

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
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Nepal: Ensure safety and respect human rights during elections

Amnesty International Nepal is deeply concerned over the increasing rate of incidents of violence occurring lately across Nepal. Amnesty International Nepal notes with concern the recent attacks targeting political leaders and campaigners with explosive devices that have resulted in numerous injuries and one death in Dang.

Nepal's authorities must protect the well-being and safety of all people, including voters and candidates, ahead of the country's second phase of the historic federal and provincial parliamentary elections, Amnesty International said today.

Election campaigners from various political parties have faced incidents of violence in different parts of the country, including the use of improvised explosive devices, raising fears for the safety and well-being of voters as they go to the polls.

"Nepal's authorities must protect people's rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and ensure their safety and security. There should be an independent and effective investigation into incidents of violence, and the suspected perpetrators should be held accountable through fair trials," said Nirajan Thapaliya, Director of Amnesty International Nepal.

"The security forces must abide by international standards when carrying out their duties. Violence must not be an excuse to trample on people's rights through arbitrary arrests or detentions, or the use of unnecessary or excessive force. Law enforcement personnel may only resort to the use of firearms in self-defense or defense of others against an imminent threat of death or serious injury, and must not use them to manage or disrupt public assemblies."

Background

In the lead up to the second phase of the federal and provincial parliamentary election scheduled to take place on 7 December, dozens of explosions across the country including in the capital Kathmandu valley have targeted various political party leaders and cadres. Eleven individuals including former health minister and Nepali Congress youth leader Gagan Thapa were injured in an explosion on 4 December in Chapali Kathmandu.

On 29 November, a temporary police personnel succumbed to the injuries he sustained in an explosion that took place in Dang on 28 November. Likewise, four individuals were seriously injured when a bomb was detonated on 27 November in Udayapur districts.

In response to the violence, the security forces have detained hundreds of protestors allegedly affiliated to the Communist Party of Nepal, a breakaway faction that is opposed to the elections and campaigning against them.