

Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020

February 4, 2020

Source: *PRS India*

Recently the Union Cabinet approved the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The Bill seeks to **amend the Medical Terminal of Pregnancy Act, 1971** which provides for the termination of certain pregnancies by registered medical practitioners

Key features of the bill

- **Increase in the number of weeks for termination of pregnancy:** Under the Act of 1971, a pregnancy may be terminated within 20 weeks if: (i) the continuation of pregnancy may risk the life of the mother, or cause grave injury to her health, or (ii) there is a substantial risk that the child if born, would be seriously handicapped due to physical or mental abnormalities. **The amendments propose to enhance the upper limit from 20 weeks to 24 weeks for special categories of women. These would include**
 1. survivors of rape
 2. victims of incest, and other vulnerable women (such as differently-abled women and minors).
- **Application:** However, this limit of 24 weeks for termination of pregnancy will **not apply in cases of substantial fetal abnormalities diagnosed by the Medical Board.**
- According to the Act, a pregnancy can be terminated within 12 weeks, with a **recommendation from a registered medical practitioner.** For terminating a pregnancy

between 12 to 20 weeks, two medical practitioners are required to give their opinion.

- The proposed amendments recommend the requirement of the **opinion of:**

1. One registered medical practitioner for termination of pregnancy up to 20 weeks, and
2. Two registered medical practitioners for termination of pregnancy between 20 to 24 weeks.

The amendments also propose that the **name and other particulars of a woman whose pregnancy has been terminated will not be revealed**, except to a person authorized by the law.