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IAF's MiG-29 Fighter Jets to be Equipped with ASRAAM Missiles

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Why in News?

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is set to equip its MiG-29 fighter jets with the advanced ASRAAM to enhance its close-combat air capabilities.

Key Highlights

The integration of ASRAAM missiles will significantly improve the air-to-air combat capability of MiG-29 aircraft.

The upgrade focuses on enhancing short-range combat effectiveness in modern warfare scenarios.

It is part of India's broader efforts to modernise its ageing fighter fleet.

About ASRAAM Missile

Full form: Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile (ASRAAM)

Developed by: MBDA

Type: Infrared-guided, short-range air-to-air missile

Range: Approximately 25 km+

Features:

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High speed (supersonic)

“Fire-and-forget” capability

Advanced imaging infrared seeker for high accuracy targeting

About MiG-29 Fighter Aircraft

Origin: Developed by Mikoyan (Russia)

Role: Air superiority fighter

Inducted into IAF: 1980s

Known for:

High manoeuvrability

Twin-engine design

Capability to operate in diverse combat conditions

Need for the Upgrade

Changing nature of aerial warfare requires:

Faster reaction times

High-precision weapons

Existing missile systems on MiG-29 are relatively outdated

Enhances India’s preparedness against regional security threats

Additional Key Facts:

ASRAAM is already integrated with:

SEPECAT Jaguar (IAF fleet)

India is also upgrading its air fleet with:

Rafale jets equipped with Meteor and SCALP missiles

India focuses on Atmanirbhar Bharat in defence, but also uses strategic imports for advanced tech

IAF operates under the Ministry of Defence, Government of India

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