

Behind the Scenes

The Paris Parade 2020



Every year on 14th July, the National Military Parade (*défilé*) is held in the French capital of Paris commemorating start of the French Revolution. On 14 July 1789, the Bastille prison had been raided by people from Paris, an event that began the French Revolution. Traditionally thereafter, a spectacular military parade is held with soldiers, trucks and tanks in the heart of Paris while aircraft and helicopters fly overhead in an air parade (*défilé aérien*).

However, this year, because of the ongoing pandemic, several restrictions were imposed. The ground parade was confined to the Place de la Concorde and visitors were not allowed, having to watch the parade on television. The main theme of the parade was the liberation of France 75 years back as also the 80th birth anniversary of the 'Free French Air Force' (*Forces Aériennes Françaises Libres*' (or FAFL). The parade climaxed with an aerial display of various helicopters from the Army (*Armée de Terre*),

Air Force (*Armée de l'Air*), Navy (*Marine Nationale*) and the Police (*Gendarmerie Nationale*).

The participants operated from various airbases, some from their home bases (*Air Force*: C-130, A400M, E-3F, C-135F, A330MRTT, Mirage 2000D, Mirage 2000C; *Marine*: Rafales, Atlantic, E-2D, Falcon 50M) as also from airbases close to Paris where fuel was an important factor (BA Evreux, west of Paris for the Mirage 2000C and Rafale, local transport aircraft ;

