

Amnesty UK South Asia

December 2025



South Asia Coordinator Team

You have been sent this Newsletter because you or your local group opted in to receive Actions, Campaigns and Updates on South Asia. You can opt out at any time by contacting one of us.

Please let us know if you have taken any actions or need further information.

Thank you for your support.

Cherry, Jerry, Irfan, Faissal & Will

CAMPAIGN FOR GARMENT WORKERS IN BANGLADESH, INDIA, PAKISTAN AND SRI LANKA

The garment workers campaign is now launched, after two years of Amnesty research work. Our Activist Led Campaign will focus on violations of workers' right to freedom of association in the four target countries: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and the steps that brands must take. Two reports are now available:

1. *Stitched Up*: Denial of Freedom of Association for Garment Workers.



Please see [*'Stitched Up'*](#).

2. *Abandoned by Fashion*: The Urgent Need for Fashion Brands to Champion Workers' Rights.



Please see [*'Abandoned by Fashion'*](#).

Join the fight for garment workers' rights

Garment workers in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka struggle daily to survive, having to deal with sexual harassment, unpaid overtime, low wages, excessive targets, poor or no access to healthcare and other exploitative conditions, so that they can support their families. These abuses likely wouldn't be ignored if they belonged to a union.

For years, governments and fashion companies have profited from the poor working conditions of the women who make our clothes. In Sri Lanka, some workers said their targets have increased by up to three times, meaning they don't have time to go to the toilet, so they don't drink water or use their lunch break, otherwise they wouldn't meet their targets to get paid. In India, Mahir, a 40-year-old worker, must work 10-12 hours a day, six or seven days a week, to earn just enough to survive.

Garment workers want to improve their conditions but can only do so with a collective voice. When they try to form unions, they are threatened. When Sumaiyaa in Pakistan tried to form a union to put an end to daily sexual harassment, she was forced to leave her job. In Bangladesh, Susmita, who worked in a garment factory as a child, was denied a promotion because she was a union member.

When workers raise their voices, they are ignored; when they try to organise, they are threatened and fired; and when workers protest, they are beaten, shot at and arrested. Attempts to unionise or demand better conditions are often met with threats, violence or dismissal.

Please do not include any suggestion of boycotting clothing in the campaign. These women and their families need this work.

This Activist Led Campaign needs support from UK activists. We are the home of more of the brands than other sections. Please contact Jerry Allen (jerry.allen@amnesty.org.uk) for more details.

INDIA

BK16 Update



Good news that Jyoti Jagtap, the only remaining female member of the BK16 and the youngest, has been released on interim bail (centre of photo in patterned top) having been held for 5 ½ years. The bail is only interim until the next court hearing in February, so there is no guarantee she will remain free and she will still be subject to restrictions on her movements. Mahesh Raut is also on interim bail for medical treatment for his rheumatoid arthritis, which has been worsened by his years in jail, but this could change at the next court hearing.

Stop Press: We have just heard that Hany Babu has also been granted bail, which leaves three individuals still in jail, Surendra Gadling, Ramesh Gaichor and Sagar Gorkhe. Charges have still not been dropped for any of those out on bail and none has received anything amounting to a fair and legal trial.

Take action on 10 December, International Human Rights Day: Write solidarity letters or send cards to the three BK16 activists still in jail (Taloja Central Prison, Kharjar, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra 410210). Please do not mention Amnesty, just send a personal solidarity message.



Immigration and Foreigners Order threatens human rights

Amnesty International has expressed concern about the new [Immigration and Foreigners Order, 2025](#) issued under the recently enacted [Immigration and Foreigners Act 2025](#). The government presents this as a modernisation measure, but Amnesty is concerned at the sweeping powers granted to authorities to restrict movement, censor expression, detain and deport individuals without safeguards, and expand the powers of biased foreigners' tribunals. This undermines India's obligations under international human rights law and represents a serious threat to the protection of human rights in the country. The government can also prevent foreigners from leaving India on vague grounds such as "public interest" or potential harm to relations with a "foreign state", and the order further limits the right to work by requiring prior government approval for foreigners seeking employment in certain sectors, including human rights and defence. Treating human rights as a potential security threat is inconsistent with the principles of freedom of expression and association.

