The coalition congratulates the Government for proposing the MTP Amendment Bill 2020. The MTP Act 1971 is the most important law that governs abortion in India. Currently the Bill allows for abortion up to 12 weeks gestation (20-24 weeks gestation, and 35% of all women who sought judicial intervention were survivors of sexual abuse within the same year). The above-suggested changes do not substantially alter the MTP Amendment Bill 2020. They just make it clearer and easier for the law to be implemented.

Harmonising Bill with recent Laws & Judgements

vii. The term ‘woman’ in the Bill be replaced by person ‘or pregnant person’: This will make the law inclusive and gender neutral.

vi. ‘Abnormalities’ should be replaced by the word ‘anomalies’: This is a small but significant change that reflects the latest understanding of the medical term.

v. Opinion of a single provider for gestation up to 24 weeks, instead of two providers for 20-24 weeks gestation: This change will certainly ease the burden on the health system and provide services for 20-24 weeks. This change will also add as barriers to access.

v. The upper gestational limit of 24 weeks be extended to all pregnant persons, and this will make the law more inclusive and gender neutral.

vi. ‘Abnormalities’ should be replaced by the word ‘anomalies’: This is a small but significant change that reflects the latest understanding of the medical term.

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