

We sail or sink together: NSA Ajit Doval meets eminent Indian Muslims

National Security Adviser Ajit Doval invited 14 eminent people from the Muslim community to the new PMO building. Doval heard their concerns and suggestions, and spoke about the path for a stronger and united India.



NSA Ajit Doval emphasised the importance of unity in the meeting with eminent members of the Muslim community. (Image: Zafar Sareshwala/X)

National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval met a group of eminent Muslims and discussed the path to a united and stronger and united India. Industrialists, educationists, activists, a doctor, and a journalist were part of the 14-member group that Doval met at the new PMO building. Doval "patiently" heard the guests for about 1.5 hours, and then shared his guidelines and vision.

Businessman and educationist Zafar Sareshwala, who led the team that met the NSA on Saturday (April 18), told India Today Digital, "Doval listened to every one of us patiently." He also said that Doval emphasised the importance of unity among religions in the country. "India is a ship, we all sail together, or we sink together, he said at the meeting."

"The government invited us, and this is a positive sign," Sareshwala said about the meeting. "In the meeting, we requested a need for a level playing field. We said neither Muslims should be discriminated against nor should they get any special treatment," he added.

"This is just the beginning of something special. We are going to continue this in the future," Sareshwala told India Today Digital.

Other than Sareshwala, the eminent Muslims who met Doval included KP Groups founder and Chairman Faruk Patel, German Steel CMD Inamulhaq Iraki, German Steel Executive Director Ibrarulhaq Iraki, Niton Valves CEO Juned Shariff, GLS Switchgear Director Zaffar Lari, Dawoodi Bohra leader Jamaat Altaf Sadikot, Anjuman-I-Islam president Zahir Kazi, community leader Haji Rayma and Chairperson of Haj Committee India Kausar Jahan. Environmental activist Saher Bhamla, AIIMS doctor Nishat Hussain, Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) Vice-Chancellor Naima Khatoun and journalist Samina Shaikh were also part of the group.

"The meeting sends a positive message that there are people in the government who are ready to listen to minorities. Regular dialogues help remove misconceptions and should continue as they help in building bridges," Zahir Kazi told The Times of India's Mohammed Wajihuddin.

DHURANDHAR MOVE OF NSA DOVAL, SAYS VETERAN JOURNALIST

"Ajit Doval, real-life Dhurandhar, that's India's National Security Advisor to Narendra Modi, is a highly pragmatic and grounded man. On 18 April, he invited 14 respected achievers and leaders of the Indian Muslim community to the newly built Prime Minister's office," posted veteran journalist Sheela Bhatt on X on Friday.

"All the Muslim leaders were selected with care and purpose. These Indians are refusing to be part of so-called 'vote-bank politics' where one's vote becomes merely a tool to defeat or select one party or the other," she wrote.

Zafar Sareshwala thanked Doval in a post on X "for giving us your valuable time, hearing us out patiently, and giving futuristic guidelines for national growth". He called it "an absolutely wonderful interaction" and "the only way forward".

The group shared their concerns and suggestions with Doval, including on education and job opportunities.

Samina Shaikh, an independent journalist, shared insights on X after meeting Doval. "As I represent myself as an independent journalist who's a part of the media fraternity while being a Muslim girl, it was important to highlight how the community supports us for our education as well as ambition."

"When issues blow out of proportion on social media and Muslims get targeted, it does concern us and how it should be sanitised," Shaikh said. She said Doval "not only heard us out with minute detailing, but also provided solutions to the concerns".

In July 2023, Doval said religions have co-existed in harmony for centuries, adding that "Islam occupies a unique and significant position in India. "Amongst its numerous religious groups, Islam occupies a unique and significant position of pride with India being home to the second-largest Muslim population in the world," he said.

The recent meeting of NSA Doval with the Muslim industrialists, educationists, religious leaders and professionals has been appreciated by the participants.