Additional restrictions on freedom of expression require foreigners to obtain prior approval before producing films or digital content in India, granting the authorities broad discretion to deny permission, effectively silencing foreign journalists, filmmakers, and digital creators. Provisions for detention and deportation (without due process) of individuals who lack valid documentation puts refugees and asylum-seekers such as the Rohingya at particular risk and violate the principle of non-refoulement. The Order also further expands the powers of foreigners' tribunals across India, granting these quasi-judicial bodies powers to issue arrest warrants and send individuals to detention centres. Amnesty International India has [previously documented](#) how, in Assam, such tribunals have declared Indian citizens as "foreigners", rendering individuals stateless and subject to indefinite detention. The new Order replicates this flawed system on a national scale, shifting the burden of proof onto individuals and removing meaningful avenues for appeal. Amnesty is therefore urging the Government of India to immediately repeal the Immigration and Foreigners Order, 2025.

Read the full statement [here](#).

Migrant workers behind the Riyadh Metro system subjected to a decade of devastating abuse



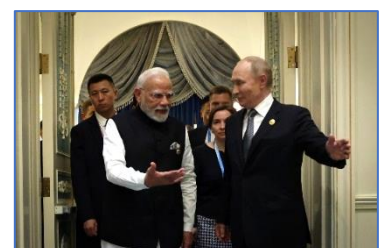
Migrant workers who travelled to Saudi Arabia to work on the Riyadh Metro project were forced to pay exorbitant recruitment fees, worked in dangerous heat and earned pitiful wages during a decade of serious abuse, Amnesty International revealed in a new report today. The report, "[Nobody wants to work in these situations': A decade of exploitation on the Riyadh Metro project](#)", documents labour abuses on one of Saudi Arabia's flagship infrastructure projects. Promoted as the

"backbone" of Riyadh's public transport system, the newly-opened metro was built by leading international and Saudi firms under government direction and further expansion is planned. The workers mainly came from **India, Bangladesh and Nepal**.

Read Amnesty's statement [here](#).

Modi balances India's relationships with Putin and Trump

A comment piece in the Observer newspaper notes how PM Modi continues to keep in with all sides. This week, Putin travels to meet Modi in Delhi, to discuss arms deals and oil purchases. Note that, in the wake of the four-day conflict between India and Pakistan, when Trump tried to take credit for the ceasefire, Modi



made it clear that the US had nothing to do with it, whereas Pakistan effusively thanked him and publicly nominated him for the Nobel Peace Prize. Trump slapped 50% tariffs on Indian products. Among diplomats watching from Washington, London, Brussels and Berlin, there will be concern that India under Modi has decisively moved into the orbit of autocracies and illiberal democracies, away from the West.

Read the full article [here](#).

Open statement on India's human rights record

An open letter signed by human rights organisations, including Amnesty International, urges the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) Bureau to uphold the Sub-Committee on Accreditation's (SCA) recommendation to downgrade the National Human Rights Commission of India (NHRCI) from "A" to "B" status. The SCA's April 2025 recommendation followed consecutive deferrals in 2023 and 2024, as well as an earlier deferral in 2016, preceding the granting of "A" status in 2017. Collectively, these reflect a decade-long pattern of persistent non-compliance with the Paris Principles.

Read the statement [here](#). Also the Facebook post by Amnesty International [here](#).

KASHMIR

Khurram Parvez still in jail after more than four years



Aakar Patel's article in the *National Herald* notes that India has now been elected to the UN Human Rights Council, which carries responsibility for 'strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe'. India's government statement said its election 'reflects India's unwavering commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms. We look forward to serve this objective during our tenure.' But there seems little evidence of this happening.

For example, on 22 November, Khurram Parvez marked four years in detention without trial, an anniversary noted by many human rights organisations. Aakar Patel, Chair of the Amnesty International India Board writes that Khurram Parvez should never have been arrested in the first place. His only 'crime' has been to document human rights abuses. Yet he is held hundreds of kilometres away from his home in Srinagar, in Delhi's Rohini jail, separated from his wife and two young children in Kashmir. His imprisonment an example of how India's counter-terrorism law, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act or UAPA, is used to silence human rights defenders. Even in 'New India', Jammu and Kashmir remains one of the most heavily militarised regions in the world. It continues to witness unlawful killings, punitive home demolitions, arbitrary arrests under abusive administrative detention laws, unlawful surveillance, and travel bans. It is a place where people already denied basic rights have been further stripped of dignity.

Read the piece by Aakar Patel [here](#). And Amnesty International's post on X [here](#).

UN experts alarmed by Indian counter-terrorism operations in Jammu and Kashmir

UN experts have expressed alarm about serious human rights violations committed by Indian authorities following the 22 April 2025 terrorist attack in Pahalgam, in Indian-Administered Kashmir, which killed 26 people. While they unequivocally condemn the terrorist attack on a tourist area, they emphasise that governments must respect international human rights law when combating terrorism. After the attack, Indian authorities launched sweeping operations across Jammu and Kashmir, resulting in the arrest and detention of around 2,800 individuals, including

journalists and human rights defenders. They used the Public Safety Act and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, which permit prolonged detention without charge or trial and contain vague and overbroad definitions of terrorism. The UN experts were concerned at reports of arbitrary arrests and detentions, suspicious deaths in custody, torture and other ill-treatment, lynchings, and discriminatory treatment of Kashmiri and Muslim communities.

