are not optimally utilised because the required technical expertise is not uniformly available among the force's personnel.
- The exorbitant cost of the electronic devices and the lack of easy availability of spare parts act as a deterrent against their use.
- Centralised decision making could hamper timely and effective response on the ground.
- Erratic power supply and adverse climatic and terrain conditions in the border areas could potentially undermine the functioning of the sophisticated system.
- The experiences of countries such as the United States show that such devices fail to provide a comprehensive solution to border security problems.
- Implementation of similar solutions for the US-Mexico border has been facing several technical glitches and financial challenges.

7) Way Forward

- Given that detection and interception of infiltrators at the border require a quick response which can be achieved only through a decentralised decision making process.
- Caution must be exercised while advocating the use of high-tech and high-cost electronic devices for border security.
- A judicious mix of properly trained manpower and affordable and tested technology is likely to yield better results.
- By this India can show the way to the international community on how to lower the cost of border security, and in turn, counter terrorism.