



# PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

16 JULY 1978

## PRIME MINISTER TO VISIT INDIA

The Prime Minister announced today that he would visit India in January 1979. Mr Fraser said that at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Regional Meeting (CHOGRM) held in Sydney in February of this year he had received a verbal invitation from the Indian Prime Minister, Mr Moraji Desai, to attend the Indian Republic Day celebrations on 26 January 1979. In a letter of 8 May, Mr Desai had renewed his invitation to Mr Fraser to be a special guest of the Indian Government at the celebrations. Mr Fraser had replied on 2 June that he was very pleased to accept this invitation.

The Prime Minister will be accompanied by his wife and children. Details of the visit have not yet been finalised, but it is expected to last for several days.

Mr Fraser recalled that at CHOGRM he and Mr Desai had had wide-ranging and useful discussions on a number of matters of common concern. He looked forward to the opportunity for a further round of talks with Prime Minister Desai and other senior Government Ministers.

The Prime Minister noted that Australia and India shared the same date for their respective National days, 26th January, and his attendance at the Indian Republic Day Celebrations as a special guest of the Indian Government indicated the warmth and depth of the relationship between the two countries; Australia's relations with India were close and he would be seeking ways and initiatives by which they might become closer still. Mr Fraser said that he and his family also welcomed the opportunity that this visit would afford to see something of India's cultural heritage and contemporary achievements.