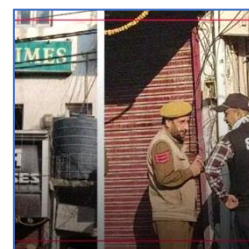
The experts highlighted reports of punitive house demolitions, forced evictions and arbitrary displacement, targeting families of individuals perceived as supporting the militants, without court orders or due process. “Such actions constitute collective punishment and defy the 2024 ruling by India’s Supreme Court, which found that such demolitions are unconstitutional and violate the rights to life and human dignity, which includes the right to protection against arbitrary displacement”. They were concerned by communication blackouts and restrictions on press freedom. Authorities reportedly suspended mobile internet services and blocked around 8,000 social media accounts, including those of journalists and independent media outlets, saying “These measures are disproportionate restrictions on freedoms of expression, association and peaceful assembly”.

India’s response to the attacks was also felt elsewhere in India as Kashmiri students were subject to surveillance and harassment, following Government directives requiring universities to collect their personal data. Hate speech and incitement to violence increased against Muslims, inflamed by political figures in the ruling party. Demolitions were reported in Gujarat and Assam, where thousands of Muslim homes, mosques, and businesses were destroyed. Nearly 1,900 Muslims and Rohingya refugees were also expelled to Bangladesh and Myanmar, often without due process.

Read more on the UN response [here](#).

Reporters Without Borders condemns raid on Kashmir Times office

In a further move to target free speech, the Jammu and Kashmir State Investigation Agency (SIA) raided the *Kashmir Times*’ editorial offices in Jammu, seizing professional equipment. Yet the office has been closed for four years following earlier harassment. Reporters Without Borders (RSF) condemned this unacceptable attack of one of the region’s few independent media outlets and called for the false charges against the newspaper and its editor-in-chief Anuradha Bhasin (who now lives abroad for his own safety) to be dropped.



Read the RSF report [here](#).

Amnesty International condemned the raid in a [post on X](#), saying “The recent actions targeting Kashmir Times’ editor Anuradha Bhasin fit squarely into the ongoing climate of intimidation against independent journalism in [#Jammu](#) & [#Kashmir](#). Book bans, raids, and allegations circulated through media reports instead of official notices.”

India demolishes home of Kashmiri man allegedly linked to Delhi blast



Following the bomb attack near the Red Fort in Delhi on 10 November, which killed 12 people, Indian authorities used bulldozers to demolish the home of a Muslim man in Indian-administered Kashmir’s Pulwama district, alleging that he was the one who carried out the car explosion. Such demolitions of homes and shops, primarily targeting the country’s Muslim population, have become routine, as collective punishment on families. Police have not produced documentary evidence linking the accused, Dr Umar Nabi, to the attack.

Amnesty International said “The demolition of a family home in response to the attack is a serious violation of the fundamental rights of all those who live there amounting to collective punishment.” There are reports that many other houses have also been destroyed.

Amnesty International condemned the demolition in a [post on X](#), saying “The 10 Nov Red Fort attack was a grave crime, but justice can’t come at the cost of rights. The demolition of Dr Umar Nabi’s family home in response to the attack is a serious violation of the fundamental rights of all those who live there amounting to collective punishment”.

Read the report in TRT World [here](#).

Journalist’s house destroyed

Despite the Supreme Court guidelines against punitive demolitions, the Jammu Development Authority has demolished the home of journalist Arfaz Daing just weeks after he exposed a cross-border drug trafficking racket allegedly linked to a police officer.

See Amnesty International’s post on X [here](#).



BANGLADESH

Bawm Prisoners IAR Case

The Bawm Prisoner IAR Case needs your support. A new Urgent Action is to be published soon.



In April 2024, 142 Indigenous Bawm people, including 30 women and children, were arbitrarily arrested as part of an ongoing military operation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in southeastern Bangladesh. Three of the Bawm prisoners have died in jail. Recent reports are that 62 remain in prison including 7 women and 3 children. Between 2022 and 2025, a total of 199 Bawm Indigenous were arrested.

Amnesty International said: “There is CCTV footage of the robbery that shows who robbed the banks,” “Instead of using it to identify the perpetrators, your government is persecuting an entire Indigenous community.” It is collective punishment.

Please look out for the new Urgent Action.

