

## **Prime Minister's Visit to France: PM's Statement to the media after the Parade (July 14, 2009)**

14/07/2009

I am delighted to be present today at the National Day celebrations of France. The magnificent parade we have witnessed dramatises the strength and dynamism of this great nation. It was an honour for India to have a contingent representing all three services of our armed forces lead the parade. This reflects the friendship and strategic partnership between our two countries and the cordial ties between our armed forces.

July 14 is a date important not only for France. The French Revolution marked a defining moment in world history when the aspirations of the common man began to acquire a central place in political and social life. The ideals of the French Revolution – liberty, equality and fraternity – helped to inspire our freedom struggle and guided the founding fathers of the Indian Constitution. I am grateful to President Sarkozy for giving India a place of honour on this great occasion.

India-France relations and cooperation are growing in strength and vitality in all fields. We have a strategic partnership and have built vibrant political ties, with collaboration in energy, space research, defence, industry and commerce, science and technology, education, culture and tourism. It is my ardent wish that the partnership between our two democracies is further strengthened and deepened in the years to come. This will benefit the people of both our countries.

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