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Brazilian Air Force conducts METEOR missile firings with Gripen E

The METEOR Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile (BVRAAM) first firing in Brazil underscores Gripen E's long-range air combat capability.

In November, the Brazilian Air Force (FAB) achieved a major milestone by completing the first firings of the METEOR BVRAAM from Gripen E, strengthening Brazil's air-defence deterrent power. Two missiles precisely hit their designated targets, while demonstrating the weapon's accuracy against long-range threats.

The launches took place during the BVR-X Technical Exercise, at Natal Air Base in Rio Grande do Norte. With the participation of the First Air Defence Group (1º GDA), the Technical Exercise brought together four Gripen E fighters in a large-scale operation that, for the first time, allowed FAB technicians and pilots to handle and employ the METEOR in combat-like conditions.

"The BVR-X was a crucial step in expanding the capabilities of the F-39E Gripen. The Gripen and METEOR combination projects Brazil's combat power and strengthens the deterrence required by our Air Force and, above all, by the country. With advanced sensors, mission systems and electronic warfare capabilities, combined with a missile designed to make evasion virtually impossible, this combination provides a decisive advantage in air combat," said Air Major General Breno Diogenes Gonçalves, Commander of Natal Air Base and Director of the Technical Exercise.

"The success of this operation reflects the strong partnership between the Brazilian Air Force, Saab and MBDA. Through this close collaboration, we are bringing cutting-edge technology to Brazil. The Gripen and METEOR combination places the country among the few nations worldwide with access to this level of air combat innovation," said Peter Dölling, Managing Director at Saab Brasil.

"METEOR is one of the best examples of what is at the core of MBDA's DNA: cooperation. It is the result of the joint effort of six European nations, led by MBDA, to create the most sophisticated air-to-air weapon system in operation today. The missile, already certified for use with Gripen E in Sweden, is a game-changer that ensures air superiority for its operator. Brazil now benefiting from this capability is an element of pride for MBDA," explained Ricardo Mantovani, Vice President Export Sales Americas at MBDA.

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METEOR's ramjet motor provides thrust all the way to its threat interception, creating the most extensive No Escape Zone of any medium range air-to-air missile. Its endgame kinematics and blast fragmentation warhead ensure maximum effectiveness. METEOR can engage a wide variety of targets, day or night, in any weather conditions, and in intense electronic warfare environments too.

Preparations for BVR-X Technical Exercise took place with support from Saab, MBDA and several FAB units, including the Operational Applications Institute, which received key knowledge transfer on missile employment. Patrol aircraft also helped secure the maritime area to ensure safe launch conditions. The targets were two manoeuvrable Mirach 100/5 drones specifically designed for this exercise. They replicated the speed and altitude profile of modern fighter aircraft, creating a demanding environment to demonstrate the missile's precision, adding realism to the evaluation.

The outcome of the exercise highlighted the highly effective performance of Gripen E paired with the METEOR missile, underscoring its importance within the Brazilian Air Force's air-defence capability.

Saab is a leading defence and security company with an enduring mission, to help nations keep their people and society safe. Empowered by its 26,000 talented people, Saab constantly pushes the boundaries of technology to create a safer and more sustainable world. Saab designs, manufactures and maintains advanced systems in aeronautics, weapons, command and control, sensors and underwater systems. Saab is headquartered in Sweden. It has major operations all over the world and is part of the domestic defence capability of several nations. Saab has a long-term partnership with Brazil and provides a wide range of advanced solutions for the country, both civil and military. Through the Brazilian Gripen Programme, the company has established a broad technology transfer initiative that is strengthening the national defence industry.

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