

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL INDIA

PRESS RELEASE

29 July 2013

AI Index: ASA 20/046/2013

Attacks on civilians in Assam must end.

Amnesty International India condemns the recent spate of attacks in Assam that have killed 1 person and injured at least 30.

On 28 July, a grenade blast near a police station in a crowded area in Guwahati injured 16 people. Four similar attacks have been carried out in Karbi Anglong and Lakhimpur districts since 23 July.

“The deliberate targeting of civilians in all these incidents is deeply concerning,” said Shashikumar Velath, Programmes Director of Amnesty International India. “Attacks of this sort go against fundamental principles of humanity.”

No one has claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Assam authorities said they suspect a secessionist armed group – the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA-Independent). The Assam police have arrested four men suspected of being involved in the Lakhimpur blasts. The police said the attacks were intended to scare people ahead of India’s Independence Day on 15 August.

“The victims of these attacks have a right to justice and reparations. Authorities must conduct prompt and effective investigation into the attacks,” Shashikumar said.

Unlawful police practices can violate the fair trial rights of suspects, and also the victims’ right to justice.

“The authorities must bring those responsible for the attacks to justice in fair trials, without recourse to the death penalty.”

In October 2008, over 75 people were killed and around 500 injured when a series of bombs went off across Assam.

Armed groups have been active in Assam and parts of north-eastern India for decades. The central government has been carrying out peace talks with some armed groups, including one faction of the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA), since 2011.

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