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29 December 1999

Indian Airlines hijacking: Amnesty International calls for immediate release of hostages

As the situation becomes increasingly desperate for hostages held on board the Indian Airlines plane in Kandahar, Amnesty International today appeals to the hijackers, reported to be members of the Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, to immediately and unconditionally release them.

"We condemn unreservedly the killing of one of the passengers and threats to kill further passengers if the hijackers' demands are not met," the organization said.

"The taking and killing of hostages is in contravention of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions. This act has rightly been condemned, both internationally and in many quarters in Jammu and Kashmir."

Amnesty International pointed out that it has highlighted for many years the abuses of human rights which have taken place in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir.

"All sides to the conflict have been responsible for violating international human rights and humanitarian law. By holding scores of civilians hostage under threat of death, members of this armed group are committing one more act in an apparently never-ending spiral of brutality. This must stop now," the human rights organisation said.

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