

# Pregnancy termination bill gets Cabinet nod

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The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020, to amend the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971. It will be introduced in the ensuing session of Parliament.

According to a release, the proposed amendment seeks to enhance the upper gestation limit from 20 to 24 weeks for special categories of women that will be defined in the amendments to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Rules and will include 'vulnerable women including survivors of rape, victims of incest and other vulnerable women (like differently-abled women, minors) etc. Also, the upper gestation limit will not apply to cases of substantial foetal abnormalities diagnosed by the Medical Board. "Name and other particulars of a woman whose pregnancy has been terminated shall not be revealed except to a person authorized in any law for the time being in force," the release said.

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (Amendment) Bill, 2020 is for expanding access of women to safe and legal abortion services on therapeutic, eugenic, humanitarian or social grounds. Addressing the media after the Cabinet meeting, Union Minister Prakash Javadekar said the amendment to the ACT would ensure a safe termination of pregnancies and also give women reproductive rights over their bodies. The extension to 24 weeks will also help victims of rape, girls with disabilities as well as minors, who may not realize they are pregnant until later.

**SOURCE:** *The Hindu*