

MEDIA ADVISORY

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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SENDS OPEN LETTER TO POLITICAL PARTIES IN RUN UP TO INDIAN ELECTIONS

As the general election draws near, Amnesty International is sending an open letter to political parties, urging their leaders to publicly commit themselves and their party to strengthening human rights protection in India and promoting human rights internationally.

Human rights violations affect most sections of Indian society, with the socially or economically disadvantaged being especially vulnerable. Amnesty International is raising the question of human rights protection in India as abuses of human rights are still being reported. The organization believes its concerns can and should be resolved through the political process, and hopes that these concerns will be at the forefront of the policies of the new government in India.

In the open letter, Amnesty International urges the government to:

- Review and amend the provisions in India's legislative framework which permit human rights violations by not conforming to international standards.
- Review the problems experienced by the politically, socially and economically disadvantaged when they try to use the law, as these problems increase the suffering of those whose rights have been violated.
- Take concrete steps to ensure the eradication of torture, including rape, deaths of prisoners in custody and illegal detention.
- Review the mechanisms that monitor the police and security forces, and provide adequate and appropriate training to ensure that these forces are made fully aware of human rights concerns.
- Investigate in a thorough and impartial manner all human rights violations as a matter of urgency, and promptly bring to justice anyone found guilty of perpetrating these violations.
- Join the growing number of countries that have abolished the death penalty in law, and as a first step, commute all death sentences and carry out no further executions.
- Enter into full and open discussions with Indian and international non-governmental human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, and grant them unhindered access to India. This would ensure that all those concerned with the protection and promotion of human rights could work together, in a spirit of openness, towards their shared goals.

For more information on Amnesty International's concerns in India, to obtain a full copy of the open letter, or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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