Introduction of Mr. Ajit Doval, KC, National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister of India, by Mr. B. P. Bam, IPS (Retd.) on the occasion of the Twenty-first Lalit Doshi Memorial Lecture on 4th August 2015

I have the honour of introducing today's speaker Mr.Ajit Doval. I distinctly remember the first day I met him, it was thirty years ago. From the uniformed services, I had found myself on a desk job in the IB (Intelligence Bureau) Head Quarters. In the Executive Police I was following a simple rule, read and write only if you must. There I was immersed in files and papers and daily new waves would come. I was trying to understand what this was all about. Finally, I could find out something which I felt was important from the point of view of intelligence. So I went and told my boss, he appreciated my efforts. He said Mr.Ajit Doval was dealing with that, and told me to go and meet him. I felt honoured because Mr. Doval was already a celebrity by then. In the intelligence bureau or any intelligence service for that, you are noticed only if you make blunders. But he changed that order and he was noticed for whatever good work he was doing. He created a record by getting the Indian Police Medal in the sixth year of service! The qualifying norm was seventeen years.

When I had discussions with him, I realised that what I had found was important, but it was only a small piece of a giant jigsaw puzzle he was working on. Just a small piece! Then I found that he was very much interested in what he was doing and was handling several jigsaw puzzles at the same time with the pieces jumbled together. He was in the operations and I was in the I.B. headquarters, later in SIB HQ in Bhopal, and then in Mumbai. We were also doing operations and we used to meet very irregularly and often the time gap used to be very long. But whenever I met him there was some cause to celebrate. He fed us excellent lunches, I do not know how he keeps his fitness and figure even now! He would be there everywhere, wherever he worked he would go and mix with the underground, the insurgent groups, terrorists, extremists, whatever it was. Whether it was in North-East, border of Myanmar, border of China, the cold of Kashmir, the heat of Punjab, everywhere. He would mix with the locals, especially with those who did not want the government anywhere near them. I remember when he was awarded the Kirti Chakra, I was thrilled to hear from the others what he had done. He had defused a situation where bullets were already being exchanged. He walked into the den of those terrorists and could convince them that it was in

their interest and in the interest of their cause to surrender. A major terror incident was avoided. I was really thrilled. Later I met him in his office in London High Commission and I was trying to bring the topic again and again on his Kirti Chakra. He wanted to avoid that, so he started praising my suit! After sometime I realised that he was giving me a hint that this Kirti Chakra and all was just a new suit, this time it was funded by the government. He was regularly involved with situations which were dangerous. I know, I was in the uniformed police, I have seen the army operations also. It requires lot of courage, when the skirmishes start, to lead your company, your platoon, your battalion into battle, lot of courage is required. Even the policemen, I see a lot of them here before me, when they have to face a violent mob with just a handful of men with them, yes, it requires lot of courage. But going and staying with them, at the risk of your being exposed and killed? He was getting habituated to this. This was nothing for him.

Sir, I take this opportunity to salute you for the number of times you have challenged death, but you were not noticed. And also for times, when you were playing hide and seek with death for long periods, staying with the insurgents.

The wonderful thing was, they communicated with him, they welcomed him and he debated, convinced them and converted them to the path of peace and progress. The recent Naga Accord is one of the examples of what he has done. Not only this, earlier the Mizos, then in Kashmir, the fellows who were influenced by the enemies, he turned them against those persons. Mr. Doval looks very simple, but he is something really wonderful. As much as I knew him, I wanted to risk keeping him as my role model. But in mountaineering you cannot have the Sherpas as your role model, because the skill is in their blood. So I decided to join Mr. Doval's fan club and remain a fan of his, which still I am. We were very happy that he headed the Intelligence Bureau (IB) before retirement, he retired as the Director of IB. There are many obstacles in reaching that Chair, but, we are very happy that he retired as the Director of IB and after retirement he took up his intellectual pursuits not the intelligence in the parlance of IB. He could mix very easily with all those scholars, he could

debate with them, he could have a dialogue with them. He established a Foundation, The Vivekananda International Foundation. His Blog and the Foundation's website are really worth visiting. Because you will find some original ideas about intelligence, governance, everything!

Today he has selected an excellent topic to interact with you – it is State Security, Statecraft and Conflict of Values. The State has to contend with enemies across the border and enemies within also. History has proved time and again that excessive compassion, excessive lenience are very dangerous for the security of the State. Security of the State is not just the security of the rulers, if the general public is not safe then the rulers will never be safe. But then how do you deal with the enemies, unless you use the rod? He has the excellent timing of knowing when a dialogue will do and when the punitive arm should come forth.

It is very good that he has been selected for the job of National Security Adviser. It is a great thing and he has slid into this job very easily because he had kept abreast with all the history that had taken place and he has the courage to work for the vision for the future and lay down the path for it. I am sure he will be a source of inspiration to lot of young people who are drawn to the civil services and police services. I hope, looking at him at least a few are attracted to jobs which do not have any glamour. Somebody has to take the role of a root! Where will the fruits and flowers come from? We are grateful to you Sir for choosing to go underground and support the whole system.

Thank you.

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