

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 340
TO BE ANSWERED ON THE 24TH MARCH, 2017**

***340. SHRI VINCENT H. PALA:**

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) the salient features of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to amend the said Act, so as to increase the gestation period for abortion from 20 to 24 weeks and if so, the details thereof and the time by which the said amendment is likely to be implemented;
- (c) whether the increase in gestation period from 20 to 24 weeks might risk the health of the mother; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the provisions proposed by the Government to ensure the safety of the mother's health, if the abortion is conducted in the 24th week?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI JAGAT PRAKASH NADDA)**

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 340* FOR 24TH MARCH, 2017**

a) The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act came into existence in 1971. The Act recognizes the importance of providing safe, affordable, accessible and acceptable abortion services to women who need to terminate a pregnancy under certain conditions.

The main salient features of the existing Act are:

- The MTP is to be conducted by a Registered Medical Practitioner(RMP) at an approved place and for conditions as defined under the Act;
- The upper gestation limit for all categories of women seeking MTP services is up to 20 weeks ;
- Opinion of one RMP required for gestation up to 12 weeks and of two RMPs for termination of pregnancy in second trimester;

b) The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has recommended amendments to the MTP Act 1971.

Based on the recommendation from the National Commission for Women (NCW), one of the proposal is to increase the gestation limit from the present 20 weeks to 24 weeks for special categories of women.

The details of the category would be defined in the Rules and is expected to include survivors of rape and incest, single women (unmarried/ divorced/widowed) and other vulnerable women (women with disabilities). The proposal for amendment has been submitted to the Cabinet for consideration.

c & d)

1. Conditions which pose a threat to the life of a pregnant woman irrespective of the period of gestation are already covered in Section 5 of the present act.
2. The Honorable Supreme Court have also allowed termination of pregnancy beyond 20 weeks in some cases e.g. WP(C) no 593 of 2016(gestational age 23 weeks and 3 days) and WP(C) no 17 of 2017(gestational age 24th weeks).
3. Once the approval of the proposed amendments is received from parliament, the rules and regulations for the termination of pregnancy during the gestation period between 20-24 weeks would be framed which would take care of the safety of the mother.