You can help to raise awareness of these prisoners by writing a letter or email to your MP. The suggested text is attached with a summary description. For further information please contact jerry.allen@amnesty.org.uk



Dalit Women Sanitation Workers and the Fight for Water and Dignity

Please see the Activist Action for this [campaign](#).



The report, [‘Left Behind in the Storm: Dalit Women Sanitation Workers and the Fight for Water and Dignity’](#), documents the huge barriers faced by Dalit (sometimes called “Untouchable”) women sanitation workers in Bangladesh, in accessing safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. It highlights their vulnerability and exclusion in climate change relief programmes. These workers are largely invisible in government policies on climate change, water and sanitation due to their caste, gender and occupation.

The Bangladeshi government must adopt an anti-discrimination law that includes caste discrimination. This new Active Led Campaign calls on the Government of Bangladesh to ensure the rights of Dalit sanitation workers and urgently address access to water for the community. [Please see the Blog.](#)

If you would like to know more about this campaign, please contact jerry.allen@amnesty.org.uk.

The trial and death sentence of Sheikh Hasina is neither fair nor just

The victims of July 2024 deserve far better. Bangladesh needs a justice process that is scrupulously fair and fully impartial beyond all suspicion of bias and does not resort to order further human rights violations through the death penalty. Only then can genuine and meaningful truth, justice and reparations be delivered.

This trial has been conducted before a court that Amnesty International has long criticised for its lack of independence and history of unfair proceedings. Further, the unprecedented speed of this trial in absentia and verdict raises significant fair trial concerns for a case of this scale and complexity. Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception, regardless of the nature or circumstances of the crime; guilt, innocence, or other characteristics of the individual; or the method used by the state to carry out the execution. [See the full report.](#)



AFGHANISTAN



Learn more about the human rights situation of Afghans in Pakistan in Amnesty's ["Treat us like Human Beings" Report.](#)

Whistle-blower claims UK special forces covered up war crimes

During a public inquiry, a former high-ranking officer claimed that leaders in the British special air service (SAS) forces were aware of unlawful executions of Afghan civilians in 2011. Inaction allowed for killings to continue for at least two more years. He told the inquiry that senior leadership suppressed the allegations, opting for internal reviews that he said were designed to create an appearance of action while avoiding scrutiny. The inquiry was launched following earlier reporting that suggested dozens of detainees and unarmed men were killed by SAS units in suspicious circumstances. It is examining whether around 80 Afghan civilians were unlawfully killed between 2010 and 2013 and whether senior commanders failed to meet their legal obligations. The inquiry is expected to run well into next year and will examine whether systemic failures within the chain of command enabled repeated breaches of international law.

Read more on this [here](#).

Pakistan airstrikes lead to civilian deaths

As clashes between Afghanistan and Pakistan continue, an air strike carried out by the Pakistani Air Force killed 10 civilians in eastern Afghanistan's Khost province. The victims included nine children and one woman. Despite agreeing on a [truce](#), tensions appear to be worsening. Islamabad accuses the Taliban of supporting the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan

(TTP) rebel group, who claimed responsibility for a deadly [suicide blast](#) in Islamabad earlier in November that killed 12 people and injured 27. The strike in Khost has been condemned by the Taliban-led Afghan government, while Islamabad denies having targeted civilians inside Afghanistan.

Read more on this [here](#).

Taliban ban of aid staff deepens crisis for Afghan women

A new Taliban order banning foreign female aid workers at the Islam Qala reception centre has left thousands of returning Afghan women with almost no support. Over [1 Million Afghans](#) who have been deported from Iran enter Afghanistan through Islam Qala, with up to 20,000 arriving at the border each day at the peak.

The UN briefly suspended operations at the reception centre, saying it could not assist women properly without female staff, but has now resumed limited services after pressure from NGOs. Only three Afghan women are currently allowed to work at the site, meaning most basic services for women have stopped. Aid agencies warn the move sets a dangerous precedent and could open the door to even tighter restrictions across the country. The UK has condemned the ban, while Afghan activists say it pushes women even further out of public life.

Read more on this [here](#).

Take action by [signing the petition](#) to end human rights violations and support women in Afghanistan.

SRI LANKA

The Government must act decisively to advance peace and justice

One year after its meteoric rise to power, the NPP ruling party risks losing critical momentum and squandering an unparalleled opportunity of using its political capital to build a just peace in the war-torn country. The Tamil and Muslim minorities saw this as an opportunity for equality coupled with prospects of transformation for justice and peace. After 16 years the war survivors' demand for justice shows no sign of diminishing, especially for families of disappeared.



[Please see the Groundviews report.](#)