



## India-Indonesia Strategic Partnership

### High-level *Ulama* Delegation of “National Treasures” Visits India in the Wake of R20 Summit

***“We take pride in our relations with Indonesia, which have been elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in recent years.”***

***~ India’s National Security Advisor, Ajit Doval***

NEW DELHI, India, 29 November 2022 — The India Islamic Cultural Center hosted a day-long dialogue on the role of *ulama*, or Muslim scholars, in fostering interfaith peace and social harmony in India and Indonesia, as part of a comprehensive strategic partnership emerging between the world's largest and third largest democracies.

India’s National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and his Indonesian counterpart, Mahfud MD, held two days of high-level discussions that included meetings with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and its Minister of External Affairs, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar. As Indonesia’s Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs, the Honorable Mahfud MD led a 25-member Indonesian delegation that included senior Muslim scholars and representatives of other faiths including Roman Catholicism and Hinduism.

Many members of the Indonesian delegation, including the Minister himself, participated in the G20 Religion Forum (R20) Summit held on the island of Bali on 2 – 3 November 2022.

Addressing his Indonesian counterpart, NSA Ajit Doval said, “Excellency, your idea to bring a high-level *ulama* delegation of ‘National Treasures’ to India is apt and extremely important. As you all are aware, both our countries have been victims of terrorism and separatism. While we have overcome these challenges to a considerable extent, the phenomenon of cross-border terrorism continues to pose a threat. Cooperation among civil society is essential in countering the threat from ISIS-inspired individual terror cells and returnees from theatres like Syria and Afghanistan.”

As reported by the [Hindustan Times](#) (est. 1924), “Indonesia formally handed over the G20 presidency to India during the Bali summit of the world’s 20 largest economies. Both countries, along with Brazil are part of the G20 Troika, which includes the outgoing, current and incoming presidencies. Indonesia also has a key role in helping organise the events to be held during India’s G20 presidency from December 1.”

During the day-long dialogue held at the India Islamic Cultural Center, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and Sikh leaders participated in three closed sessions on the themes “Islam: Continuity and change,” “Harmonising interfaith society,” and, “Countering radicalisation and extremism in India and Indonesia.”

The visit of the Indonesian delegation was widely covered by print, broadcast, and social media in both India and Indonesia.

Indian Muslim newspaper [\*Awaz \(the Voice\)\*](#) — which publishes in English, Hindi, Urdu, and Assamese — wrote of NSA Doval: “Tracing the rich history of India’s ties with Indonesia, the NSA said, ‘Indonesia is an important partner in India's extended neighbourhood and our two countries share many complementarities. We have had vast and extended cultural, economic and spiritual contacts for 1600 years up to the 14th Century. These contacts showed us the value of openness, engagement and respect for diversity... We are both flourishing democracies in the Indo-Pacific region.’”