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## Draft Bill to Raise Upper Limit for Abortion

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### Why in News

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**Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971 upper limit for termination of a pregnancy from 20 weeks to 24 weeks.** The Union Cabinet has approved changes to the in order to increase the

### Present Abortion Law

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- **The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971 provides for termination of pregnancy only up to 20 weeks.** If an unwanted pregnancy has proceeded beyond 20 weeks, women have to approach a medical board and Courts to seek permission for termination, which is extremely difficult and cumbersome process.
  - **Section 3 (2) of the MTP Act, 1971**
    - **does not exceed twelve weeks**, Where the length of the pregnancy or
    - **exceeds twelve weeks but does not exceed twenty weeks.risk to the life of the pregnant womanchild** Where the length of the pregnancy In this case, the abortion will take place, if not less than two registered medical practitioners are of opinion, that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve a (her physical or mental health); or there is a substantial risk that if the were born, it would suffer from some physical or mental abnormalities to be seriously handicapped.
- According to a pregnancy may be terminated by a registered medical practitioner-
- **Issue:**
    - **for minors**-The law says, written consent from guardian is required, and
    - **unmarried women**The cannot cite contraceptive failure as a reason for abortion.

The law does not accommodate non-medical concerns over the economic costs of raising a child, effects on career decisions, or any other personal considerations.

### Provisions of Proposed Bill

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- **one up to 20 weeks** Requirement of opinion of registered medical practitioner (instead of two or more) for termination of pregnancy of gestation (time between conception and birth).
- **two 20 to 24 weeks.** Requirement of opinion of registered medical practitioners for termination of pregnancy of
- **Increase the upper gestation limit (for abortion) from 20 to 24 weeks minor girls.** for survivors of rape, victims of incest (human sexual activity between family members or close relatives) and other vulnerable women, including
- **unmarried women, “only married woman or her husband” “any woman or her partner”.** For the Bill seeks to relax the contraceptive-failure condition. Earlier were allowed to medically terminate the pregnancy, but the Bill proposes the same for

## Conclusion

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The Bill if passed will provide greater reproductive rights to women as abortion is considered an important aspect of the reproductive health of women. Deaths and injuries from unsafe abortions are largely preventable, provided services are performed legally by trained practitioners.

**Source: IE**