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## **Execution of Balwant Singh would be a step back for India**

The execution of Balwant Singh Rajoana must be halted and an official moratorium on capital punishment established in India, Amnesty International said in an [open letter to the country's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh](#).

Balwant Singh's execution is scheduled for 31 March 2012, in Punjab state.

While death sentences continue to be imposed by Indian courts, no executions have been carried out in India since 2004.

Amnesty International publishes its new report Death Sentences and Executions 2011 on [Tuesday 27 March](#).

As of 22 March 2012, more than two-thirds of all countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice. Out of 41 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, 17 have abolished the death penalty for all crimes and 10 are abolitionist in practice.

"Resuming executions after an eight year hiatus would place India in opposition to regional and global trends towards abolition of the death penalty," said Bikramjeet Batra, Amnesty International's Policy Adviser.

"We urge Prime Minister Singh to stop the execution of Balwant Singh and establish an official moratorium on executions – and ultimately to abolish the death penalty in India for all crimes."

Balwant Singh was found guilty in 2007 of the assassination of former Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh in 1995. The death sentence was upheld by the High Court of Punjab and Haryana in October 2010.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception. The death penalty is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

- Interviews with Amnesty International Death Penalty experts are available
- Please use link for a copy of the open letter to Prime Minister Singh: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA20/011/2012/en>
- Amnesty International's new report Death Sentences and Executions 2011, with facts and analysis on the death penalty worldwide, is available under embargo. Please see: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ACT50/003/2012/en>
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