

Russia Works on MiG-41 Doomsday Fighter Jet

defense-aerospace.com

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The new MiG-41 fighter jet, which is being developed in Russia, is likely to be put to test in 2020. At the same time, the MiG-31 interceptor aircraft that are now in service will not become obsolete before the 2030s.

On October 26, MiG-31BM long-range interceptors covered missile-dangerous destinations during air force exercises in the polar zone of Russia's Urals. More than 40 aircraft also performed midair refueling maneuvers at high altitudes. This is one of the most complicated maneuvers for air force pilots, who need to position the aircraft at a distance of only 10-15 meters from the Il-78 tanker, despite aerodynamic disturbances and an obvious threat of collision.

The MiG-31 has been in service for less than half a century - since 1975. The fighter that saw the light at the Mikoyan design bureau became unique for a number of reasons: it was the first aircraft to be equipped with a phased array antenna that allows to "hold" up to 24 targets (at least eight targets at once during active radar augmentation). In addition, the aircraft was armed with long-range air-to-air missiles. This made him a killer plane for a number of targets, including even low-orbit satellites. Another respectable characteristic of the veteran of the Russian Air Force is its unimaginable speed and long flight range.

Yet, there is a limit to everything. Therefore, back in the 1990s, a decision was made to create an absolutely new aircraft that would take aircraft performance characteristics to a whole new level. The aircraft of the future was code-named "Project 701." During the presidency of Boris Yeltsin, Russia did not need new aircraft to protect its own airspace, and the project was shelved.

Today, Russia gives the MiG-41 another chance. Interestingly, it was the Russian administration that placed an order for the new aircraft - it was not a creative proposal from the Mikoyan Design Bureau. The rigid deadline for the implementation of the defense order is conspicuous: the new aircraft is to be passed into service already in 2025.

In fact, the project was reanimated quite a while ago: its transition from the research to the practical stage was announced a month ago. To be able to switch to this stage, the design bureau is supposed to have all necessary calculations and preliminary drawings prepared properly.

Nothing is known yet about the configuration of the new aircraft. However, it is expected that we will see the development of the good old MiG-31. The new aircraft may become a joint project for a number of departments, as there is not much time left to have it done. What's the big hurry? The last time when the country's leadership was in such a hurry with the rearmament program was on the eve of the Great Patriotic War.