



MMRCA – Bees Saal Baad! (20 years later)



Saab Gripen E (Photo: Saab)

In the sixties and seventies, the IAF, with its superior capability, played a pivotal role in dominating the battlefield and changing the course of war in India's favour. Then, in the eighties, it went through an evolution in terms of both enhanced operational capabilities and squadron strength. The quick inductions of Mirage-2000, Jaguar, MiG-29, MiG-23, MiG-27, and MiG-25 saw a rapid enhancement in strength. At the same time, HAL manufactured the last of the MiG-21 series, the "Bis", which in coming decades would go through extensive modernisation to be the "Bison". But that advantage quickly started to dwindle as several platforms got obsolete, requiring immediate replacement. Dassault Aviation reportedly offered to transfer production line of Mirage-2000 to India. But ultimately there was no progress. At that time, IAF squadron strength plummeted to an all-time low of just 32



Dassault Rafale (Photo: Dassault)