

IAF Rafale's in “revolutionary” flight

Strategic partner India joins French Bastille day celebrations

All over the world countries celebrate annually their national memorials and or markings of important historic events. Internationally well known samples of such large festivities and parades include “Independence Day” in the USA in July, Chinese “National Day” in October and, in the same month, “Unity Day” in Germany. France is no exception when celebrating its revolution and founding of the republic during “Bastille Day” on 14 July. Highlight of this French event is the large military parade at and over the “Champs Elysee”, the most important and well known road through the centre of Paris, capital of the country. On the ground and in the air the defence forces and governmental services of France present themselves to the gathered audience in a large defile in front of the President of the French Republic.

Each year the defile focusses at specific themes to underline the importance as well as showing honour, gratitude and respect to the involved units and crews. Next to the national themes another regularly included element of Bastille Day are the international friendships, cooperations and partnerships with other nations. Samples of forces who joined the aerial parade over the past few years include military aircraft of Singapore, Belgium, Germany and Greece. This year French President Emmanuel Macron invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India who accepted to join the French celebrations on 14 July, as a special guest of honour. Amongst others, the joint French-Indian contribution to Bastille Day 2023 was to commemorate 25 year anniversary of their strategic partnership.

The months prior to the festivities, India revealed information how they would contribute to the French event. A total of 240 personnel of army, navy and air force elements were scheduled for the marching parade over the Champs Elysees. Actually, on 14 July these Indian troops, accompanied by their fanfare, were leading the opening of the marching parade through the Paris city centre in front of the Indian PM, the French President and numerous VIP guests.

Additionally the Indian Air Force was giving act the presence by forwarding 4 Rafale fighter jets together with 72 flight and

