

Lok Sabha passes bill to regulate IVF clinics

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Members flag exclusion of single parents and LGBTQ community from using the procedure

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Bill,, 2020 that proposes the establishment of a national registry and registration authority for all clinics and medical professionals serving in the field.

Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, while moving the Bill for passage, said several suggestions of the Standing Committee have been considered by the Government to improve the legislation. The Bill seeks to regulate and supervise Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) clinics and ART banks, prevent misuse, adopt safe and ethical practice and so on.

[Parliament proceedings | December 1, 2021](#)

“Many such ART clinics have been running without regulation. A need was felt for regulation of such clinics as there are implications on health of those who undertake the procedure,” Mr Mandaviya told the House.

Opening the debate, Congress’s Karti Chidambaram said this law is Victorian as it doesn’t include lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people (LGBTQ) or single men for exercising the right. He also urged the Government to consider supporting poor childless parents to take ART’s help.

Supporting the Bill, Dr. Heena Gavit of the BJP said the Bill sets minimum standards and codes of conduct for fertility clinics and egg or sperm banks and about 80% of ART clinics are not registered.

“The Bill also has a provision that those involved in trafficking and sale of embryos will be fined ₹10

lakh at first instance and in second instance, the person can be imprisoned for up to 12 years,” Dr. Gavit said.

Trinamool Congress (TMC) MP, Dr. Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar, who is a specialist in the field, said experts should be involved at every level to monitor the Bill’s provisions and pointed out “ART banks” should not be there unless it has a proper laboratory.

Dr. Dastidar and BSP’s Sangeeta Azad raised the issue of exclusion of single parents and the LGBTQ community from using this procedure. “They have a right to be parents too,” they argued. Welcoming the Bill, NCP’s Supriya Sule also talked about the LGBTQ community and single men.

“I think we should not deprive any human being who deserves or wants to have a child. Why do we not put all the bright minds together,” Ms. Sule said, adding that there should not be any jail terms for doctors.

RSP’s N.K. Premachandran raised a technical point and said, “Surrogacy bill is pending in the Upper House, that has not been passed. How can this House pass a law that is depending upon another law”.

The Health Minister said both the Bills would now be taken up in the Upper House together.

Credit: The Hindu