

# *Indian Village Elders Order Sisters Gang-raped and Paraded Naked*

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New Delhi, August 31 (RHC)-- An unelected, all-male council has passed a ruling in northern India's Uttar Pradesh state, ordering the sisters of a man accused of committing a crime to be gang-raped then paraded around the town naked with blackened face.

According to reports, 23-year-old Meenakshi Kumari and her unnamed 15-year-old sister have been sentenced to be raped as punishment for their brother's running away with a married woman from the village's dominant Jat caste.

The sisters and their whole family, who are all from the lower Dalit caste, have since fled the village over fears of their safety, leaving their home at the mercy of looters.

Amnesty International issued a statement saying: "Nothing could justify this abhorrent punishment. It's not fair. It's not right. And it's against the law. Demand that the local authorities intervene immediately."

The human rights group has called on Indian authorities to guarantee the sisters' safety and has also launched an on-line petition, already signed by over 100,000 people, aimed at stopping the execution of ruling. The older sister has also reportedly filed a petition with India's Supreme Court requesting safe

passage back to their village.

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